

Minneapolis / St. Paul Business Journal - February 13, 2009
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Friday, February 13, 2009

Delayed Blue Skies wine bar will open this summer

Minneapolis / St. Paul Business Journal - by [Caleb Stevens](#) Staff writer

Construction of a restaurant and wine bar in Northeast Minneapolis began last week, more than a year behind its original schedule.

The **Blue Skies Wine Bar** is being developed by Brian Gruis and Brent Mayes, who formerly owned a bar in Stillwater.

In late 2007, they **announced plans to open the bar** in the spring of 2008, but had trouble landing financing to construct the 3,000-square-foot space at 24 University Ave. S.E. The space is across from **Surdyk's Liquor & Cheese Shop**, one of the state's largest liquor stores.

Gruis said they cut costs by changing the design and also by using reconditioned furniture. The bar still will include its most unique feature: an Enomatic Italian wine-serving system, which preserves wine for several weeks after a bottle is opened and allows customers to sample 100 different wines in portions as small as an ounce, not just by the glass or bottle.

The business partners also raised more capital through several individual investors, including themselves.

Last November, the men sold their Stillwater bar, the former Cesare's, which is now called Domacin Restaurant and Winebar, to raise cash for Blue Skies and also free up time to work on the project, Gruis said.

The partners are now filling 10 to 15 job openings and are tentatively planning on an opening in August.

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