

Michael O'Keefe, owner of Brooklyn's River Cafe, owner expands into Red Hook's Liberty Warehouse

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Restaurateur Michael O'Keefe is opening another Brooklyn waterfront restaurant in the Liberty Warehouse in Red Hook. The owner of [DUMBO's](#) ritzy River Cafe is expanding into new waterfront territory with a high-class banquet hall overlooking the harbor in [Red Hook](#).

Michael (Buzzy) [O'Keefe](#) is banking on the Liberty Warehouse, a pre-Civil War brick building, becoming a premier venue for weddings, bar mitzvahs and special events.

Party planners will pay top dollar to rent the space on the Van Dyke St. pier, which features three floors, a patio and a deck capable of holding 1,630 guests.

A sample wedding menu included in O'Keefe's liquor license application filed on March 8 with the State Liquor Authority shows prices of \$195 per guest for cocktail service, open bar and a three-course dinner.

For that price, diners get to nibble on delicacies like [Maryland](#) crabmeat and avocado salad, followed by Angus beef tenderloin with whipped potatoes and mushroom sauce.

O'Keefe could make the space a restaurant: His liquor license forms filed with the state and Community Board 6 describe the space as a restaurant with dinner hours from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m.

The Liberty Warehouse's website boasts that the setting "is truly a unique place that one must see to appreciate."

"Located directly on the water's edge, there are expansive views of [New York Harbor](#)," the website continues. The [Statue of Liberty](#) directly faces the venue.

[MTV](#) filmed a season of "[Real World](#)" in the cavernous loft in 2008. O'Keefe began leasing the space last October.

The setting puts O'Keefe in competition with venues that have [Manhattan](#)-skyline views, like [Williamsburg's](#) Giando on the Water and [Abigail Kirsch](#) in the [Brooklyn Navy Yard](#), where prices range from \$125 to \$200 per guest.

Abigail Kirsch manager [Stacey Bass](#) said her space, which is in the Steiner Studio film complex inside the Navy Yard, has the edge on O'Keefe's location.

"I'm sure there are great things about his space, but it's a little harder to get there [Red Hook]," said Bass. "We have amazing views of [downtown Manhattan](#), the [Empire State Building](#) and the East River bridges.

"Then there's the excitement of being on a movie studio lot," she said.

But Red Hook residents insisted their neighborhood is a picture-perfect setting for special events.

"We have some of the most extraordinary waterfront in the city of [New York](#)," said [Red Hook Civic Association](#) Co-Chairman [John McGettrick](#). "Maybe it [O'Keefe's place] will bring more people down to see what an incredible place Red Hook really is."

O'Keefe is at the center of a probe being conducted by city [Controller John Liu](#) into whether the restaurateur has underreported sales at the River Cafe, which sits on city property.

O'Keefe didn't return calls for comment.