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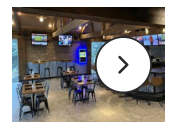


ENTERTAINMENT

Chops Grille & Tap House open under new ownership, provides dining option off I-90 (photos)

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Chops Grille & Tap House



By [Marc Bona, cleveland.com](#)

GENEVA, Ohio – Few restaurants can say their location does a better job advertising itself than [Chops Grille & Tap House](#).

The restaurant sits at the northeast corner of Ohio 534 and Interstate 90 in Ashtabula County. For the past few years, the scores of hungry people driving east to Pennsylvania or west to Cleveland had to keep going.



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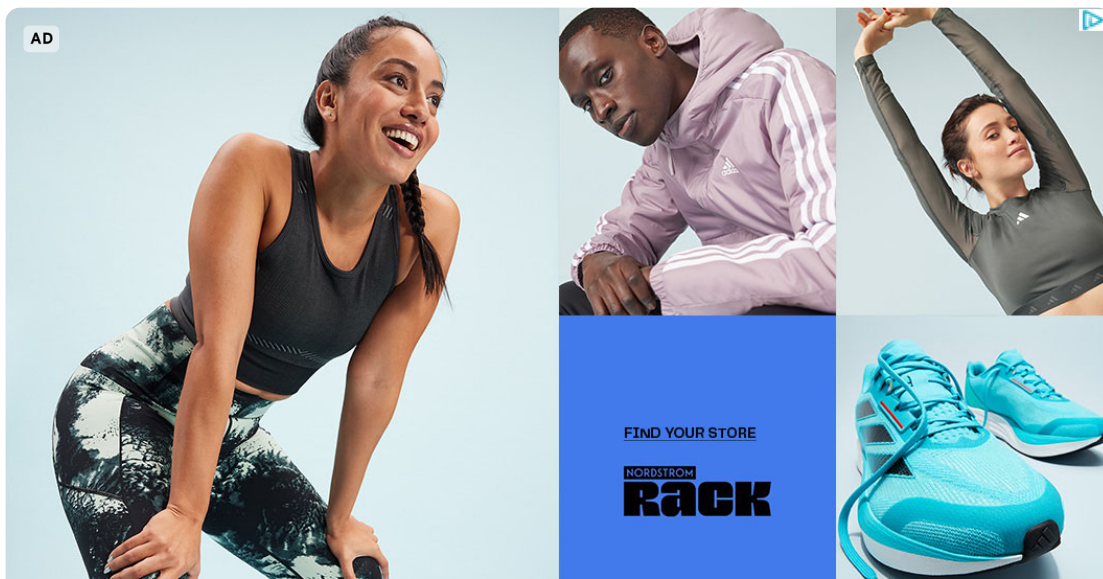
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The Ehrenfeld Companies, which owns the adjacent [Spire Academy](#), bought, renovated and reopened the Geneva restaurant on Dec. 11. A grand-opening celebration is planned for early March, general manager Stephanie Valentine said.

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“It was a complete remodel,” she said. All the floors were redone, furniture was ordered and the place cleaned up. Twelve televisions - all showing sports - face the 20-seat, five-sided bar. The bar area has nine tables.

A nook between the main dining room and bar area serves as a comfortable lounge, and a semi private area off the main dining room works to accommodate tables for kids, if necessary.

Valentine has been in the restaurant business her whole life and has opened restaurants before, but she said this one attracts more large groups than any place she’s worked, and that’s primarily because of Spire.

That next-door-neighbor owner is a sports academy with facilities that host a variety of competitions that attract varying ages and athletes – and accompanying parents and coaches.

“We have a lot of people who come in, they get their cocktails, they drop their kids off at Spire, they come in and get their wine,” she said. “We have a lounge area, and they can dine here as well.”

The montage of customers is both local and transient. A group from a local plant comes in like clockwork weekly. People driving back to New York stop for a meal. Spire visitors head over.

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Having Chops in the area means folks don't have to drive to Mentor, which sits halfway between Geneva and downtown Cleveland. Plus, families from Pennsylvania and their relatives or friends from Ohio have a convenient meeting point, she said.

"Do you know how many people come here and meet family because of the halfway (point?)" Valentine said.

