

Cafe Ole restaurant in downtown Richmond is for sale - will stay open during sale

BY KARRI PEIFER Richmond Times-Dispatch



Anyone who's ever worked in downtown Richmond knows the name Cafe Ole.

The quaint Mexican eatery has been serving up affordable, delicious and fast Mexican fare out of 2 N. Sixth St. since 1992.

If you don't know the name of the restaurant, you've never worked in downtown Richmond. If you do, you have a standard order. Is it fish tacos? The beef burrito? The chicken quesadillas or the taco salad? Regardless of the order, Cafe Ole has been a staple for downtown workers since the original owner, Dave Rennolds, first opened its doors.

And now, for the second time in its nearly three decade history, the weekday-only lunch restaurant is for sale.

Richmond restaurateur Betsy Thomas bought Cafe Ole from Rennolds in 2008, but now Thomas has decided to list the restaurant - and its name, menu, clientele and all the equipment inside.

Thomas opened Betsy's Coffee House at the corners of Auburn and Cary Street in Carytown (the space became Bin 22 and is now 10 Italian Café) in 1996 before moving on to buy Cafe

Ole. In 2010, she opened a second Cafe Ole location in Carytown at 2901 W. Cary St. in a defunct laundromat turn Ben & Jerry's ice cream shop. Two years later, she retooled the Carytown Cafe Ole and turned it into Dixie Donuts, which ran until 2016 (the space is now Sen Organic).

"When I bought the place, I was like 'oh my god - I'm the luckiest person in the world," Thomas said. But now she's decided to move on to the next chapter of her life. "There shouldn't be any concern about closing – I definitely want to sell it to someone who wants to continue Ole. We're definitely not closing."

So don't worry, fish taco (or whatever your order is) fans - the restaurant will stay open during the sale process.

"Downtown is so different now – there's tons of potential to do dinner here," Thomas said. "It can be taken to the next level – I just know I'm not the person to do that."

Nathan Hughes, principal broker with Sperity Real Estate Ventures, is representing the restaurant in the transaction. Interested parties can contact Hughes at sperityventures.com.

https://www.richmond.com/food-drink/restaurant-news/cafe-ole-restaurant-in-downtown-richmond-is-for-sale-/article_30faa831-b447-50ba-9b9c-8c756bc8c8b3.html