

## Downtown Bazaar, at former EXPO space, opens Monday

Andrew Galarneau

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Ful medames at Akec Aguer's Nile River booth in 617 Main St. is made of fava beans, tomatoes, garlic and other spices, topped with fresh cheese and hard-boiled egg.

Derek Gee

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**D**owntown Bazaar will open to the public Monday, bringing international all-stars from the West Side Bazaar to Buffalo's Theatre District.

At 617 Main St., office lunchers and pre-curtain diners will get the chance to enjoy the cooking that made the Grant Street site a must-stop for adventurous eaters before it was closed by **fire** last year.

Until the \$11.5 million reimaged and expanded West Side Bazaar opens on Niagara Street this fall, Downtown Bazaar is the place for Grant Street fans to find their old favorites. The Westminster Economic Development Initiative's lease ran out after the fire, meaning 25 Grant St. passes into eater memory.

But at Downtown Bazaar, people who fell in love with doro wot, Ethiopian braised chicken and hardboiled egg, or the best sauteed fava beans in town, will have their needs met again.

The former EXPO space runs through the block, from Main to Ellicott streets. It will be open from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Monday through Friday. Inside, folks can meander by a cast of food offerings never before seen in the Theatre District.

There, you'll find the same people making the same dishes – and a few new faces.

Filipino chef Lloyd Ligao, whose Pinoy Boy restaurant operation found an audience from the public kitchen at the Broadway Market, is coming downtown.

Through his capable hands, Buffalo can discover Filipino favorites like marinated and grilled chicken inisal (\$16) or fried garlic rice with Spam, pork sisig or longanisa sausage (\$15). Basque brûléed cheesecake made with purple ube sweet potato (\$8) beckons for dessert, along with halo-halo (\$7/\$10), the gaudy dessert of crushed ice, coconut cream and technicolor jellies.

Abyssinia Ethiopian Cuisine's Zelalem Gemmeda will have the city's essential Ethiopian menu on offer. Vegetarian and nonvegetarian meals, each with five dishes on the pancake-like flatbread called injera, are the move here.

South Sudanese restaurateur Akec Aguer, of Nile River, will be supplying the city's best ful medames, fava beans sauteed with garlic and cumin, dill-laced beef kabobs and the hearty collards-and-greens Sudanese stew called sukuma wiki.

Pattaya Street Food, another West Side Bazaar veteran, will be open mornings once the schedule begins, offering bubble tea and coffee.

Besides soft drinks, beer and wine will be part of the Downtown Bazaar's lure. Its operator has yet to be announced, but the Downtown Bazaar promises to be the only spot in town that you can get a decent glass of Merlot with your sukuma wiki.

Send restaurant tips to [agalarneau@buffnews.com](mailto:agalarneau@buffnews.com) and follow @BuffaloFood on Instagram and Twitter.



Downtown Bazaar will add South Sudanese, Ethiopian and Filipino culinary choices to the menu at 617 Main St.

Ben Tsujimoto