

RETAIL REALNESS

MEZARI

ATELIER & BOUTIQUE

Mezari Atelier & Boutique, Est. 2017











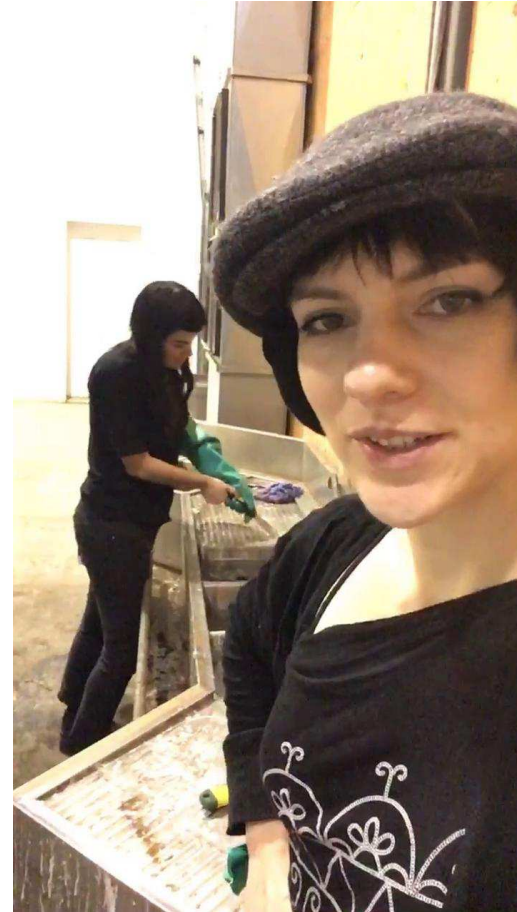
This building, (formerly the restaurant le Vieux Duluth) subdivided into four separate commercial units.

The façade was vacant for about 5 years and was in poor shape.





Complete DIY renovation- a dirty but satisfying job, turning a run down building into a place where beautiful things are created.



From the public, I hear a lot of fear.

People often ask if I'll be able to stay open.

In the face of multiple stores closing, streets strewn with garbage, construction everywhere, and orange pilons everywhere you look, I can understand how the outlook can appear bleak.

I've heard the word apocalyptic more than once.

The more stores close, the less reason people have to go to the area to shop.



Aesthetics and hope

While online sales are on the rise, brick and mortar stores accounted for about 90% of retail sales in 2019, according to a recent article from Retail Insider.

More and more, we need to create in store immersive experiences that can't be duplicated online. This starts on the sidewalk and ends at the cashier.

Aesthetics and community are more important than ever.

All business owners need to creatively problem solve.

- Run workshops
- Sell wholesale elsewhere
- Reward your regular customers
- Meet the artist events
- VIP events
- Sell online
- Offer customized products
- Combine with a service



Challenges

Extended periods of construction - dangerous detours, loss of all parking types, eyesore and debris

Winter months- especially if you're far from the metro. Nov- March are rough.

Garbage everywhere- a collective sense of giving up

Taxes and fines - sandwich boards, fees for signage, high property taxes

Solutions

Higher standards for construction sites, subsidize businesses who are impacted during the construction period.

Rent subsidies, hydro subsidies, tax breaks, apply for this on a sliding scale based on revenue and # of employees

Winter outdoor events - currently heavily skewed to summer. Street sales attract shoppers . Boosts morale, festive lighting outside, etc.

Instead of fining businesses for sandwich boards, fine construction sites for leaving cones everywhere, debris, etc.

Solutions Cont'd

Grants for interior renovation, exterior signage and lighting, façade repair, window display grants.

Energy efficiency grants- many plateau businesses operate in 100 year old buildings that leak heat and are inefficient energy-wise. Save on hydro bills, better for the environment

Financial incentive for eco-friendly initiatives. Selling local products, using organic raw materials, reducing recycling and reusing waste.

Thank you!

Thank you for your time, for listening to my perspective, and for taking action to improve this situation.

And thank you for shopping local!

