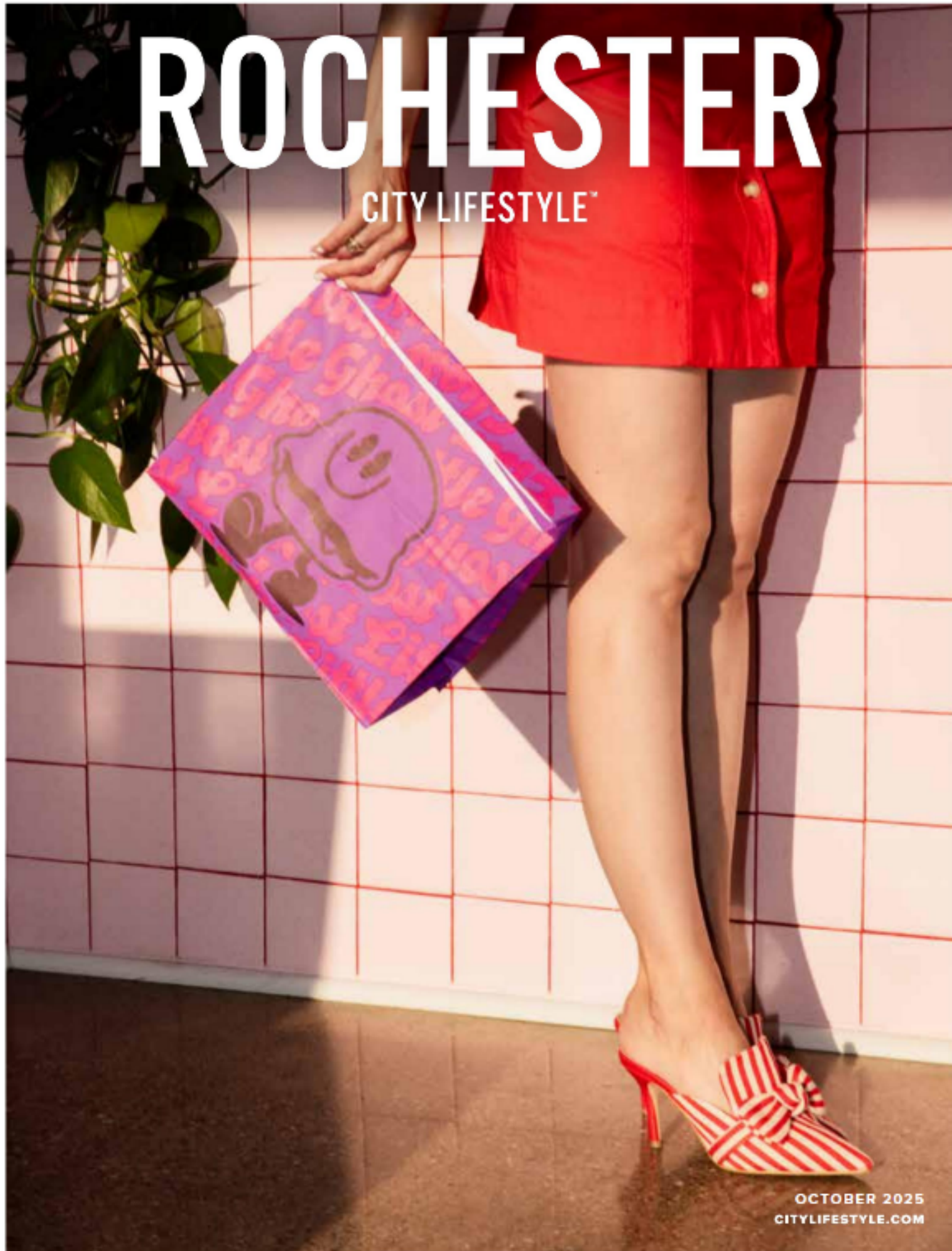


ROCHESTER

CITY LIFESTYLE™



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inside *the issue*

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On the Cover

Max Interiors brought Little Ghost to life with a bold, playful design that mirrors the brand's crowd-worthy menu—mixing edge, quirky details, and neighborhood comfort to create a fast-casual space that feels fresh, fun, and unforgettable.

