



RESTAURANTS & HOSPITALITY

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ALONG THE BELTLINE

New cidery and tasting room set for July groundbreaking

A husband-and-wife team are gearing up to open a new cidery that will sit along a future portion of the **Atlanta Beltline**.

Mark and Liz Deno launched Atlanta Hard Cider Co. last October with their flagship, all-natural Crisp Apple hard cider.

Today, it's distributed throughout Georgia, poured at hotspots including The Roof at **Ponce City Market**, and on shelves at grocery stores such as Kroger, Publix and Whole Foods Market.

The couple has been contract brewing at a more than 100-year-old apple orchard in upstate New York.

Now, they hope to break ground on their cidery this July.

The 11,250-square-foot facility will come to 1283 Marietta Boulevard, near **Topgolf Atlanta** and upscale restaurant **Bacchanalia**. It will include a nearly 5,000-square-foot tasting room with an outdoor patio, 40 taps and private event space.

Mark has a real estate background, and Liz has worked in marketing. Their interest in cider came about because of Mark's gluten intolerance and a lack of natural cider options in the market. Mark took classes at **Oregon State University** to learn to make cider.

"We don't add any sugar to it," Mark said, or artificial colors and flavors. The cider is made from hand-picked, fresh-pressed apples and champagne yeast. "It's real light, crisp and fresh."

The couple now sees growth opportunity with cider, especially with last year's law change that allowed breweries and distilleries to sell direct to the public for the first time. Today, there are just four craft cider makers in Georgia, the Denos said.

"We think we are on the ground floor," Liz said.

"We feel that the craft cider market here in Atlanta is where craft beer was in Atlanta 20 years ago," Mark added.

Atlanta Hard Cider Co. will soon release new flavors, including a pomegranate cider in May. A honey cider could launch in late summer.

When the cidery is complete, the couple envisions being open Wednesday through Sunday with food trucks and live music.

State looks to hire hotel consultant

State officials are looking to hire a hotel consultant to help design a planned 1,010-room convention hotel on the **Georgia World Congress Center** campus.

The hotel is estimated to open in December 2021, according to a request for qualifications just released by state agency **Georgia World Congress Center Authority** (GWCCA). It will rise on a portion of the former Georgia Dome site.

A hotel consultant is now needed "to ensure the hotel is set up for success by

Atlanta Hard Cider Co. is planned for Marietta Boulevard.



RENDERING/SPECIAL

thoughtful, strategic design and brand operator selection," says the RFQ.

That includes being involved in the selection of a hotel brand to flag the property. That is expected to happen June 26.

The consultant would also provide support and recommendations through 50 percent of the design development of the hotel. That includes input about the meeting space, lobby and guest rooms. The hotel will have up to 100,000 square feet of conference space, says the RFQ.

Atlanta Business Chronicle wrote in March that the GWCCA is close to finalizing a development agreement with Boston, Mass.-based **Drew Co.** for the hotel.

The hotel is estimated to cost \$320 million to \$350 million. It would be financed through state-issued bonds. State lawmakers have already approved GWCCA to issue bonds for the project for up to \$400 million.

'City Springs' tenants revealed

The retail and restaurant tenants for a 14-acre town center project in Sandy Springs will include a Vietnamese restaurant from MF Sushi's **Alex Kinjo**.

The city of Sandy Springs, **Selig Enterprises** and **Carter** on April 11 announced the tenants for the City Springs mixed-use project, which features a performing arts center, conference center, government offices, park and residences.

The list includes four restaurants and several fitness boutiques. The first tenants are expected to open in early summer.

Here's the full restaurant list:

- ▶ **Café Vendome** – A relaxed spot for handmade traditional French pastries and breads. It will also serve sandwiches, quiches and coffee.
- ▶ **Flower Child** – A restaurant devoted to veggies, grains, fruits and healthy proteins. It will serve bowls, wraps, grains and greens.
- ▶ **Nam Kitchen** – An authentic Vietnamese restaurant. It will be led by executive chef **Thuy Bich** who will cook recipes from her mother, **Ahn Hoang** of Nam Midtown fame.
- ▶ **The Select** – From the same team

behind the popular Vinings restaurant Paces and Vine, The Select will offer contemporary American comfort food and an impressive wine list.

The fitness tenants include:

- ▶ **TURN Studio** – An indoor cycling and strength studio.
- ▶ **SculptHouse** – Offers a core-sculpting, low-impact, but high-intensity workout.
- ▶ **Vida-Flo** – A hydration station that's a medically safe way for individuals to rehydrate their bodies.

New guest experience VP for Atlanta Hawks

Philips Arena is undergoing a \$192.5 million renovation. Now, it will have a new executive charged with making sure guests have a great time.

The **Atlanta Hawks** and Philips Arena said they've hired **David Garcia** as vice president of guest experience. "Garcia will be charged with building a new guest services team and high-performance culture to ensure a world-class experience for all members and fans," says an announcement.

Garcia previously served as director of fan experience for **AMB Sports & Entertainment** where he had similar duties with the **Atlanta Falcons**, **Atlanta United** and **Mercedes-Benz Stadium**. Prior to that, Garcia worked for **Amazon** and **The Walt Disney Co.**

Garcia led the design and implementation of the Falcons mobile app, which was rated by fans as the second-best app in the **NFL**. He also led the development of the team's first-ever AI chatbot, programmed with more than 2,000 automated responses for fan questions.

"I'm excited about working with this forward-thinking team and welcoming basketball fans and concert-goers alike to a sports and live entertainment experience like no other," he said.

New owner for Lake Burton marina
Atlanta-based investment firm **Keel Funds** has acquired LaPrade's Marina on

north Georgia's **Lake Burton**, according to an announcement.

The purchase included 117 wet slips, 25 dry slips, fuel, a full-service restaurant, Tiki bar, boat sales and service.

A price was not disclosed.

Milwaukee-based **F3 Marina** will now manage LaPrade's.

Keel Funds plans to add more boat slips, a second restaurant and additional pontoon boat rentals, among other upgrades. Changes should come this boating season.

"We are excited to take LaPrade's into its next great phase," said **Bill Boden**, managing partner with Keel Funds. "With a long-term focus, we plan to strategically invest resources into LaPrade's so it continues to be the exceptional destination it has been for generations."

LaPrade's dates back to 1925 when **Georgia Power** formed Lake Burton by building a dam for power generation. John LaPrade was a local landowner who built a camp for workers building the dam. It evolved into a rustic fish camp with cabins, a restaurant and marina.

Bakery coming to Ponce City Market

A Charleston, S.C.-based baking company is moving its headquarters to Ponce City Market.

Root Baking Co. said in a news release that it's opening a bakery and cafe this summer on the second floor of the historic mixed-use project in Atlanta's Old Fourth Ward neighborhood. The bakery will sit beside The Mercury, in what's now the Atlanta Gallery Collective space.

Root Baking Co. said there will be a handmade mill and windows for visitors to watch the milling, fermenting, shaping and baking process.

Founded in 2015 by husband-and-wife duo **Chris Wilkins** and **Nicole Lewis**, Root Baking Co. said it's known for milling Southern, heirloom grains in-house, sourced from the likes of **Anson Mills** and **Geechie Boy Mill**. The company said it will serve "vegetable-driven fare" and freshly baked breads and pastries during breakfast and lunch.