

Spectra Wired Cafe Opens In Downtown Hartford



Spectra Wired Cafe will have a soft opening on Thursday, Sept. 7, from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. The new cafe features coffee, smoothies, paninis, sandwiches, soups, pastries, cookies and much more. It's located at the corner of Columbus Boulevard and Kinsley Street in downtown Hartford.



By **Rebecca Lurye**

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With the opening of **Spectra Wired Cafe** on Thursday, Constitution Plaza apartment-dwellers now have a cafe as swanky as their luxury digs.

The space was designed and furnished by co-owner Joseph Klaynberg's design company, Wonder Works Construction and Development Corp., whose retro and European style are evident in Spectra Boutique Apartments.

Cement floors and walls contrast with wooden shelves and partitions, teal velvet couches and retro, blue

leather chairs. The colors running around the trim highlight the four seasons, as does a tree sculpture behind the counter.

The 5,000-square-foot space — part coffee shop, part lounge — fills a storefront that has been vacant since long before Spectra apartments opened at 5 Constitution Plaza in 2015, property manager Laurie Waddell says.

It was Waddell's dream to turn the space into a cafe but it wasn't until November that plans got off the ground to partner with New Jersey-based Copera Coffee Co. In April, she brought on general manager Elizabeth Goslee, a former wedding planner from Winsted, who developed the menu of paninis, deli sandwiches and specialty lattes like nutella and chai.

And this week, the cafe opens with not only Copera coffee but local beer and cider — liquor license pending. Goslee said only Connecticut brewers will be on tap, with the first offerings being Hanging Hills, Black Hog and Hog River.

Spectra Wired will also sell smoothies named for each season, like the summer — mixed berry, mango and almond milk — and the winter — peanut butter, banana, cocoa and soy milk.

Waddell and Goslee said the food and drink will be delicious, and the cafe will cater to its budget-minded customers by offering happy hour prices, glasses of wine starting at \$6 and bottles starting at \$21 — which Spectra apartment residents are free to finish off at home.

But Waddell hopes the comfortable furnishings will tempt people to sit and stay a while. She envisions a community space where people can come to relax and connect, appreciate local art and culture.

“I think we hope people will linger,” Waddell said.

This is just the latest finished product of Klaynberg and Girona Ventures president Jeffrey Ravetz, the same New York partners who spent \$26 million to convert the old Sonesta Hotel into Spectra Boutique Apartments two and a half years ago.

The building has been at or near capacity since it opened in 2015.

Earlier this summer, the owners purchased two more buildings on Pearl and Trumbull streets for \$625,000 each and announced they would be redeveloping their buildings at 95-101 and 111 Pearl St., into studios and one- and two-bedroom apartments.

With the area's stock of apartments booming, Waddell said she was particularly interested in creating a community space at the location of Spectra Wired, which looks out on Columbus Boulevard and low-

traffic Kinsley Street.

Spectra Wired — named for its free WiFi and the jolt of its coffee — will offer live music like the apartment building does in its second-floor lounge, which had at least 40 local groups perform in its first year, Waddell said.

And the walls will be a gallery to local artists, starting with [Wethersfield photographer Jack McConnell](#), who hung dozens of his prints on Wednesday. He said he hopes his collection of [Hartford](#) scenes, called Parallax, inspires people to take a closer look at the architecture and happenings around them.

“It’s not the same-old beige and gray city, but a dynamic, energetic capital where things are happening,” said McConnell, whose art will be featured for three months.

“This is an exciting time for Hartford, with all the recent changes and additions,” he said. “And I can just imagine that Spectra Wired will be the place to rendezvous with friends and co-workers.”

Spectra Wired is open from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Wednesday, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday and Friday, 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. Saturday and 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday.

Beverages range from \$2.25 for iced coffee and tea to \$6.25 for a 20 oz smoothie. Food ranges from \$2.50 for a bagel to \$8.25 for a hot panini.

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