Photography:
Shelby Cuban
Photography

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Little Ghost



A Detroit favorite with Rochester ties
finds a home in Ferndale.

ARTICLE BY JENNIFER LEE
PHOTOGRAPHY BY SHELBY DUBIN AND JESSICA SNOW

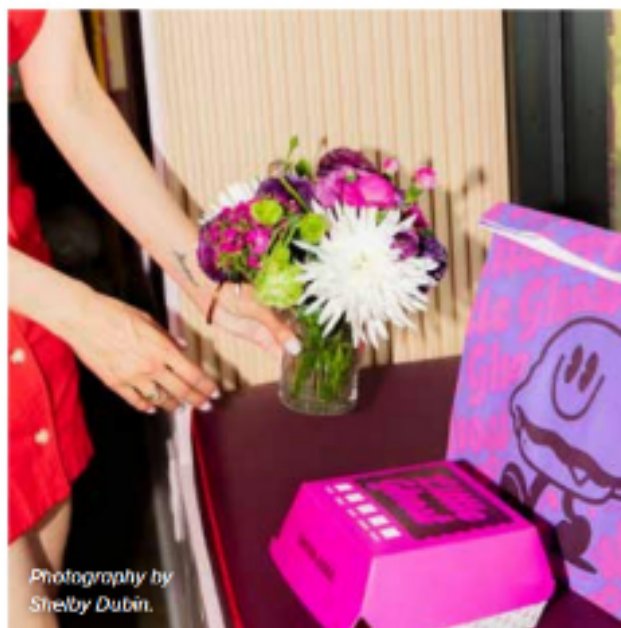


When we moved to Rochester, 17 years ago, I couldn't have imagined how deeply this community would become part of our story. Back then we had just enrolled in Rochester schools (a huge reason for moving here) and Will and I were still bartenders living in a tiny little place—me working late nights at Mr. B's, with Will pulling long shifts at Hamlin pub while balancing life -- and just crazy enough to keep chasing the dream of having our own place one day. Fast forward to today, our son has graduated from Rochester, and our daughter is currently a Junior at

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Photography by
Shelby Dubin.



Photography by
Shelby Dubin.

Rochester, on her 3rd year of Varsity Cheer. Time is a thief as they say, but we're still on this crazy restaurant ride -- with so much to be thankful for.

Will and I met as bartenders, which will surprise absolutely no one who knows us. The service industry has always been at the center of our relationship. We fell in love while working side by side...serving drinks, emptying ashtrays and the occasional karaoke performance from me. Hospitality wasn't just how we made a living—it became the story of our lives together. We've both spent our entire careers in restaurants, and over time we've learned that what some people might see as a "temporary job" or an "unimportant role" can become a craft, a calling, and, if you're crazy enough, a dream worth building from the ground up.



*Merch available on the site!
Photography by Jessica Snow.*

That dream took its first big leap in July of 2016 when we opened Grey Ghost alongside our amazing partners in Detroit's Brush Park. It was an incredibly exciting time. We wanted to create a place that was about hospitality above all: food made with care, drinks poured with skill, and a space where anyone could feel at home. Little Caesars Arena was being built just down the street from us at that time, and we knew that Brush Park was going to change dramatically -- we were so excited to get to be a part of that next chapter.

Grey Ghost became known for many things, but the burger has taken on a life of its own. We had no idea it would be something that would be on the menu as a staple, and for us, it's a reminder of what everyone on the Grey Ghost team has always believed: food doesn't have to be complicated to be exceptional. Done right, even the most classic dish can be special. That burger represents a lot about what we believe as a team: simple food done well, and served just like we'd serve our own families.

