

Peek Inside Olio, Peabody's New Industrial-Chic Wedding Venue

By Rachel Kashdan



Photo by Analog Wedding

It's not every day that a new wedding venue opens in the Boston area, especially not one brimming with an undeniable *cool* factor. But that's exactly what one mother-daughter duo Sarah Narcus—day-of coordinator and owner of planning firm Without a Hitch—and her mom, Ellen Basch are bringing to the table with Olio, a historical Peabody Square theater turned industrial event space.

The colonial revival building was built in 1912 as a home for the Peabody Theater, one of the country's first completely concrete structures. After the Strand Theatre group sold it in 1957, the theater shut down and the space took on a variety of identities including, most recently, that of a storage facility. Narcus and Basch had been searching for the perfect space for the flexible, non-traditional event venue many of Narcus's clients craved for three years when finally, they stumbled upon the theater that would become Olio. At first, not everyone was on board with Narcus's vision. "My mom walked through the space and thought I was crazy, and all of the banks turned us down. We had a lot of people look at us like we were out of our minds," Narcus says. Still, she saw past the decades of dilapidation, eager to unearth the building's true potential. "I knew, that under the many decades of disrepair and underuse, it had a really cool feel and amazing architecture."

The term Olio means a "miscellaneous collection," and variety is exactly what Narcus and Basch wanted to provide at the venue. The bones of the 6,000-square-foot space, which seats up to 400 guests and features a large prep kitchen, lean industrial with timeworn concrete walls, 1950s wood flooring, large loft-style windows, and 30- to 50-foot ceilings. At the same time, it's a blank canvas with a flexible floor plan and a look that's easily transformed with drapery, furnishings, and lighting.

Construction wrapped on Olio earlier this month and the first wedding at Olio is already slated for mid-May. Not to worry, though: Narcus says there is still availability for weddings (as well as bar and bat mitzvahs, corporate parties, workshops, and other events) in 2019. The team is also offering tours of the space several days a week, in addition to a chance for couples to see the venue in action at a grand opening celebration on April 28. The launch will feature vendors from Olio's preferred list such as Cuisine Chez Vous, Capers Catering, and Premier Bar Service. Itching for a glimpse of the space before then? Take a peek inside the venue below!

43 Main St., Peabody, 978-595-1091, oliopeabody.com.



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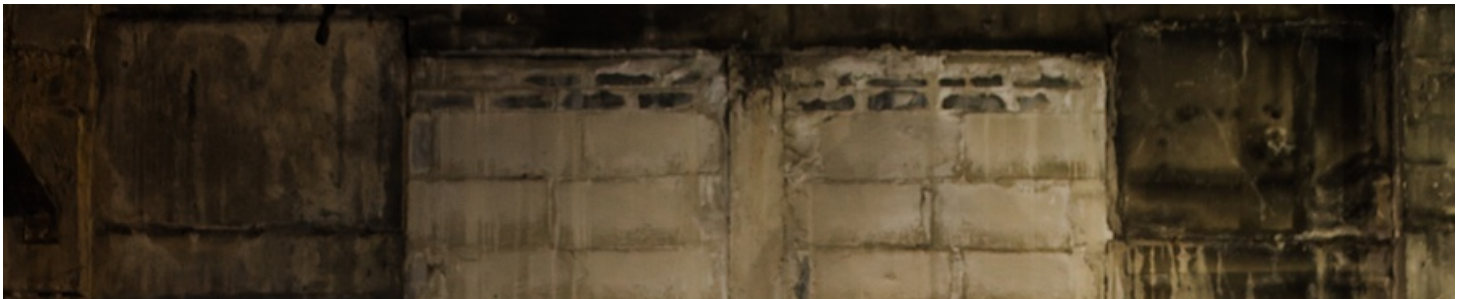




Photo by Ella Farrell Photography





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