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## Tokyo-style ramen eatery to open downtown

By KRISTA G. FARRIS Special to The Winchester Star  
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Winchester restaurateurs Shawn Steffey, left, and Tyler Newcome, owners of The Wine Room at Taylor Pavilion in downtown Winchester, are opening the Miso Tori Ramen Company at 21 E. Boscawen St., which will serve traditional ramen and fusion ramen. Everything will be house made. They plan to open in mid- to late June.

Jeff Taylor/The

If you want to create a buzz about your new business, take notes from the owners of Miso Tori Ramen Company, a Tokyo-style ramen restaurant that is slated to open soon at 21 E. Boscawen Street in downtown Winchester.

The owners covered the windows in brown paper a few months ago when they started renovating the space, making passersby curious about what was going on inside.

On a recent rainy day, which felt like perfect ramen weather, Miso Tori Ramen Company owners Shawn Steffey and Tyler Newcome talked about their newest restaurant venture, which will open in mid- to late June.

They also own two other downtown establishments, The Wine Room at the Taylor Pavilion and T.T. Walls Kitchen & Bar on the Loudoun Street Mall.

"Ramen is the rage right now," Newcome said with a smile.

Steffey continued: "When the chef at T.T. Walls (Jeff Wilson) became obsessed with ramen, we knew what our next restaurant would be."

Miso Tori Ramen Company, which is located in the space previously occupied by Sexi-Mexi, will be "reminiscent of a back alley spot in Tokyo that locals frequent," Steffey said. Behind him, one of several bright neon signs exclaims, "Wax on, wax off," a nod to the "Karate Kid" movies.

"All of the light fixtures, the Japanese silk lanterns, we brought from Japan. The neon signs on the walls are classics in downtown Tokyo. We'll have a music playlist that is all Japanese pop. And there will be about 100 folded origami cranes," he said.

When renovations began, they decided to expose some brick walls and relocate the bar to the back of the dining room. The interior can seat 42 customers. Outdoor seating will also be available.

The restaurant will be open daily from lunchtime through dinner and beyond.

"We expect to do a lot of carry-out, and we expect to be busy after 8 p.m.," Steffey said.

The menu will offer about a dozen different types of ramen. The soups are an East-meets-West fusion. Traditional ramen will be available, but get ready to try adventurous combos like Nashville hot chicken ramen, Tai coconut curry and lobster tempura ramen, Texas barbeque ramen and other unexpected combinations.

"Most dishes cost in the upper teens to low twenties. They are generous portions," Steffey said.

"We can accommodate meat eaters and vegans," he added. "The vegetable broth will be vegan." To keep things friendly for those who eat gluten-free, the restaurant will use tamari instead of soy sauce. "It's also easy to accommodate gluten-free by using rice noodles."

Another cool feature of Miso Tori Ramen Company is that its proximity to the duo's two other businesses will help further their quest to develop restaurants that are zero waste. "All broths are made in house. We can use butchered parts from T.T. Walls to make broth. Peelings from carrots from T.T. Walls can be used in broth here. We can take the bottom of an onion that we might otherwise discard — there's flavor there. It's gonna help us utilize more of what most people take for granted," Steffey explained.

Two non-ramen dishes will be available for those who aren't in a soup mood: kimchi fried rice and Japanese curry chicken. There also will be a handful of appetizers to complement your ramen, like house-made kimchi, mushroom and water chestnut dumplings, spicy jalapeño chicken wings and edamame.

"We'll have one dessert," Steffey said, grinning. "It's an American banana split made with Japanese mochi."

The bar will serve Japanese whisky, beer, liquors, sake and soda. Expect classic American cocktails to be reinvented with Japanese liquors and flavors, like lychee.

Keep your eyes and ears open for the grand opening. For more information, email [misotoriramen@gmail.com](mailto:misotoriramen@gmail.com) or following Miso Tori Ramen Company on social media.

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