

This popular catering business is moving to downtown Baton Rouge

By Dillon Lowe



Local chef Ciara Finley is relocating her catering business, [Desiderata Kitchen](#), to a new space on Third Street in downtown Baton Rouge.

Finley, who has operated her business out of Denham Springs since 2018, says the move will bring her closer to her client base.

"Most of my business is in Baton Rouge," Finley tells *Daily Report*. "We have a lot of corporate contracts here, we do a lot in the Pentagon Barracks and we do a lot for the LSU Board of Supervisors. It just makes sense to bring the business to Baton Rouge."

Known for her creative spins on Louisiana classics and for accommodating clients with dietary restrictions, Finley says her menu puts an emphasis on fresh, specialty cuisine that balances tradition with innovation. One standout is her award-winning Creole shrimp and smoked gouda grits, which she describes as a client favorite.

The new space, located between Cecelia Creole Bistro and The Little Village, will be more than just a base of operations for her catering business, though. It'll also be an event venue and a lunch spot. On the events side, she says the space will be "flexible" above all else, hosting everything from corporate functions to chef's table dinners and king cake workshops.

"It'll be a café by day and an event space by evening," Finley says.

Desiderata Kitchen is targeting an Oct. 1 soft opening, with lunch service to follow in November. The business currently employs four full-time staffers in addition to several contract workers, but the team is expected to grow once the downtown operation launches.

Finley, a classically trained chef who studied at the Louisiana Culinary Institute, has earned a string of notable accolades over the course of her career. She was named one of the American Culinary Federation New Orleans Chapter's Best Chefs of Louisiana in both 2020 and 2024 and one of *Louisiana Cookin' Magazine's* Chefs to Watch in 2023. She has also showcased her skills on the national stage, cooking at the Masters Tournament—yes, *that* Masters Tournament—in 2017, 2018 and 2019, earning the prized Masters chef's coat for her work.

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