I think a lot of people think that being part of a restaurant is all glamour...the truth is, being a part of opening a restaurant means constant chaos--long days and nights, time spent away from your families, endless decisions, and the constant quest of making guests feel at home in an ever changing world. But, still to this day, when we see people celebrating birthdays or just enjoying a Tuesday night out, it's still a "pinch me" moment. We didn't just open a

**"The hospitality industry
isn't for everyone - but
if you've been a part of
it and loved it, you know
it's special. It's not about
food or cocktails...It's
about people."**

restaurant--we created a space where community could happen, people could celebrate, and memories could be made.

Little did we know at the time, Grey Ghost was only the beginning. Soon after came Second Best, a bar that's a little like your favorite Upnorth hang, or a friend's basement bar with all of your favorite cocktails done with quality ingredients - where guests can enjoy themselves without overthinking it, and maybe catch a game of Golden Tee or a Lions game. Then came Basan, where the team leaned into Japanese-inspired flavors and continued the commitment to hospitality in every detail. Each project has been its own learning curve, with its own incredible team, and unique challenges.

Most recently, the newest concept--Little Ghost--opened in Ferndale in August of this year. It feels like if Grey Ghost was our grown-up space, Little Ghost is the invitation to keep things fun without sacrificing the quality and the care.

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Little Ghost is built on a fast-casual model we call “grab and ghost.” It’s food that’s simple, craveable, and consistently excellent—but it doesn’t require the time or price tag of a sit-down dinner.

The vision was to create a neighborhood spot people can take their families to, ride their bikes to, and just pop in without having to think too far ahead. Whether it’s grabbing a burger during a lunch break, swinging by after a late shift, or picking up food for the family on the way home, Little Ghost is meant to feel easy, and familiar. Every option is to be something you’ll crave, without overcomplicating the experience.

Now that we’ve been open a few months...I think we can all confidently say that Ferndale was the perfect first home for Little Ghost, but our hope is that it won’t be the only one. We love the idea of expanding into other



Dining area.
Photography by Shelby Dubin.

neighborhoods—each location carrying the same heart, the same focus on doing simple food really well, but rooted in its own community.

We're not chasing the next space just to open more -- We put a lot of thought into where we land, because what excites us is the possibility of creating spaces where people feel taken care of, where food feels nostalgic, and where hospitality is woven into even the quickest take-out order. Little Ghost has the potential to be that kind of place in more than one community, and we're always on the lookout for where it could land next.

Four Man Ladder Hospitality team is our small but mighty group of partners. Each member of the group brings a different perspective, but what is shared is an unwavering love for this industry.

Partnership in restaurants is pretty dang important. It requires a lot of trust, and the ability to get through all of the unexpected things together. There have been plenty of challenges with the day-to-day unpredictability of running restaurants—but the bond our group shares, and the desire to care for people, keeps everyone grounded. Together, we've built not just restaurants, but a real story that we're

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Lyz Hope of MOZ Interiors designed the space with the leading the concept.
Photography by Shelby Dubin.

“Everything about the space feels happy and nostalgic, cozy like your favorite neighborhood place.”

- Lyzz Hope of MOZ interiors.

Photography by
Jessica Snow.



Menu + Beverage selection
including a few Michigan staples.
Photography by Shelby Dubin.

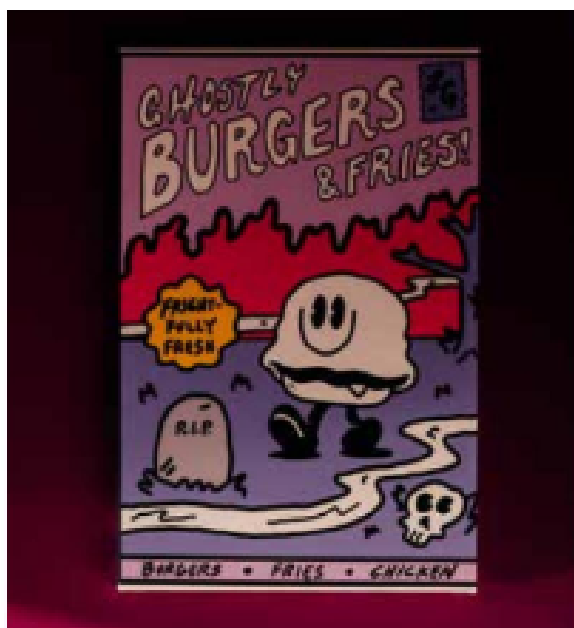


proud of. The truth is, none of this would be possible without our partners and their families, our friends, and our community.

