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THIS LUXE DOWNTOWN DESTINATION FEATURES TABLESIDE CHAMPAGNE, MARTINI CARTS, AND CAVIAR BUMPS

By Dianne de Guzman

Holbrook House aims to bring downtown workers to its doors with a range of food and drink options that stretch from breakfast until midnight

by [Dianne de Guzman](#) Aug 31, 2023, 3:23pm PDT

The atrium at One Sansome is a familiar sight to downtown workers, especially those who frequent BART's Montgomery Station. But come Wednesday, September 6, the atrium will have a new addition: Holbrook House, a downtown all-day restaurant and bar opening next week is a new gastronomic destination serving as a reminder to workers that, no, downtown San Francisco is not dead.

The restaurant is part of a [\\$23 million makeover](#) of the lobby at One Sansome that transforms the conservatory into a space that's open to the public during the day, with the ability to pivot to [private events](#) such as weddings and fundraisers. Separate from the event programming, Holbrook House will offer breakfast and coffee service by day and transition into a chic nighttime spot centered by its oval bar and serving appetizers and cocktails — including an optional Champagne cart with caviar or a martini cart — until midnight.

Chef Holly Stevens leads the kitchen as director of culinary services. She's worked at Bar Agricole, Delfina, Aziza, and Michael Mina, later serving as executive chef at the now-shuttered Trou Normand. But more recently she worked at Meta (or, Facebook, if that's preferable) helping to open the social media giant's cafes and run their in-house culinary programs. While the extensive operating hours could prove challenging at Holbrook House, Stevens is determined to craft a menu that incorporates her sensibilities as a chef, even making a number of things in-house, such as grinding the meat for burgers, curing their own ham, or making sausages. The food is seasonally driven, she says, with most of the dishes based on what's at the farmers market. "There's a lot of options, something for everybody," Stevens says, "and food

that just makes you feel good using the best ingredients. I want it to be a regular spot for people to stop in the Financial District.”

In keeping with the lifestyles of FiDi workers, breakfast will have a number of options, whether it’s a grab-and-go Craftsman and Wolves pastry and Sightglass Coffee to take back to a work desk, or something more substantial to eat at the restaurant or in the atrium. There will also be yogurt and granola, fruit, and a seasonal toast, such as a tomato toast served on bread from Josey Baker Bread. Three egg dishes are also featured on the menu, as well as heavier, brunch-like options, such as a duck fat hash served with duck confit and poached eggs, or a pork schnitzel with a fried egg, if diners want to linger over breakfast.

Lunch, however, is where the more luxe dishes start to come into play, leading into the afternoon. There will be staples, of course, such as four different kinds of salads, four sandwiches, a double patty pork-and-beef burger, and a fried chicken sandwich with kohlrabi slaw on a brioche bun. Larger format dishes will be rotating, but expect items like a Petrale sole or mussels with sungold tomatoes, fennel, white wine, and basil, Stevens says. On the fancier side of things, lunch is where oyster and caviar service begins, with caviar served with deviled quail eggs and duck-fat fried hash browns, rather than the more traditional blini. Those two options run through the evening, along with charcuterie and cheese plates.

Besides caviar, expect options such as escargot and a fun “french-fry flight” featuring sweet potato fries and two styles of potato-based fries cut in different ways, served with aioli.



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Despite the higher-end options, Stevens promises a robust menu that will meet diners at different price points. “We want to be a place that people can go, at any time of day,” Stevens says, “whether it’s in the morning to get a pastry and coffee or sit-down breakfast. We just want to be a place serving good food and amenities, all day long.”

Now, about those martini and Champagne carts. It’s an addition to the bar, inspired by the grand hotels of Europe, says general manager and beverage director Hernan Martinez. The cleverness is fueled even further by the addition of two light switches available at each table — the flip of one designated switch will turn on a light meant to summon a Champagne cart to your tableside. There are seven different Champagne and sparkling wine options by the glass, four available half-bottles, and a list of 30 producers for the full Champagne menu, Martinez says. For those deciding to flip on the martini switch, there will be a selection of gins and vermouths, a rotating cast of bitters, and house-made garnishes where visitors can pick and choose their accoutrements, or go with the bar’s classic and not-so-classic martinis on offer. Caviar bumps are optional.

Martinez says head bartender Simone Mims, who’s previously worked at Palette, Foreign Cinema, and Blackbird, has had an impact on the cocktail menu, which will have 16 drinks to start, beyond the aforementioned martinis. The cocktails will be a play on classic drinks such as the Key, which incorporates cognac and scotch, together with Strega, an amaro, and orange bitters, meant to be a play between a Manhattan and a negroni. Off the cocktail menu, there will be a mix of wine options, from well-known producers like Matthiasson Wines to up-and-coming wineries or natural winemakers like Jolie-Laide, with bottles that start in the \$40 range, and glasses that start at \$12. There will be a rotating beer tap of local brands such as Fort Point Beer Company, Original Pattern Brewing, and more, as well as a Mims Cup, a play on Mims’ name and the Pimms cup, made with Pimm, strawberry, cucumber, and ginger ale, also served on tap. There are also some nonalcoholic drink options, featuring house-made infusions that will be made throughout the year, such as a tea infusion and a hibiscus infusion for drinks.

It's a wildly ambitious project, but one that rings with hope that downtown could yet feel vibrant once again. "I just want to serve the community that's here in the Financial District," Stevens says. "That was what drove the menu creation: a sense of place and where we are, and what the city needs right now in this area."

***Holbrook House** (One Sansome Street) debuts Wednesday, September 6 and is open Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 11 a.m. for breakfast; 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. for lunch; 4 to 8 p.m. for evening drinks and small plates, and 8 p.m. until midnight for cocktails.*



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