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Rochester bakery Give Thanks expanding to Midtown Detroit

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Kate Bell/KMB Designs

Give Thanks Bakery owner Katy Knoer next month will open a second location inside The Plaza building in Midtown Detroit.

An Oakland County bakery is expanding to Midtown Detroit with the hopes that its customers will be thankful for its artisan breads and pastries.

Give Thanks Bakery, a woman-owned European-style bakery established in 1988 in Rochester by Gerald Matthes, plans to open a second location in late September inside The Plaza building — formerly known as the Hammer and Nail building — at 3800 Woodward Ave.

The 650-square-foot shop will offer baked goods and coffee. It will be set up as a mainly takeaway location with indoor seating for six patrons, according to owner Katy Knoer. Seasonal outdoor seating will be available, too.

Knoer said participating in the ongoing revitalization in Detroit made opening the Midtown location a natural move.

"It's an increased population of residents, employees and tourists seeing Detroit as a destination," Knoer said. "Those people are now going to see what Give Thanks is known for."

Give Thanks will be the first occupant in a renovated corner on the ground floor of The Plaza. The space, which previously housed a pharmacy, is being purposefully designed for the bakery, Knoer said.

"We made a significant investment for a business our size," Knoer said, while declining to disclose how much she invested in the new bakery.



Knoer, 52, said the Midtown location will employ three to five staffers, including a full-time manager, counter staff and trained baristas. No employees will be brought over from the Rochester location, she said.

All of Give Thanks' breads and pastries are made using premium, preservative-free ingredients and shaped by hand, Knoer said. The hallmark of the breads is the long, cool fermentation of the dough, a method that has been used in European bakeries for centuries.

From buttery croissants and danishes to hand-decorated cakes and tortes, to a selection of cookies, Give Thanks Bakery offers a wide variety of baked goods. Knoer touts the bakery's multiple variations of their croissants, which come in sweet and savory flavors. The almond croissants are the Rochester store's biggest seller, she said.

The bakery brews Illy coffee from Italy and has made a significant investment in machinery to provide high-quality coffee to pair with its pastries, Knoer said.

Midtown Detroit Inc. President Sue Mosey looks forward to the bakery joining the neighborhood.

"Midtown has a tradition of great baked goods that began with Avalon International Breads in 1997," Mosey said in a statement. "A new European artisan bakery will definitely be welcomed by our growing population of workers and residents in the neighborhood."

Knoer, a longtime customer of Give Thanks who previously worked in advertising and marketing for 20 years, and her husband, Dietrich, in January purchased the bakery from Matthes. She would not disclose the purchase price.

"I have been a food and baking aficionado for years. I'm an avid home baker. I love to cook," Knoer said. "Thing came together at an unexpected time in 2020. (Matthes) was seeking to retire. I was seeking the next big thing in my journey."

Knoer said the name of the bakery is a major part of how she does business.

"It really is the heart and soul of the spirit of gratitude," she said. "The bakery has a long-standing commitment of expressing gratitude through hand-crafted products, but also through its interaction with the community. There's a family feel here. Some customers come in multiple times a week to purchase their favorite items. We're personally thankful for what appears to be a growth phase and expansion opportunity. Giving thanks is at the heart of our business."