

Piratz, burgers and lost pizzazz

Did you catch my blog post last week on what I consider a rebranding #fail for Piratz Tavern? Robert Freeland did, and he shared his thoughts with me (and I thought I would share them with you, with his permission of course)

Hi Deborah,

I agree with your prediction that the Corporate Bar and Grill angle Spike TV's "Bar Rescue" guru, Jon Taffer, thinks will save the sputtering Piratz Tavern will die its own death. The first article I read about the makeover had Taffer proclaiming the need for an "executive burger" joint in Silver Spring...whatever an executive burger is.

I've had plenty of enjoyable times and grogs at PT, and will miss its one-of-a-kind shtick. The thing that displaced it attempts to strongarm pretention into a dive...an antithetical marriage, like matter and antimatter...Boom! I think Taffer missed the one about understanding a region's audience before dictating what they need.

I walked past CB&G this evening, after leaving a very-packed Quarry House across the street (where the burgers are great). It was open but dead, consistent with your forecast. Ground beef and low inventory rotation don't get along well.

Best,

Robert Freeland

We'll keep tabs on the new place, but unless "executives" develop a taste for these burgers, AND flock there religiously every lunch, I doubt the new place will survive. These days, competition is stiff for any dollars. How do you stand out from a crowd? In this case, the shtick was the attraction. Substituting a generic experience in a place with little foot traffic is a sure-fire way to lose business.

Katie Aberbach at expressnightout.com seems to agree in her post Walked the Plank. What do you think will happen?