

PRESS RELEASE: Shop for Skills during Bloorcourt 101

This **Saturday June 1st**, from **11am until 10pm**, dozens of local businesses in the Bloorcourt neighbourhood of Toronto will be offering free lessons for their new street fair called Bloorcourt 101. This innovative event invites community residents and customers to walk along the Bloor Street West community and shop for new skills and ideas from local business experts creating a first of it's kind "Skillshop".

The initial concept emerged when the Bloorcourt Business Improvement Area (BIA) had to cancel their annual summer street festival due to the ongoing street construction. When local community organizer Nico Koenig heard the news, he asked the BIA if he could help organize an alternative festival. "I loved the street festival, but I never really learned anything about the businesses" says Koenig. Instead, he wondered if creating a fun and interactive event where businesses shared their expertise might build customer relations and support local shops. He soon rounded up a group of organizers, calling themselves "Skillshop" and their first event named Bloorcourt 101.

"Sharing skills and knowledge is a great way to build community and partnerships as well as celebrating business owners decades worth of experience" says Koenig. "Bloorcourt 101 will a way for you to see the neighbourhood in a new light, not as a mall but as a school filled with teachers"

The BIA and Skillshop organizers spent the past few weeks speaking with business staff and customers about what lessons they might teach. New cafe bar Northwood's owner Ange Reynolds is excited to be apart of Bloorcourt 101. Her business is offering two classes, one on latte art and another on cocktail making later in the evening. Other classes include French Folk Dancing with El Cafetico Cafe, Pizza Making for Kids with Mr. Right Pizza, Ethiopian Coffee Ceremony from Pero Restaurant and DJing 101 by Bassline bar.

For a full list of participating businesses and class times, please visit www.skillshop.ca. All classes are free and are open on a first come first serve basis. Bloorcourt is located on on Bloor Street West between Montrose Avenue and Dufferin in the west end of downtown Toronto.

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