

FOOD

The Owner of Duck Duck Goose Is Opening an “Affordable” Steakhouse in Bethesda

"This isn't your grandfather's steakhouse."

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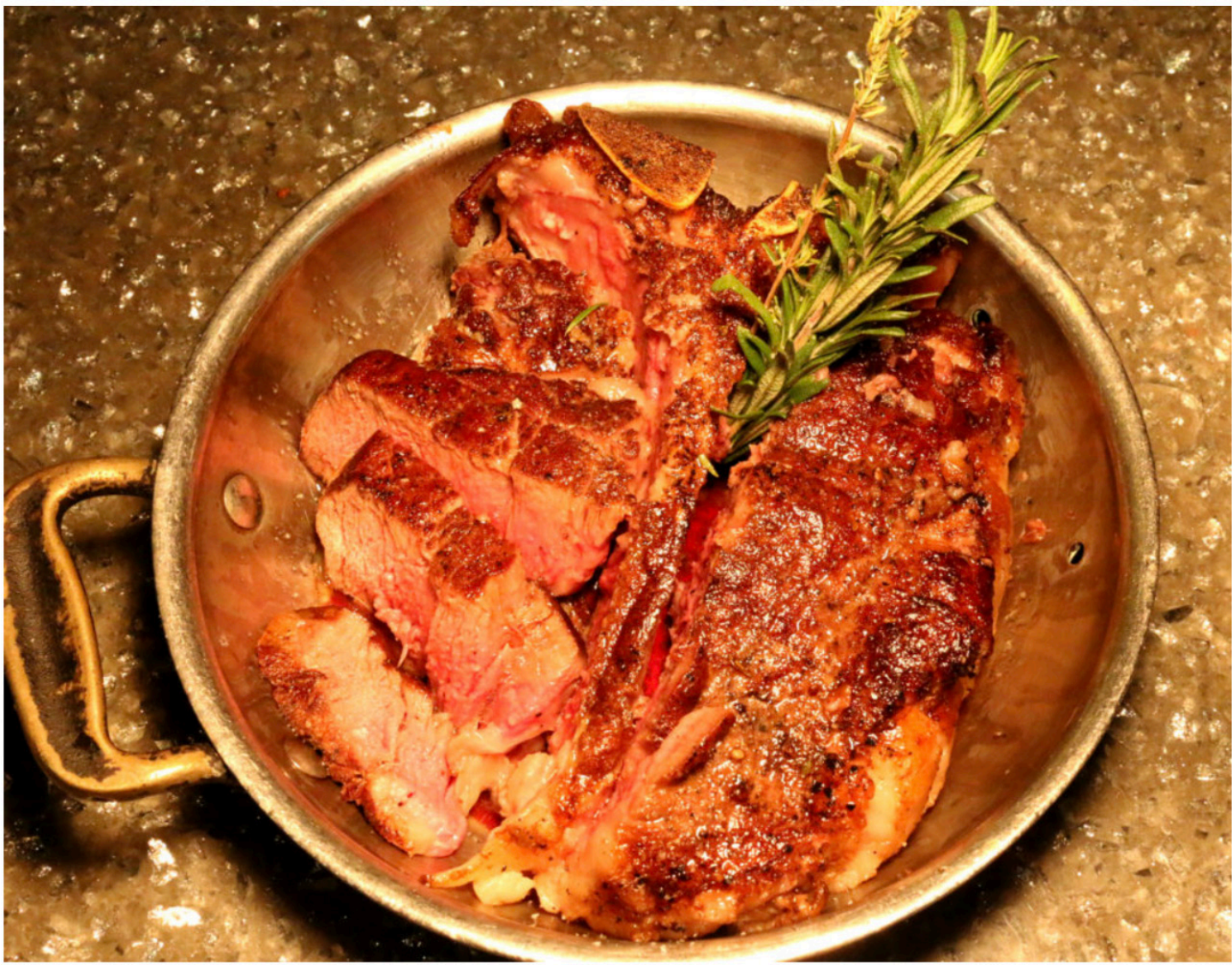


George's Chophouse will open in Bethesda this fall. Photography courtesy of George's Chophouse

Steakhouses can bring to mind dimly-lit clubhouses with men in suits downing pricey hunks of beef. Chef Ashish Alfred’s vision is much different.

The 31-year-old chef/owner behind Bethesda restaurants Duck Duck Goose and the Loft at 4935 will open George’s Chophouse in early November. Unlike other meat joints in the area that cater to expense accounts, Alfred wants to open an “affordable” steakhouse that speaks to his family. The eatery is named after his late brother, Dhiraj Waidande, who went by George. It was George who helped raise him along with his Indian immigrant parents. From a young age, Alfred was taught by his family to make the most of a little and not waste food. He recalls that while they were growing up, George always made him finish his dinner plate before he could get up from the table.

At sister restaurant Duck Duck Goose, Alfred has implemented a creative anti-waste philosophy. He fashions amuse bouches (little free snacks) for guests using throwaway items, such as shots of carrot-ginger soup made from vegetable trimmings. Just recently he hosted La Poubelle dinner (“the trash” in French), an eight-course fundraiser for KIND made entirely from recovered food. Similar practices will carry over to George’s.



Steak will be the focus of the chophouse menu, but there are plenty of options.

Carnivores will still be able to splurge on a massive Roseda Farm tomahawk ribeye from Monkton, Maryland, but George’s will have a diverse menu that can accommodate a range of budgets and tastes. Though not cheap, the Creekstone Farms black Angus steaks are designed to be more affordable, because they’re not all served in the usual massive steakhouse portions. The menu includes a 14-ounce boneless ribeye for \$33, and a 12-ounce New York strip for \$34 (as opposed to the 16 oz. strip for \$46 served at the nearby Ruth’s Chris). He also says butchering half animals in-house can keep costs down.

Unlike meat joints where entrees are priced as high as the steaks, Alfred serves entrees at a variety of price points. Options range from a \$22 salmon wellington to seared scallops with braised pork belly, celery root puree, and compressed green apples for \$28. Sides (all \$6) include mac and cheese, spicy broccolini, and corn creme brûlée.

One of Alfred’s favorite entrees isn’t a dish you’d regularly associate with a steakhouse: spaghetti and meatballs. The homey meal, priced at \$16, includes pork, beef, and veal meatballs with ricotta, and house-made pasta.

“My brother cooked for me a lot and it was easy to make me spaghetti and meatballs. The meatballs were definitely not from scratch and sauce definitely came out of a jar, but the meal itself is something I associate with him,” says Alfred.



The interior of George’s will feature exposed brick and low, leather booths.

The decor of the restaurant is also designed to stray from the steakhouse norm. Instead of huge, dark booths, George’s will have lower seats with light leather, allowing guests to observe the ongoings of the space. Alfred has also nixed white table clothes in favor of a cozier industrial-chic look with plenty of exposed brick.

“When we say ‘affordable steakhouse,’ we’re certainly not trying to be like Outback,” says Alfred. “We’re trying to be affordable by giving just a little bit more options to people. This isn’t your grandfather’s steakhouse.”

George’s Chophouse. 4935 Cordell Ave., Bethesda.