The owners mulled changing the name, but Chops was part of the region for a while and people in the area have a good feeling about it, she said.

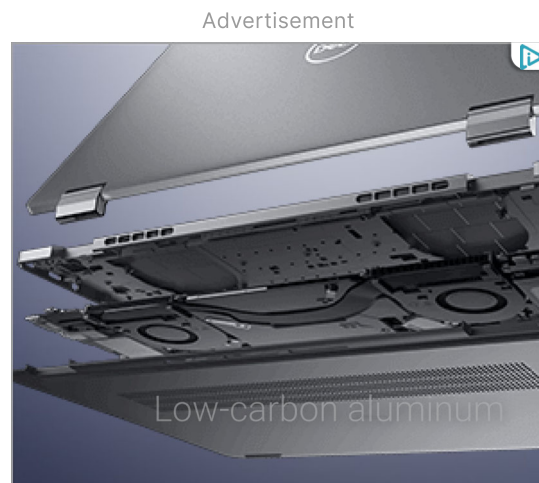
"People love the restaurant," Valentine said.

It also serves as a culinary respite for those trekking to nearby wineries.

"We have a lot of people who come in, believe it or not, and say, 'Can you fit 20 of us?' There's a lot of large parties that come in here."

Weekends are big for Spire folks, she said, with different events going on and families sauntering over "with all their kids, whether it's swim tournaments or whatever is going on, and they get these breaks. Where are they coming? They're going to walk over here."

Chops was open for more than a decade, and previously it was the Lighthouse Grille & Tap House. Before that, it was the Geneva Inn.



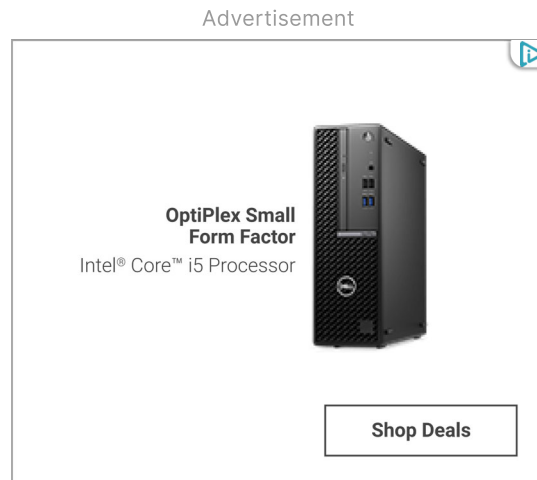
The menu's approachable, something-for-everyone vibe keeps with the sports theme: "Starting line" appetizers include power-play fried pickles, snap spinach artichoke dip and chicken wings with assorted sizes and sauces. It also includes "home run" salads, "slap shot" soups, "finish line" flatbreads, "slam dunk" sandwiches and "hat trick" smash burgers. "Touchdown" entrees range from strip steak to baby-back ribs to brisket mac and cheese and more. Four "half time" kids' plates and "overtime" desserts also are offered, as are nightly specials.

For beverages, the beer list is both local and national. Wines from Ohio's Grand River Valley are available, but Valentine said, "We're going to venture out" with the list and include varietals from Oregon and Sonoma, California.

"We're definitely growing it," she said. "It's something that we're building."

And more changes are coming. Within three months, Chops will be adding Prime Sports – a gaming space, with teller windows for people to place wagers, bet horses and play keno. (The bar area is 21 and older). Also, weekend brunch is planned.

“I know eventually we want to create a bigger space to hold bigger parties and events here,” Valentine said. “What we want to do for the community is endless. We want to be able to cater and do so much more than what we’re just starting with.”



Chops is at the northeast corner of Ohio 534 and Interstate 90. Marc Bona, cleveland.com

More on [Chops Grille & Tap House](#)

Location: 1752 Ohio 534 S., Geneva. It's 47 miles from downtown Cleveland. It's also 57 miles from Erie, Pennsylvania, so it serves as a crossroads for people from both areas. It's 65 miles from Youngstown. The restaurant has a parking lot and patio.

Hours: Noon to 8 p.m. Sunday to Thursday, noon to 9 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Happy hour is 3 to 5 p.m. Monday to Friday. Wine Down Wednesday gives 50% discount on select bottles.

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