

## SFGate

### Opening: Sidebar in Oakland

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The couple behind the former Zax in San Francisco and Zax Tavern in Berkeley are back with Sidebar in Oakland, serving a mix of comfort food and Mediterranean-inspired cuisine. The restaurant settled into the former Trio Bistro spot across from Lake Merritt, its attractive bar front and center, despite the name.

The team: Barbara Mulas will run the kitchen, with husband Mark Drazek handling desserts. They've partnered with Anne Marie Adrian, who runs the front of the house.

The cuisine: Cod stew with calamari and chorizo shares the menu with a grilled double-cut pork chop at dinner. Lunch service, which begins Monday, will include a chickpea-cilantro "burger," fried fish sandwich and baked manicotti with house-rolled pasta. Between meals, there's a short menu with the day's soup, panini, hamburger and fries served from 2:30 to 5 p.m. Drazek's desserts include a riff on the Almond Joy candy bar. Plans for a full bar are in the works; in the meantime, there are international wines by the glass and bottle, and a selection of beers.

The vibe: Architects II of San Francisco redesigned the sophisticated space, with rich-toned walls, wood accents and amber lighting. The bar in the center of the room is the focal point and sure to become popular. It's flanked by tables and banquette seating on one side and a small lounge area, communal table and open kitchen with counter seating on the other.

Sidebar, 542 Grand Ave. (at Euclid), Oakland; (510) 452-9500 or [www.sidebar-oakland.com](http://www.sidebar-oakland.com). Dinner 5-10 p.m. Mon.-Thurs., until 10:30 p.m. Fri., 4-10:30 p.m. Sat. Bar open until 11:30 p.m. Fri. and Sat. Lunch 11:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. weekdays beginning Mon. Starters \$6-\$10; entrees \$10-\$19; desserts \$6-\$6.50. While the customers are conversing, they also can chow down on, say, deviled eggs with Dungeness crab and spicy mustard (\$9), pork chops with cannelloni bean ragout (\$17), oven-roasted Poussin with German butterball potato hash (\$18).