Working in restaurants shaped us, not just as work goes, but as people. It's why we often say that everyone should work in hospitality at least once in their life.

Service teaches you how to overcome obstacles on the fly. It teaches you empathy. It teaches you how to anticipate someone's needs before they say a word. Most importantly, it teaches you how to take care of people. Those lessons are universal, whether you stay in the industry or not -- and they're more important than they've ever been.

I'm thankful for every year I spent behind the bar, in the kitchen and in the dining rooms I've had the pleasure of being a part of over the years. The hours were long, the shifts were exhausting, but they were also important. They gave me the foundation to step into new chapters with confidence. They reminded me that no matter how big an idea



*Photography by
Shelby Dublin.*

becomes, hospitality always comes down to one simple thing: making people feel welcome.

Seventeen years in Rochester, decades in hospitality, and four restaurants later, I feel nothing but gratitude. Every risk, every leap into the unknown has led us here. We've had the privilege of working for and with incredible teams of people, serving communities we love, and watching our dreams take shape in real time.

Rochester gave us a place to call home. Detroit gave us a canvas for our creativity. Ferndale gave us the chance to try something new with Little Ghost. And through it all, we've been supported by our friends and guests who walk through the doors, and most importantly, the people who dedicate their time and energy to working alongside us.

Hospitality isn't for everyone—but if you've been a part of it and fallen in love with it, you know it's special. At its core, it's not about food or cocktails...it's about people - it's about relationships...it's about taking care of each other. As long as there are people to take care of, we can only hope to be a small part of it.

Looking ahead, we're excited to keep dreaming. Maybe Little Ghost grows into more neighborhoods. Maybe we explore entirely new ideas. Whatever comes next, it will be guided by the same things that have carried us this far; hard work, and a deep love for hospitality.

**“Little ghost comes
through like your
favorite mixtape –
nostalgic, loud, and
unapologetically fun.”**

For us, restaurants aren't just businesses. They're important parts community. They're places where people gather, connect, and celebrate life's small and big moments. That's why we do what we do—and why we'll keep doing it for as long as we can. To all of you who have chosen us to spend your special days with... Cheers – you're what makes this journey the most special.

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Branding by Skidmore Studios.
Photography by Shelby Dubin.

MEET THE DESIGNER - LYZZ MOZZ:

The little Ghost interior space was designed by Lyzz Hope of Moz Interiors. Over the past 12 years, Moz Interiors has been recognized for its range of projects in Michigan and throughout the county. Lyzz has an education in art and nearly a decade of hands on interior experience.

WHAT WAS YOUR INSPIRATION FOR LITTLE GHOST?

I took all of my cues from the incredible branding work that was created by Skidmore Studios. After seeing the bold, vivid colors, and retro vibe, I decided to let that be the driver of the design. I ended up leaning into the pink and plum because they just worked beautifully together and they were so fun to work with.

WHAT WAS YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGE?

Having to get extra creative with very limited space. The space was essentially one small box. I really had to think about how to create these small, intimate moments without the space that wouldn't compete with each other, while still tying the design together overall.



Photography by
Jessica Snow

FAVORITE FEATURE IN THE SPACE?

The window seats for sure. As I mentioned, the space was so limited, and once I saw these deep set window areas, I knew right away we needed to utilize them. I worked Premier furniture to create specialty seat cushions in this perfect plum color. When you walk by Little Ghost, you can see people sitting there, it's just perfect.

(Look for her upcoming project in downtown Rochester, Le Juicel)

Little Ghost is located at 22305 Woodward Ave, Ferndale, MI 48220 and is open for lunch, dinner and late night offerings. They do offer online ordering and have a walk-up window for quick service.

<https://www.eatlittleghost.com>