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New Wayfare Tavern coming to heart of Financial District

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Image: Tyler Florence

Wayfare Tavern

Wayfare Tavern, the Sacramento Street Michelin-rated restaurant from celebrity chef Tyler Florence, is getting a new multilevel location at 201 Pine St. elsewhere in the Financial District.

San Francisco's still-sluggish Financial District is poised for a shot in the arm at Pine and Battery streets with a three-level restaurant from a celebrity chef with Michelin pedigree.

The popular Wayfare Tavern from Chef Tyler Florence is building out a new location at 201 Pine St., recent planning applications reveal. The large project will renovate the basement-, first- and second-levels of six-story 221 Pine, transforming the former ground-floor Tunisian restaurant Dar Fatma and adjacent shuttered GNC store into an 8,000-square-foot restaurant featuring the Wayfare's private lounge and event space, The Sequoia.

Plans are to convert the second-floor office level to retail, expanding the restaurant space by about 4,355 square feet, per planning documents, and reducing the office load to about 18,000 square feet. The proposal features outdoor dining under retractable awnings along Pine Street, a bar and "Sequoia Rooms" in the former GNC space.

The property owner and applicant for the Pine Street project, Skyline Pacific Properties, did not respond to multiple requests for comment. The company also owns the building at 558 Sacramento St. that's housed the Wayfare Tavern since 2010. No one at Wayfare Tavern picked up the phone or answered emails requests for comment.

It's unclear if this means Wayfare's time on Sacramento Street — in a picturesque spot looking directly up at the Transamerica Building via skylight — is nearing an end or if Pine Street will be a second location in the Financial District. Either way the investment is a sign of confidence in the hospitality potential of an area that's seen restaurants and bars suffer from diminished office worker foot traffic.

"This will be an absolutely transformative hospitality addition for downtown," said Robbie Silver, executive director of the

neighborhood's business improvement district, the Downtown SF Partnership.

Wayfare Tavern is poised to join concurrent investments in downtown hospitality besides Michael Shvo's \$400 million renovation (including a swanky private club) at the Transamerica Building; the group behind FiDi's Treasury is opening a new cocktail bar, Heartwood, at 531 Commercial St.; the Dawn Club from Future Bars is on the way this spring; and the renovated One Sansome aims to start hosting group events in April and later this summer debut its Jeff Schlarb-designed restaurant, Holbrook House.

Local architecture firm Liebes Architects, which collaborated with renowned interior designer Ken Fulk Inc. on the office conversion of the original Sequoia lounge, is enlisted on the design side of the new Wayfare Tavern. Fulk designed the interior of Florence's other recent concept, steakhouse Miller & Lux over in the Chase Center's Thrive City, but it's unclear if he's on the docket for this project.

Florence is known in the food world for hosting several Food Network shows such as "Food 911," "How to Boil Water" and "Tyler's Ultimate." He also makes frequent chef guest appearances on national talk shows. His local restaurants include the previous Michelin Guide-selected Wayfare Tavern and current Guide pick Miller & Lux, and he previously debuted since-closed concepts Rotisserie & Wine (Napa), Hawk's Tavern (San Francisco) and El Paseo (Mill Valley).

Pine Street's former restaurant Dar Fatma, also known as Café Mediterranean and several other iterations since 2015, closed in December after months of tough sledding from high rents and sluggish business. Restaurant owner Kamel Bouzidi said he found better prospects in NoPa, and is soon to open a smaller 30-seat French Mediterranean restaurant, La Sarrasine, at 607 Divisadero St. in the lively neighborhood corridor featuring Emporium and concert venue The Independent.



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