

# Former Owners of Seaport Restaurant Barbarini Head to Higher Ground in FiDi

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FINANCIAL DISTRICT — The co-owners of popular South Street Seaport eatery **Barbarini**, which remains shuttered in the wake of Hurricane Sandy, are heading to higher ground to open their new Italian restaurant.

Linda Marini said she and her husband, Claudio Marini, recently signed a lease for a 3,200-square-foot space at 21 Ann St. and are hoping to get the restaurant, called **Da Claudio Ristorante e Salumeria**, up and running by February 2014.

“We’re really, really excited about the project,” Linda Marini said. “These past months have been very tough, but we’re putting all our energy and passion into this, and we really think it will be wonderful.”

Marini said she and her husband are sad to leave the historic slice of Front Street where their beloved restaurant and grocery thrived for years, **but after flooding destroyed Barbarini**, they knew they needed to move to a spot less likely to take such a devastating hit in a major storm.

“We knew we wanted to stay in Lower Manhattan, this is our home — but we couldn’t afford to take the flooding risk,” Marini said.

The Marinis decided to move on from the Seaport **after they learned the hurricane had not only completely wrecked Barbarini, but would keep the Front Street shop closed for months while their landlord made extensive repairs to the 19th-century building.**

Barbarini’s co-owner Stefan Barbagallo, **however, recently had a change of heart and is slated to open a new Italian restaurant in the old Barbarini space** — which still remains closed for repairs.

Marini said she wants their new place to have the character of Barbarini as a “neighborhood hub,” but Da Claudio will have its own unique feel.

The restaurant will have more sophisticated, seasonal Italian fare, she said. And while there won’t be a full grocery, they will have a salumeria — a counter to buy imported Italian meats and cheeses.

“We’re happy to moving forward,” Marini said. “We’re so thankful for all the support we’ve gotten from the community, and we’re ready to go do what we do best.”