



Mobile: Cell/PDA | Alerts | E-News | RSS | Widgets | Twitter

Find it: Jobs | Cars | Real Estate | Apartments | Shopping | Coupons | Classifieds | Dating | Foreclosures

**GreenvilleOnline.com**

SEARCH THE UPSTATE:  [go](#)

All Local News Calendar Jobs More »

SPONSORED BY:  
**'08 SHOW HOUSE**  
**CLICK HERE!**

HOME NEWS SPORTS OPINION METROMIX ENTERTAINMENT MULTIMEDIA YOURUPSTATE OBITUARIES WEATHER CLASSIFIEDS CUSTOMER SERVICE

Business Crime & Arrests Education YourUpstateHealth Election 2008 DataLibrary Lifestyle Nation Tech Obituaries Get Published



Comment, blog & share photos  
Log in | Become a member | Search people

POWERED BY YOU AND **The Greenville News**

## Posh downtown eatery Restaurant O plans to close, reopen with new concept

BY RUDOLPH BELL • BUSINESS WRITER • NOVEMBER 21, 2008

[Read Comments\(15\)](#) [Recommend](#) [Print this page](#) [E-mail this article](#) [Share](#) [?](#)

The owners of Restaurant O in downtown Greenville said they will close the restaurant at the beginning of next year and reopen its doors in February with a new concept as they work to turn around a flagging business.

ADVERTISEMENT

**Upstate SC's Finest Dining,  
One-of-a-Kind Shopping,  
and World Class Industry.**



**www.greerdevelopment.com**

The upscale restaurant, which opened next to the Westin Poinsett Hotel in 2003, has always fought a public perception that it was too expensive for anything but special occasions, said Carl Sobocinski and David Williams, partners in the Table 301 restaurant group, which owns Restaurant O and four other restaurants downtown.

On top of that, restaurants across the country have been squeezed as consumers have cut spending in a down economy and costs have risen, the partners said. They also cited increased competition from numerous restaurants that have opened downtown and elsewhere in Greenville in recent years.

"We're responding to the needs and desires of the community in this time of economic downturn," Williams said.

The partners said they spent more than \$2 million to open Restaurant O, and the business hasn't been able to retire as much debt as they had hoped at this point. Its menu includes a 16-ounce New York strip steak for \$27 and wild boar chops for the same price. The restaurant has 120 seats for dining, a lounge and 32 employees.

"We don't think anything is broken with either the food or the service," said Rodney Freidank, corporate chef.

The partners didn't offer details on their planned new concept but said it would be less formal and less expensive and include lunch and dinner.

Sobocinski said Restaurant O's sales have been up and down over the years and so far this year are down 15 percent, compared to last year.

He said the 5,000-square-foot restaurant lost ground when the number of restaurants downtown grew in 2006 and 2007. Among the restaurants that opened along Main Street during that time were High Cotton, American Grocery, Liberty Tap Room & Grill and Table 301's own Lazy Goat. Other competition, such as Azia, surfaced on Woodruff Road.

Sobocinski said Restaurant O's sales picked up in early 2007, when movie stars George Clooney and Renee Zellweger were frequent customers during the filming of "Leatherheads." Other celebrities who have appeared or dined at Restaurant O over the years include singer Natalie Cole, TV anchorman Tom Brokaw



(FILE/Staff)

### RELATED NEWS FROM THE WEB

- [US Politics](#)
- [Dining](#)
- [Life](#)
- [Food](#)
- [John McCain](#)
- [US News](#)
- [Rudy Giuliani](#)
- Powered by [Topix.net](#)

### More Business Headlines

[Government unveils plan to rescue Citigroup](#) (4)

### Latest Headlines

- [Dr. Ian Smith slated to speak at GHS's minority summit](#)
- [Blue Star Mothers plan collection at Greenville's Poinsettia Christmas Parade](#)

### ADS BY PULSE 360

[Get Listed Here](#)

#### 2008 Diet of the Year

How I Lost 44 Lbs Without Dieting. Seen on CNN, NBC, CBS & Fox News  
[www.jennifer-weight-loss.com](http://www.jennifer-weight-loss.com)

#### Medical Billing/Coding

Start your Medical Billing training online. Get free info.  
[www.allaliedhealthschools.com](http://www.allaliedhealthschools.com)

#### AARP Auto Insurance From The Hartford

Save \$363 On AARP Auto Insurance If You're Over 49. Free Quotes Now!  
[AARP.TheHartford.com](http://AARP.TheHartford.com)

and presidential candidates John McCain, Rudy Giuliani and John Kerry.

