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From the Charlotte Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/charlotte/news/2022/08/23/dumpling-lady-south-end-charlotte-opening.html>

The Dumpling Lady expanding to South End with restaurant in The Penrose

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The Dumpling Lady plans to open its new South End location by late winter. The popular eatery expects to invest roughly \$400,000 into a 1,350-square-foot location, John Nisbet says.



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He and wife Zhang Qian — also head chef— are behind The Dumpling Lady. “We’ve been looking to expand for a year or two. South End has always been high on our radar,” Nisbet says.

MELISSA KEY

The Dumpling Lady is expanding its footprint with a brick-and-mortar location.

He says the location is in a fast-growing area, surrounded by apartments, breweries and restaurants. “It’s growing and we just think there’s a good opportunity for us,” Nisbet says.

Peadon Finein Architecture has been tapped for the project, which will include renovating to add a kitchen hood, streamline operations and add a takeout window. “It’s a small spot in and of itself, so it will be mostly grab-and-go.”

A larger kitchen will allow Qian to grow The Dumpling Lady’s menu. It serves up authentic Szechuan-style dumplings and noodles. Food is handmade utilizing locally sourced meats and veggies. Traditional flavors incorporate chili oil made fresh with ingredients from the mountains of Sichuan, China and North Carolina.

She plans to offer additional traditional Sichaun dishes as well.

“It’s what she knows and what she loves. It’s a little bit nostalgic for her,” Nisbet says. “I think she likes to offer that part of her to Charlotte, her adopted home.”

Qian started The Dumpling Lady in 2015 after moving to the Queen City from Sichuan. The Dumpling Lady got its start as a food truck.

It then added its first brick-and-mortar spot at Optimist Hall in August 2019. Its food truck is permanently located at Resident Culture Brewery in Plaza Midwood.

South End marks the first freestanding restaurant for the business — and additional talks are underway about additional sites, Nisbet says. Expansion will depend on financial resources, manpower and available locations.

“That location will only help us grow over time,” Nisbet says. “I think we’ll be well positioned for growth.”

It also leases just over 2,000 square feet on the ground floor of The Rail House in Charlotte’s North End as a production kitchen.

Shawn McCollough at National Restaurant Properties represented Callie’s in the transaction. The Dumpling Lady was represented by Jon Beall with RED Partners.

Jennifer Thomas

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