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Prime Fish expands with sake, wine, and provisions shop

Robin Anthony and Bill Cox share their favorite things in a new Cotswold retail concept

by Jacqueline Pennington



Robin Anthony and Bill Cox of Prime Fish Cellar. Jacqueline Pennington/UP

When a 1,500-square-foot space in the same complex as the Omakase Experience by Prime Fish became available, chef Robin Anthony saw an opportunity to bring more high quality food and beverage offerings to Charlotteans. This time, however, these offerings will come in the form of a premium bottle and gourmet foods shop. Anthony is pairing his expertise in sake and gourmet Japanese provisions with former Counter-

beverage director (**and UPPY Award winner**) Bill Cox's expertise in wine for a retail concept with the opening of Prime Fish Cellar.

"The intention is really just to show Charlotte what a lot of our favorite things are," says Cox, who first fell in love with sake during his days at Counter-. When Anthony and Cox met through a mutual sake-loving friend, their vision naturally fell into place. Both recognized that Charlotte doesn't currently have a proper sake store. With Prime Fish Cellar, they will make sake accessible to the Charlotte community with a price tag that doesn't carry the typical restaurant markup. "We would love to show Charlotte what incredible sake is out there," Cox says.

In addition to sake, Prime Fish Cellar will carry a selection of wine and provisions that are also not commonly seen in the Charlotte market. Items like caviar, Wagyu, truffles, premium soy sauce, and more will be available. The selections will be curated by Anthony and of the highest quality with certifications of authenticity on items like A5 Wagyu. Buying in person prevents the headache that can come with buying these types of provisions online where certifications can be unclear to those who aren't experts like Anthony.

When it comes to the wine, the goal is to have a selection that Cox would describe as "accessible," he says, "but still pushing the boundaries and educating on some next level stuff that maybe not everyone knows...I'd love to expand the palate. We've had some excellent import partners who are really showing diamonds these days."

The team is also looking forward to helping customers expertly pair the food they plan to have at home with the selection of wine and sake in the store. Cox emphasized that he is very open to consulting customers on the selection of wine in their home cellar as well. "Wine collecting can be a difficult and precarious world sometimes," he says. "We're able to take a more holistic approach and find the things you know you want...it's something I have a passion for."

The team is aiming to open the store in the first week of February with a soft opening in the coming weeks that will include a website launch. Once up and running, Prime Fish Cellar will be open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. in Providence Plaza at Providence and South Sharon Amity roads.

"We have some really fun stuff in our pipeline if we can make the timing and the numbers work," Cox says.