The partners said sales at three other restaurants owned by their group -- Soby's, Soby's on the Side and Devereaux's -- are flat or down only slightly. They said business is growing at the Lazy Goat, which opened at RiverPlace in the summer of 2007.

The partners described the times as "challenging," but predicted their group would emerge stronger after a period of belt-tightening.

"We're paying more attention to what we do," Sobocinski said.

The partners announced a special event at Restaurant O on Wednesday, Nov. 26, the night before Thanksgiving. That evening, they said, customers will be allowed to pay whatever amount they think the food is worth. Drinks will be regular price.

### In Your Voice

READ REACTIONS TO THIS STORY

Newest first 



Ichthus wrote:

Replying to erskinebreezy:  
And just why is this "sad" ? I would much prefer the Clock over the places mentioned in this article. I was also glad to read in the weekend section on Friday that Rey's has burgers. That appeals to me more than anything Carl could cook up.

*This is the reason why 33 Liberty closed as well. Although the food is delicious, the portions are not worth the price. Heck, even Rio, with their prices is a better deal.*

*Sadly, most Greenvillians do not want anything past the BBQ joint or Golden Corral.*

11/22/2008 9:42:02 PM

[Recommend](#)   [New post](#)   [Reply to this Post](#)   [Report Abuse](#)



berthamMae wrote:

This is GREAT news..... this is a typical example of someone wanting to charge a Dollar to much for food. I hope to see more of these greedy restaurant owners lock their doors just as these are doing. I think that these people should go to the local CHINESE BUFFET and take lessons...If the Chinese can do a buffet and serve chicken ,shrimp and beef plus desserts for \$9.95 or less then why can't these people.. .Maybe we will be able to offer these folks a job on the back of the trash truck just to give them a picture of reality. tata for now.

11/22/2008 10:53:05 AM

[Recommend](#)   [New post](#)   [Reply to this Post](#)   [Report Abuse](#)



erskinebreezy wrote:

Replying to IrishPRgrl3:

*Parking? I was visiting Greenville a few weeks ago and we got some great spots both at night and during the day. As a northerner coming down south, the parking is a cake walk. Get over it and enjoy some good food!*

Were glad you came and spent your money. We're equally as glad to got the hell back out!

Have a nice day!

11/21/2008 10:45:36 PM

[Recommend](#)   [New post](#)   [Reply to this Post](#)   [Report Abuse](#)



erskinebreezy wrote:



The "O" stood for "Oh s\*\*t! Look how much my bill is!"

11/21/2008 10:43:36 PM

[Recommend](#) [New post](#) [Reply to this Post](#) [Report Abuse](#)



upstatesquirrel wrote:

Closing temporarily? Ha! Check back in February. No one has any money now, and that will be worse after Christmas. The real story three months from now will be how many MORE high end restaurants have closed. And what does it say about this community when the best restaurants close (O, 33 Liberty, and Gerard's) while the mediocre ones stay open?

11/21/2008 5:15:08 PM

[Recommend](#) [New post](#) [Reply to this Post](#) [Report Abuse](#)

1 2 3 4 >> Last

[FULL PAGE VIEW](#) See more comments per page and quote other replies

You must be logged in to leave a comment. [Login](#) | [Register](#)

1000 characters left

### Interested In More Business Conversation?

post in our [Business](#) forum

 <a href="#">Free Samples</a>	 <a href="#">Grocery Coupons</a>	 <a href="#">Baby Coupons</a>	 <a href="#">Pet Coupons</a>	 <a href="#">Beauty Coupons</a>	 <a href="#">Free Stuff</a>	 <a href="#">View All</a>	<a href="#">CoolSavings.com</a>
---	--	---	--	---	--	---	---------------------------------

						
---	---	---	---	---	---	---

Partners: [Jobs: CareerBuilder.com](#) [Cars: Cars.com](#) [Apartments: Apartments.com](#) [Shopping: ShopLocal.com](#)

[HOME](#) | [NEWS](#) | [SPORTS](#) | [OPINION](#) | [METROMIX](#) | [ENTERTAINMENT](#) | [MULTIMEDIA](#) | [YOURUPSTATE](#) | [OBITUARIES](#) | [WEATHER](#) | [CLASSIFIEDS](#) | [CUSTOMER SERVICE](#) | [Site Map](#)

[Contact Us](#) | [Subscribe](#)

Copyright ©2007 The Greenville News. All rights reserved.