

CORTICELLI PIZZARIA – Bringing wood-fired pizza to West Broadway

by Matthew Kreider

By next spring, the old grocery store at the corner of Langside and Sara will be serving beer and wood-fired oven pizza.

Winnipeg siblings Ryan, Shelley, and Jason Armstrong have recently taken possession of the heritage building at 164 Langside and want Corticelli Pizzeria to showcase cosmopolitan tastes and home-grown flavour.

“I’ve eaten at wood-fired oven pizza places all over the world – Chile, Italy, New York – and that pizza style has always stuck with me,” says Ryan. “We want our place to be hip and cool and where everybody’s welcome.”

The menu will eventually feature foods grown on farmland the family owns near Carmen. They hope to use livestock from the family’s farm for Italian style sausage and other toppings.

Architectural drawings for Corticelli were completed by neighbourhood firm Syverson Monteyne Architecture. Renovations will showcase the building’s age. “We want the room to look like it

did at the time when [the building] was built,” says Ryan.

The restaurant and patio takes its name from a piece of wrapping paper marked with the name Corticelli. Ryan discovered it while ripping out old shelving in the building. After researching the name and its history, the siblings were pleased to learn it was available to use.

While the Armstrongs have no plans to hang TVs, they plan to play vinyl in the dining room, which will seat 30 inside, as well as offering a friendly outdoor patio.

According to Ryan, plans for Corticelli Pizzeria “really lit a fire” in his brother Jason, a 10-year chef and owner of a restaurant in Calgary. Jason is at a point in his career where he is able to shift his focus onto the family project. Their sister Shelley lives a few blocks from the Langside location.

“As siblings, we’re all different, so it’s amazing how we all came together with this,” says Ryan. “The building brought us together.”



As the trio began the process of retrofitting a heritage building, Ryan admits Winnipeg’s current code and guidelines have not been helpful.

“They have lots of information for new buildings, but it’s extremely difficult to get any consistent information on what can and can’t be done when retrofitting an old building. The city [officials] should be thinking about how they can help,” says Ryan.

Still, he is grateful to be working in Winnipeg, noting the real estate market is still among the most affordable in Canada. “For people like me, Winnipeg is a place where there are still opportunities to go after your dream.”

West Broadway is a perfect space to see their dream come to life, says Ryan. “It’s got some of the most character – and characters. It’s the kind of neighbourhood I would live in – in any city.”