

Retailing

# Antique gallery expands at historic Merino Mill, with restaurants and a beer garden still to come

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Main St. Antiques & Design Gallery has added 12,000 square feet to its Mooresville location.

By Jennifer Thomas - Senior Staff Writer, Charlotte Business Journal  
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Main St. Antiques & Design Gallery has added 12,000 square feet to its Mooresville location.

The antiques mall at 500 S. Main St. now encompasses 102,000 square feet at Merino Mill – a 13% increase.

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Vendor demand drove the need for expansion. The expansion accommodates 30 additional vendors for a total of 517, says owner **Michal Bay**.

The waiting list still has 127 vendors on it.

“Antiques dealers want to be here,” Bay says.

Bay – who also owns and is redeveloping Merino Mill – opened the antiques mall in 2012. The space boasts wide aisles for easy browsing. The setting also offers high ceilings and exposed brick.

Sellers offer everything from furnishings and home accessories to toys, art, clothing, jewelry and other hand-crafted items.

The antique mall opens daily at 10 a.m.

“I think it’s popular because it’s different,” Bay says. “We have customers coming from Virginia, South Carolina and Georgia. It’s amazing. Word of mouth has really brought in people from far beyond our location.”

The antiques mall is just one piece of the continued evolution at Merino Mill.

Bay bought the mill – formerly Burlington Mill – for \$500,000 in 2008. It sits on a 42-acre parcel, just off Main Street. He’s working to transform the 1.1 million-square-foot mill into a hub for office and retail.

“When I think about what it looked like when I bought it 12 years ago and what’s happening here today, it’s magical,” he says.

Restored space is 99% occupied.

The mill is home to roughly 40 different tenants, including Alino Pizzeria, The Barcelona Burger & Beer Garden and Defined Coffee.

Work is ongoing to restore the final two buildings in the complex.

“Every year we work on improving the mill,” Bay says. “We always want to spend extra effort to make it the best of the best, and I think we are succeeding.”

The goal is to add a taqueria, German beer garden and sushi restaurant by October.

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“It will depend upon whether we run into any supply-chain issues in getting the right equipment and other factors in restoring the space,” Bay says.