



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For client review

## **Café Selmarie Announces Plans to Close at the End of April**

*Assets Sold to Local Business Owner with Plans to Open New Café and Bistro*

**CHICAGO, IL (April X, 2024)** – Café Selmarie, a beloved restaurant and bakery in the Lincoln Square neighborhood, will be closing at the end of April, announced retiring owner Birgit Kobayashi. The assets of the restaurant have been sold and the lease transferred to a local business owner who plans to open a café and bistro in the space.

The café was founded by Birgit Kobayashi and Jeanne Uzdawinis, who met as neighbors on Giddings Street. In September 1983 they created Café Selmarie just down the street from where they lived with their families. They started out in a tiny storefront with a handful of tables serving pastries and coffee, breaking down walls in 1999 to eventually double its size. The café has been a staple on Giddings Plaza, at the heart of the Lincoln Square community. Long before coffee shops were prevalent, the café had the first espresso machine in the neighborhood.

“We were inspired by European cafés and coffee houses,” explained Kobayashi. “We wanted fresh food, made with the best ingredients, served in a warm and inviting setting. While it is bittersweet to be closing Café Selmarie, we are delighted to know that this space will continue to be a place for the community to come enjoy coffee, soup and a great sandwich.”

Kobayashi notes that after 40 years in business, Café Selmarie has had thousands of employees who have made the restaurant and bakery something special. Cooks, bakers and servers have contributed a recipe, a method, a system – all of which has turned Café Selmarie into a home of and for the Lincoln Square community.

She and her daughter and Café Selmarie manager, Connie Kobayashi, have spent the past few months thoughtfully evaluating offers and looking for someone who will continue the welcoming traditions of great food and hospitality for the space.

“Cafe Selmarie is a beloved part of Lincoln Square’s culture and history, so we feel honored to have the opportunity to carry on its tradition of great food and hospitality while creating our own unique restaurant,” said Andrew Pillman, founder of Neighborhood Taprooms. “Once we begin operating as

Willow Café & Bistro, we're hoping to retain some of same sense of community. We're looking forward to what's ahead!"

Birgit Kobayashi plans to retire to travel with her husband and see family, as well as pursue other interests.

"We witnessed this sleepy northside enclave blossom into the vibrant, lovely Lincoln Square neighborhood at our front door. We are forever thankful to our customers for their support through all these years," said Kobayashi.

Eatz Associates, one of the nation's largest restaurant brokers, is representing Café Selmarie in the sale of its assets, including the lease of the space, commercial kitchen equipment and restaurant furnishings. The Café Selmarie name and recipes will not be sold.

### **ABOUT Café Selmarie**

The Café Selmarie dining room is simple and modern, displaying art from local artists, with large windows overlooking Giddings Plaza as well as al fresco dining on the shady patio. The location is at the heart of Lincoln Square. The café serves contemporary American cuisine for breakfast, lunch and dinner. Café Selmarie has been known for creating amazing comfort food and incredible bakery treats. Many families have celebrated special occasions with a special dinner, cake, torte, or pastry; the Café Selmarie cookies and pastries are as much a part of family traditions as are visits to the café. Café Selmarie's name comes from the two founders' middle names: Birgit Selma and Jeanne Marie.

For more information: <https://cafeselmarie.com/>. [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#)  
Dinner reservations can be made on Tock [www.exploretock.com/cafeselmarie](http://www.exploretock.com/cafeselmarie).

### **Business Hours:**

Tuesday-Friday 10:00 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.

Saturday 9:00 a.m. – 8:30 p.m.

CLOSED Sunday & Monday

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