

April 8, 2009

Istanbul Grille opens new Downtown Pittsburgh location

Already a hit at its Shadyside location on Centre Ave., Istanbul Grille has just opened a second restaurant downtown at 643 Liberty Ave.

Coskun Gokalp, owner of Istanbul Grille, studied hotel and restaurant management in Turkey and ran a restaurant in New York City before coming to Pittsburgh. He opened the first location two years ago on Craig St. in North Oakland, moving to a larger place in Shadyside last year.



Gokalp says that many of his Shadyside customers who work downtown complained that there weren't enough good, affordable food options in that area. He decided to open "a small place, with good food, good service, and good prices" building on the success of the Shadyside location, but with a slightly different approach. In Shadyside, where customers have more time, the restaurant serves more grilled food, like shish kabobs, which take a little longer to prepare. For busier customers on their lunch breaks downtown, the menu features fast and easy items, like stews. Both spots have daily specials, specially prepared halal meat, and numerous vegetarian options, like falafel, hummus, and baba ghanoush.

Now in its third week, the downtown Istanbul Grille seems to be every bit as popular as the original. "People are coming at least three times a week," says Gokalp. "Some people will buy lunch and then come back for dinner the same day."

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Writer: [Rob Cullen](#)

Source: Coskun Gokalp, Istanbul Grille

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