

KANSAS CITY

Afterword Tavern & Shelves Now Open in the Crossroads, Offering Books, Bistro Fare and Craft Cocktails

April Fleming
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Despite it being an increasingly digital world, there are still entrepreneurs out there who believe in the allure of the tactile. Christian Overgaard and Luke Pitz, owners of **Afterword Tavern & Shelves**, are among them.

Afterword is a new restaurant, bar and bookstore that opened in late September at 19th Street and Grand Boulevard, in the heart of the Crossroads Arts District. Afterword, which in atmosphere feels a bit like a cozy, distinguished library or study, is geared towards lit-lovers who are interested in food and drink as much as their novels.

Overgaard and Pitz have brought on bartender Vanessa Waters (Manifesto, Repeal 18th) to run the bar program, which focuses on craft cocktails but also offers an enviable selection of predominantly local wine and beer. As a demonstration of the seriousness of the cocktail program, take the Blue Sky Thinker: coffee-infused Mean Mule Silver American Agave is blended with Luxardo Bitter Blanc and tonic, and adorned with fresh flowers. Another option: the Tyrannosaurus Tex, which features Duffy's Run vodka, green chartreuse, Luxardo marascino liqueur and Hatch and *guajillo* chile peppers, with a splash of lime. A small plastic dinosaur is playfully perched on the saucer.

The same thoughtfulness has been extended to the menu, which was built by Dylan McCabe. It features a tasteful selection of small plates, seasonal toasts, salads, flatbreads and sandwiches, with beignets (flavors of which change daily) offered for dessert. From the shared-plates menu, customers can choose from a flight of pickles, deviled eggs, fresh hummus and seasonal vegetables. Toasts are made with fresh Bloom Baking Co. bread. Try one slathered with pesto and topped with cured ham, soppressata and microgreens, or spiced apple butter with garlic and almonds, or even peach compote with spiced cream cheese.

Salads include a bowl of arugula and sprouts mixed with fresh goat cheese, walnuts and tart apples tossed with a tart mignonette, as well as a mixed garden salad with cucumber, tomato, radish and Parmesan. An Italian salad with soppressata and kalamata olives is also available. Among the restaurant's panini-pressed sandwiches, the Cuban, featuring smoked ham, citrus pork, mustard and house pickles with Emmenthaler cheese, is the customer favorite. A Margherita flatbread, topped with burrata, tomato and basil, is also on offer, as is one with roasted vegetables. Charcuterie and cheese boards are available as well.



Books are available for sale and browsing.

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Although not primarily a book seller, Afterword is certainly in the business, offering a curated selection of new and classic fiction, nonfiction, graphic novels and children's books. The shelves are carefully arranged to appeal to a diverse range of readers, and almost everyone will find something to pick up here (browsing is encouraged but outright reading of the books without purchase is politely discouraged).

Afterword seats approximately 70 guests between a large, custom-built bar (look for the clever nooks stuffed with books), plush couches and upholstered living room chairs, as well as two- and four-top tables. It's a place designed well for a relaxing afternoon of reading, but is also comfortable for lunch, dinner and after-work cocktails.

Afterword Tavern & Shelves is open

Wednesday from 11am to 9pm, Thursday from 11am to 11pm, Friday and Saturday from 11am to midnight and Sunday from 11am to 8pm.

Afterword Tavern & Shelves, 1834 Grand Blvd., Crossroads Arts District, Kansas City, Missouri, afterwordkc.com



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