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THE NEW YORK TIMES, SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 2012

SURFACING

Blue-Collar Roots, Artistic Offspring

IN Milwaukee, a city best known for its blue-collar roots, an artistic side is starting to emerge, particularly in an area known as the Third Ward. In the mid-19th century, the port city was known for its high volume of wheat trade before becoming a machine shop for the world. Immigrants — mostly Italian and Irish — settled in the Third Ward, thanks to its proximity to the city's docks and factories. In 1892, a huge fire destroyed most of the neighborhood. Though it made a modest comeback over the next decades as the city's Little Italy, by the

1960s, expressway construction through the area sent many of its residents packing.

Led by the Historic Third Ward Association, revitalization efforts over the past few years have transformed the district into a cultural magnet. Galleries now share blocks with design boutiques, trendy cafes and a public market. And a boardwalk that runs along Milwaukee River, a continuing project that saw a major portion completed in 2005, gives the area a distinctly European flair.

STEPHANIE DAVILA



◀ **THE HOME MARKET**
222 East Erie Street
(414) 755-2165
thehomemarket.net

If this full-service design boutique feels more SoHo than Milwaukee, it's because the owner, Kate Kazlo, cultivated her interior design skills in New York and other cities before returning home five years ago to set up shop. The historic warehouse space now features John Derian plates (\$52), John Robshaw pillows (\$115) and more.



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▶ **RYAN BRAUN'S GRAFFITO**
102 North Water Street
(414) 727-2888
ryanbraunsgraffito.com

In March, the Milwaukee Brewers All-Star outfielder Ryan Braun helped open this farm-to-table Italian restaurant. The chef, Dominic Zumpano, a James Beard Award nominee, offers homey items like build-your-own bruschetta (\$8), above, and housemade pasta like hot-wing ravioli (\$14 and \$19).



PHOTOGRAPHS BY NARAYAN MAHON FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES

▶ **SPIN MILWAUKEE**
233 East Chicago Street
(414) 831-7746
milwaukee.spinalgactic.com

Young professionals paddle balls between bites of truffle fries and sips of local microbrews at this sleek table-tennis bar, which opened last year as an extension of the New York flagship. During the day, it's a popular spot for children's birthday parties.

▶ **CAFE BENELUX & MARKET**
346 North Broadway Street
(414) 501-2500
cafebenelux.com

Since June, beer aficionados have been belling up at this bar and cafe dedicated to the Lowlands. In addition to 180 beers from Belgium, menu items include savory pannenkoeken (\$10) and mussels (\$12.95 a pound). A shaved beef sandwich from the market is \$9.



▶ **HOT POP**
213 North Broadway Street
(414) 273-1301
hotpopshop.com

Margaret Martin, a designer toy collector, turned a passion into a career after unveiling this boutique three years ago. The emporium is full of toy collectibles like Los Angeles-based Tokidoki and creative housewares. In back, a gallery area is devoted to street art.

