

CANLIS

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Seattle's pioneering spirit alive as small business navigates how to survive during Covid-19.

In the midst of COVID-19 concerns, businesses are needing to rapidly adapt to shifting health expectations and flighty consumer demands. Canlis, Seattle's preeminent fine dining restaurant, has only closed for service twice in its storied 70-year history: following the passing of JFK, and after the Ride the Ducks collision on the neighboring Aurora Bridge. On Monday, March 16 the restaurant will temporarily suspend its fine dining operations.

This step is not in response to any Canlis-related health issues, but rather the result of some outside-of-the-box thinking on how to safely create jobs for the restaurant's employees while serving as much of the city as they can. This is the story of a fine dining restaurant deciding that fine dining is not what Seattle needs right now.

On Monday, the team will open and operate three new on-site concepts addressing the main meals of the day: a morning "Bagel Shed", afternoon "Drive On Thru", and evening at-home delivery service called "Family Meal." Each concept allows for social distancing while thwarting the perils of social isolation. "People still need to talk to one another" Owner Brian Canlis explains, "Fear of the other is the opposite of hospitality. The point of this company has always been to inspire people to turn toward one another."

The walk up bagel shop will pop-up in the restaurant's garden and parking lot. Lunch will be offered under their porte cochere where patrons can pull up, order their food, pay and take a to-go bag – all without getting out of their car. For dinner service, orders will be secured online via Tock and Canlis team members will deliver meals and wine from their famous cellar straight to the customer's

door. These progressive projects will enable Canlis to keep their team employed and continue to do what they love—feed the city.

Mark Canlis, Canlis owner, said, “We looked at one another and pretty quickly decided Seattle may not need fine dining right now, but it still needs Canlis. It needs each of us asking the question “what can I do, how can I help?” So we’re helping by creating safe jobs for our team. We’re figuring out a way to feed and encourage a hungry city.”

Brady Williams, Canlis Executive Chef, said, “I love that we’re finding creative ways to support our favorite farmers and producers during this time of uncertainty and lost business. I’ve spent years building these relationships - it’s time to lean on, not abandon each other.”

Canlis plans to use the proceeds to deliver lunch and dinner daily to those on the front lines of serving the needy. They’re working in conjunction with city officials to determine how and when to support hourly health care and senior care professionals with some of the best food in town.

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