

# Craft Urban

## CONCEPT & BUSINESS PLAN



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## Table of Contents

CONCEPT .....	3
Sample Menu .....	4
Marketing Plan/Public Relations.....	6
Design and Décor .....	7
The Craft Urban Team.....	8
Chef Bernie Laskowski .....	8
Isabelli Media Relations.....	9
JDR Construction .....	9
Financial Outlook/Snapshot .....	10

## Concept

**Craft Urban Cocktail** is a contemporary urban neighborhood restaurant located in the vibrant West Side of Downtown Aurora at 41 Stolp Ave. This inviting eatery will be nestled into an artistic brick building located on a highly traveled street.

Chef Bernie Laskowski's seasonal menus will offer the best that local farmers have to offer as he showcases his urban American Cuisine for the denizens of the Western Suburbs. His menu is affordable without sacrificing quality, encouraging guests to return regularly. Craft's food offerings will feature progressive American Fair with new interpretations of the Classics.



Craft is a restaurant where you can bring friends, clients, and family; here guests will find a warm, inviting 100 seat dining room accented with rustic brick and finished wood. The dining room features a Unique Bar and Kitchen where modern and classic cocktails are showcased alongside craft beers and a finely-curated wine list. Diners can also enjoy the chef's kitchen counter where they watch the action in the kitchen and converse with the chef during dinner. Guests can even watch local games on strategically placed flat screens near the bar and kitchen, yet will not disturb other diners. Live entertainment playing local artisan music will add to the charm.

In the warm months locals and foodies alike can enjoy patio seating that allows for prime people watching along Stolp. What better way to feel the pulse of the neighborhood than to sit out under the sun or stars and enjoy great food, great drinks, and the local flavor?

Bernie Laskowski has a history of running successful restaurants, rooted in a philosophy dedicated to sustainable ingredients and sustainable relationships. Craft Urban will operate as an integral part of this rapidly growing Downtown neighborhood by providing great food and warm service. This will be the place to see your friends and enjoy the best that this contemporary urban neighborhood restaurant has to offer.

Cocktails

**Craft Urban Old Fashion**, citrus, cherry, honey, bourbon \$10

**Jalisco Mule**, ginger soda, lime, mint, silver **tequila** \$11



To share

**Simple Craft Salad \$8**

Heirloom Carrot, Winter Greens, Pickled Beets, Radishes, Mustard Seeds, Citrus, Puffed Quinoa, Sherry Maple Orange Vinaigrette

**Shrimp and Grits \$9**

Smoked Paprika, Grass Fed Butter, Parsley, Celery Leaves, Crisp Cured Bacon Lardons

Meat

**Pork Belly: Lachone Style \$12**

Pickled Garlic, Baby Peppers, Onions, Cilantro Sofrito



**Crispy Chicken: Smoked then made crisp \$11**

Ginger Garlic, Butternut Squash, Red Onion Curry Relish

**Craft Urban Burger \$11**

Slagel Farms Hand Patty, Caramelized Onions, Bread and Butter Pickles, Smoked Tomato Jam, Butterkasse Cheese

Sides

**Twice Roasted Butter Potatoes** Aged Pleasant Ridge Reserve Cheese \$6

**Royal Trumpet Mushrooms**, Roasted Garlic, **Brussels sprouts**, Thyme Aged Sherry Vinegar \$7

Dessert

**Craft'S Signature Shorty Bread**, Cranberry, pineapple, ginger, port \$7

Saturdays and Sunday

- Chicken and waffles, honey baked biscuits with chorizo gravy.
- Flap Jacks with Burton Farms Maple Syrup and house smoked pork belly.

## Beverage program

Craft Urban's beverage program will feature Hand Crafted Cocktails, Local Craft Breweries, and Boutique Wineries, changing seasonally with an approachable number of value driven cocktails to stimulate the palate.

Highlights will include items such as small batch bourbon aged in casks in house and chef inspired cocktails to be paired with Craft Urban menu items.

Having teamed up with some of the best local brew-masters, they will assist in the creation Craft Urban's own signature seasonal beers. The draft system will feature 8 different pours from the aligned breweries with full pint offerings ranging between 5 and 9 dollars. A Craft Bottle Program will also be created with food pairings in mind.

The wine list will reflect Chef Bernie's passion for the unique, but not the overly expensive. Craft Urban has developed relationships with some of the best small batch winemakers in the US and will feature 16 wines by the glass, 4 of them on tap, ranging between 7 and 10 dollars. The Wine Program will represent several different varietals/winemakers for guests to choose from.



## Marketing Plan/Public Relations

Marketing is imperative to success. Craft Urban has retained Isabelli Media Relations to not only to initiate interest from all the local food publications and to generate buzz, but to put together a long term marketing plan for the business. They plan to take full advantage of online marketing and will be dedicated to continual social media updates, making sure they are at the top of current food sites and are active in responding to customer comments.

Craft Urban's marketing and PR effort will encompass three different steps:

Brand building, market capture, and market maintenance.

**Brand building** will capitalize on Laskowski's Critically Acclaimed Cuisine, creating that buzz, and sharing what Craft Urban is doing in Aurora. The website will feature a video series to showcase the restaurant's development from concept to creation, including the actual construction and build out, and then onto the opening of the restaurant. Chef Driven Demonstrations at local farmers markets, Aurora Public Library, Area Schools and TV stations.



In concert with web videos, Bernie will create a blog that will highlight the project's progression including sourcing stories, tasting menus, and whimsical mishaps, all the while demonstrating his professionalism and passion for the industry. The visitors will be introduced to the concept, cuisine, and the personalities that will become Craft Urban Aurora.

