

WAKA BY BAOBAB FARE ANNOUNCES BRICK-AND-MORTAR, WILL BRING AWARD-WINNING EAST AFRICAN STREET FOOD TO EASTERN MARKET

James Beard Award nominees Hamissi Mamba and Nadia Nijimbere will serve East African-style chapati and brochettes out of the former Russell Street Deli space

DETROIT, MI, USA, May 17, 2024

/EINPresswire.com/ -- Family, we are honored to announce that Waka — the East African food truck and sister brand of the award-winning Baobab Fare restaurant — is getting its own permanent home.

And not just any home. When it debuts later this summer, Waka by Baobab Fare will bring culture and community back to 2465 Russell, an iconic gathering place in Detroit's historic Eastern Market that was home to Russell Street Deli for more than 30 years.



Baobab Fare co-founder Hamissi Mamba stands in the Eastern Market space that will soon be a brick-and-mortar of Baobab Fare's street food sister brand, Waka.

"We didn't want to go anywhere else to start this," says co-owner Hamissi Mamba. "People here in Detroit take care of us, so this idea of bringing East African street food to America has to start here. This is home, and we are so thankful to be able to grow our business and build on our story right here in Eastern Market."

A native of Burundi, Mamba recalls how when he was a child his mother sold chapati and brochettes at the bustling markets of Bujumbura to feed her family. In that sense, Eastern Market is a fitting location for the first brick-and-mortar of the bright yellow Waka food truck, which can already be found parked outside Shed 5 once a month.

Waka debuted as a food truck at Detroit's Noel Night celebration in 2022 as a street food spinoff of the popular Baobab Fare restaurant, which Mamba and his wife Nadia Nijimbere — both refugees from Burundi — opened in Detroit's New Center neighborhood in February 2021.

“

People here in Detroit take care of us, so this idea of bringing East African street food to America has to start here.”

Hamissi Mamba, Co-Owner

In 2022, the Detroit Free Press named Baobab Fare its No. 1 Best New Restaurant, and Esquire magazine included Baobab Fare in its own “Best New Restaurants” list. The accolades have kept coming, earning the couple distinctions as Crain’s Detroit Business’ Newsmakers of the Year in 2023 as well as James Beard Award nominees in the “Outstanding Restaurateur” category for 2024. In 2023, Mamba also won an episode of Food Network’s “Chopped”.

In March, Mamba and Nijimbere purchased a building on Detroit’s east side that will serve as the second location of Baobab Fare, but Waka Eastern Market will be a completely different and distinct concept from that restaurant while still paying homage to the couple’s homeland.

“All of the flavors that people love from Baobab Fare are here, but Waka is even more fast and accessible,” Nijimbere explains. “We are proud of what we’ve done with the food truck, but a permanent kitchen and a place you can always find Waka is so important. We are so excited to bring even more tastes of our culture to Detroit.”

At Waka, the flavorful stewed meats and vegetables typical of Burundian cuisine come wrapped in chapati, a flaky East African flatbread. Waka’s brick-and-mortar location will build on the food truck’s offerings, expanding the menu to include staple street food dishes like brochettes, East African-style skewered meat kabobs grilled over charcoal.

When it opens later this year, Waka will seat approximately 30 guests, offering fast-casual counter service for dine-in, as well as fresh prepared meals to go and a curated selection of coffee, chocolate, beverages, and other items from the couple’s retail line, Soko.

About Waka by Baobab Fare:

Founded by Burundian refugees Hamissi Mamba and Nadia Nijimbere, Waka is a food truck & catering service that serves the delicious East African flavors of the award-winning restaurant Baobab Fare in an accessible way.

###

Mark Kurlyandchik
Booth One Creative
media@baobabfare.com

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/712481033>

EIN Presswire’s priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors

try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2024 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.