



Award-winning chef to open new restaurant in Birmingham

November 23, 2007

By SYLVIA RECTOR - FREE PRESS RESTAURANT WRITER

Five Lakes Grill chef-owner Brian Polcyn will open a new bistro-style restaurant in Birmingham this summer with an open kitchen and brick oven and a menu that showcases the European-style charcuterie, or cured meats, for which he's known.

He hasn't settled on a name yet. So for now, he's simply referring to it as the "Forest Street bistro" because it's on Forest Street on the ground floor of a residential and office building in the Triangle District, south of Maple and east of Woodward.

"It's going to be seasonal, innovative, quality food at a moderate price," the chef said Friday.

One of the features he's most excited about is the antique Berkel flywheel meat slicer he found in Germany and bought for 5,000 Euros. It will be a centerpiece of the restaurant and will be used to slice his house-cured hams, sausages and other meats.

"The thing I love about it is that it's small — 65 seats. It's very cool food and the menu is the right price and it's a neighborhood place where people can come once or twice a week," he said. "You won't have to wait until your anniversary to come in." He hopes to open in June, just in time to take advantage of his outdoor seating for 30.

The new building, designed by architect Victor Saroki, houses the ground-floor restaurant and parking spaces, offices on the second floor, and 11 residential units on top.

Polcyn says he will work at the bistro this summer to establish it and train his staff. Later, he will divide his time between it and his award-winning Five Lakes Grill in downtown Milford.

He also teaches in Schoolcraft College's culinary program and is writing a second book. His first, "Charcuterie" (Norton, \$35), was published two years ago and was nominated for a James Beard Foundation award.

Polcyn said he's "very excited" about what the new project will offer. "There are enough cookie-cutter chain restaurants. ... This place will have personality. It will be different," he said.