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El Spero co-owner Don Kotsopoulos says he is excited his family-run restaurant will be reopening in Oakville at a new location – the former location of Brown Dog café in Bronte at 2420 Lakeshore Rd. W. The family restaurant closed its doors at the South Oakville Centre (formerly Hopedale Mall) in June after El Spero's lease was not renewed. | **photo by Eric Riehl – Oakville Beaver (Follow on Twitter @halton\_photog or www.facebook.com/HaltonPhotog)**

## El Spero to return at new location

by **David Lea**  
Oakville Beaver Staff

The El Spero family restaurant is returning to Oakville.

Co-owner Don Kotsopoulos confirmed to the *Oakville Beaver* Friday, the local eatery, which previously called the South Oakville Centre (formerly Hopedale Mall) home for more than 40 years, would be reopening at a new location.

The business closed its doors June 29 after the mall decided not to renew its lease.

"We're really excited," said Kotsopoulos, who runs the restaurant with his brother, Steve.

"We miss everyone so much."

He said the restaurant's new location is at 2420 Lakeshore Rd. W., and that it would still go by the name El Spero.

Kotsopoulos is hoping to rehire many of the same staffers who lost their jobs when the South Oakville Centre location closed, but acknowledged after two months it might not be possible to get everyone back.

"We've become kind of a family, so it would be nice to keep some of them, but obviously some had to move on," he said.

The bulk of the menu is expected to stay the same with a few additions, although Kotsopoulos said it was too early to elaborate.

It is also too early to say exactly when the new El Spero will be opening.

The brothers take possession of their new restaurant space on Sept. 1. However, there are considerable renovations that need to be done.

Kotsopoulos said he is hoping to open before Christmas.

"We're excited about the location because a lot of our customers are in that area," he said. "A lot of them will actually be able to walk to the restaurant, which is nice."

“ We're excited about the location because a lot of our customers are in that area. A lot of them will actually be able to walk to the restaurant, which is nice.... You see the same people every day and they become part of your life. We miss that. ”

**Don Kotsopoulos**  
El Spero co-owner

Word about El Spero's return is already beginning to circulate with Kotsopoulos stating he has already bumped into a few of his past customers as he scouted out the Lakeshore Road West location.

The community showed their support for El Spero during its last year at Hopedale Mall as residents attempted to get the mall to change its mind about renewing the lease.

More than 1,300 people signed an online petition on [www.change.org](http://www.change.org) asking the mall to retain the business, while members of the nearby St. Dominic Roman Catholic Church congregation also started a similar petition.

The brothers said they were thankful of that support since the restaurant was able to keep its doors open longer than its original September 2013 closure date.

Kotsopoulos said when the restaurant closed, he and Steve were looking at the possibility of the Lakeshore Road West relocation, but nothing had been finalized at that time.

He noted while the time off was nice for a change, he and his brother are looking forward to running a family restaurant again.

"You see the same people every day and they become part of your life," he said.

"We miss that."