Social media will include Facebook, Twitter, as well as other industry targeted sites such as Spoonfeed, which is a site that links chefs, publicists, the press, and the media together. The website and blog will be coupled with the social media campaign and will provide an insider's view and create positive momentum for the opening. Craft Urban expects this to allow visitors to establish a relationship with the restaurant while providing a place for interactive communication and the sharing of personal insights.

**Market capture** will target residential, neighborhood, and business lunch. A "we're new in the neighborhood" packet will go out to all area businesses that will include menus and a gift card to come and try the restaurant. The focus on local professionals as well as Local Area Residents will include frequent diner programs and complimentary parking. Craft Urban will have an aggressive concierge program, a strong presence in hotel publications, and regular concierge events.

Craft Urban will keep up the momentum with **Market maintenance**. Weekly meetings with the PR firm will ensure new marketing ideas, and keep us on top of the latest industry trends. The monthly Craft calendar will include; Chef Events, cooking classes, Cocktail/beer/wine dinners just to name a few.

As a member of the Downtown and Aurora Community, Craft Urban will host community events to support the neighborhood. Craft Urban will continue working on and maintaining relationships with existing partners while creating new relationships. The goal is to build a synergistic relationship with the smaller area businesses and residents communicating that they are an integral part of the restaurant's success.

## Design and Décor

Craft Urban will be a warm and welcoming environment, with lots of natural reclaimed wood, exposed brick, and clean modern lines. Built and designed by the sought after local architect and designer, Lane Allen of Allen & Pepa.

The bar/kitchen area will have 10 seats with a custom made communal table, cocktail tables, and inviting banquet-style seating. The centrally located bar will have sightlines straight into the upstairs Second Floor dining room and two unobtrusive, strategically placed flat screens.

The 100 seat 1st Floor dining room has been cleverly designed so that from every seat you can be a spectator in the bustling atmosphere. Music will be conversation friendly, yet upbeat.

The Kitchen will be a focal point in the interior design. It will be a dramatic space where guests can eat at the kitchen counter witnessing the goings on while Craft Urban chefs are hard at work. Guests will be able to interact with the chefs as they prepare their meal in the same way they would talk to a bartender while they are making drinks. Patrons will be in the middle of the action, in a warm and comfortable environment while enjoying a truly unique dining experience.

## The Craft Urban Team

### Chef Bernie Laskowski

Bernie Laskowski and his wife Cindy ("Cinderella") are both professionally trained Chefs. With over 20 years in the food service industry, Bernie and Cindy have operated kitchens in high end establishments such as Marche, The Everest Room, Four Seasons Hotel Chicago, Bin 36, and the Park Grill in Millennium Park.

Their unique style of cuisine comes both from a deep sense of creativity, as well as a connection to their food. They are ethical, sustainable, and local.

Creating and offering unique and healthy twists on comfort food, Bernie currently operates **Cinderella Paleo** in Naperville, IL. Cinderella Paleo provides a completely custom catering service as well as physically delivering prepared meals to athletes and customers looking to dial in their protein, fat, and carbohydrate intake.

Understanding what goes into your meal from a nutritionist's standpoint, in addition to witnessing how your meat is raised, Bernie has a grasp on flavor and texture that most chefs only

dream about. While his food is innately delicious, Chef Laskowski manages to roll the feel of the environment and design of the food on the plate into one amazingly impressive presentation.

Laskowski's Tenure at the Park Grill in Millennium Park allowed him to foster personal and business relationships with Chicago Event Management Co the Operational Team behind the International Runners Series (Boston, Chicago, London Marathons) and help develop the Food Service Program for all of CEM Chicago hosted Marathons/Shamrock Shuffle, servicing 100,000 patrons per race.

### **Isabelli Media Relations**

Founded by Janet Isabelli in May 2011, Isabelli Media Relations is a premier, modern boutique agency specializing in high-level public relations and social media services for the hospitality and travel industries. Their firm was created to fill a void in the marketplace for a modern approach to public relations. IMR's approach inspires the creation of attentive, multi-dimensional campaigns that marry what we love about traditional efforts – glossy magazine spreads, chunky articles, and coveted air time – and what we know about online and social media – that every day, it becomes an evermore powerful vehicle to reach your audience. Since its inception, the agency has begun work with numerous, high-profile restaurants and hotels throughout Chicago, some of which include The Purple Pig, Urban Union, GT Fish & Oyster, Tavernita, Trump International Hotel & Tower Chicago, and Hotel Lincoln.

### **JDR Construction**

JDR Construction is the experienced authority on the construction, renovation, and physical engineering of residential and commercial real estate. Having been involved in all aspects of estimation, construction, and asset renovation, JDR has managed smaller projects as well as projects several million dollars in scope. Included in JDR's portfolio are complete renovations of commercial buildings, historic building rehabilitations, construction contracts with national retailers, as well as hospitality & entertainment venues, including EvenFlow in Geneva, IL, and Gillerson's Grubbery in Aurora, IL.

## Financial Outlook/Snapshot

- Aurora to Purchase Lots from Fitzpatrick
- Purchase Price of 39 & 41 Stolp \$275000
- 39 Stolp vacant lot developed by the City of Aurora as City of Lights Park showcasing local area artists
- 41 Stolp Ave Developed into Residential and Retail
- Top Floor will be 4, 700 sqft 1 bedroom apartments \$900 a month each \$3600
- Main floor developed 2800 sqft Restaurant \$6000 a month rent (Craft Urban)
- Due to the cost of renovations needed Bank supported finances are not a viable option, looking to the City of Aurora as a lender for the \$650K in building development paid back over 10 years
- City to hold lien on building and assets during length of loan mitigating exposure
- Craft Urban to put in additional funding of \$300000 for development of main floor restaurant