



900 NE 13th St.

Proposed renovations and improvements of existing warehouse/office building

11,000 SF



ART OF TEA

Who We Are

Art of Tea is a tea importer and wholesaler that has been in business for 20+ years.

The company, originally based in LA, is now expanding our HQ to Fort Lauderdale.

We blend, pack, and custom craft the world's finest organic teas and botanicals.

Our teas are carefully selected directly from growers, each one offering a unique story.



Exterior (existing)



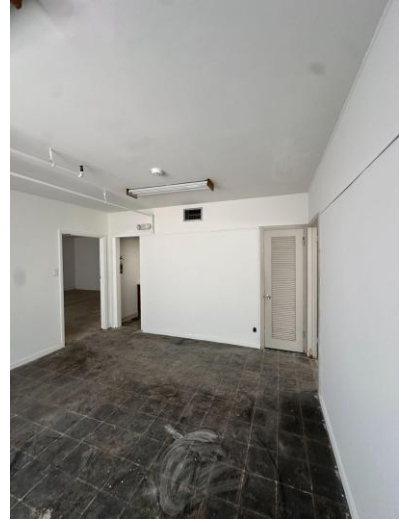
Exterior (proposed)



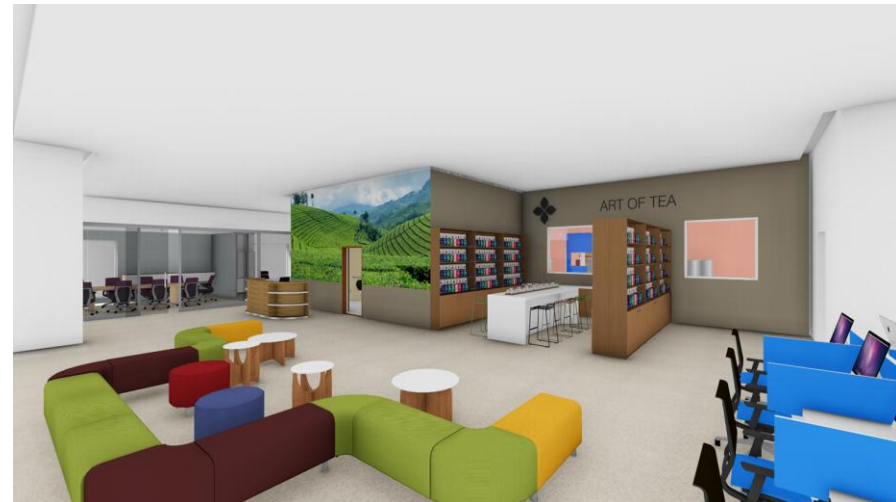
Exterior (proposed)



Interior (existing)



Interior (proposed renderings)



Project Benefits Overview

- Creation of at least 7+ new jobs and office space added for operations, shipping, marketing, production, and business development roles
- Transforming a vacant warehouse into an active business hub with elevated design & landscaping, and operated by company that has already been in business in CA for 20+ years
- Expanding Fort Lauderdale's reputation as a hub for wellness and sustainability
- Reduced lead times to wholesale partners and retail customers by 50-60%, which will generate further economic growth for the business and new tax revenues (Pier 66, Princess Cruises, Carnival Cruises, Pura Vida)
- Increased foot traffic to the area through hosting events in the space in partnership with local businesses
- Increased awareness to the area via a coordinated press, social media, and influencer marketing strategy



Project Timeline

- **Design Phase:** May - August 2025 (architectural planning, design discussions, contractor scoping)
- **Permitting:** August - October 2025 (submit and secure city permits, prepare for interior demolition and build-out)
 - *Already approved for demolition permit*
- **Construction and Launch:** October/November 2025 - February 2026 (renovations and equipment installation, operational launch in Q1 2026)

Owner & CEO (based in South Florida, new member of CCA)

- Steve Schwartz is a best-selling author, Master Tea Blender, and the Founder of Art of Tea.
- His mother's brain cancer diagnosis and Western medicine's failure to cure her led Steve on a wellness journey to learn Ayurveda, which resulted in a passion for preventative medicine and the impact plants can have on the body and mind.
- Art of Tea has created custom blends for well-known brands like Disney, Carnival, the White House, Caesar's Palace, and The Peninsula Hotel, as well as sells DTC on artoftea.com
- The brand has been in business since 2005, with Steve evolving the business model, putting an emphasis on high-quality product & experience, and growing the team sustainably.
- Committed to creating impact, building a great culture, and delivering excellence



Contractor

Selected contractor, Alberto Sbarra of [Arquigreen](#), has been operating in the South Florida area for 24+ years and has managed and completed numerous successful residential and warehouse projects.



Project Costs & CRA Funding Requests

- **Overall Project Costs:** \$6,604,437.33
 - **Land/Building Acquisition:** \$4,250,000
 - Bank Loan: \$3,908,000
 - Owner Equity: \$200,000
 - **Construction Loan requested from bank (TBC):** \$1.25M
 - **CRA Funds requested:** \$550,000
 - Commercial Facade Improvement: \$125,000
 - Property and Business Improvement: \$425,000
 - **Other project costs:**
 - Commercial Insurance
 - Equipment purchasing
 - Application, Architect, and Permit Fees



NEW Slides for 11/5



ART OF TEA

Local Partnerships & Events Ideas to Involve Community



Event: Partnership with nextdoor neighbor **Mingo Makes It Pottery Studio** for monthly “Sip and Mold” for their customers + AOT local customers in their space.



Event: Partnership with nextdoor neighbor **We Take the Cake** (cake bakery) for a monthly cake & tea tasting event in AOT space for the local community.



Wholesale: Sell tea to nextdoor neighbors like **Milk Money** in which local customers can stop into Milk Money and purchase a cup of tea or a custom blended mocktail/cocktail with our Iced Teas.



Event: Host local yoga studio teacher from **Yoga Factory** for an ongoing class in AOT space with iced tea refreshments served after the exercise.



Event: Partner with **Lauderdale Run Club** and have them start at AOT parking lot, and end at AOT for refreshments and a tour of our facility to see how tea is made after the run.



Wholesale: Already partner with **Carnival Cruises** as tea partner on-board, but will now be able to offer their customers “excursions” to the new Art of Tea HQ to see how tea is made, driving foot traffic to NE 13th St.

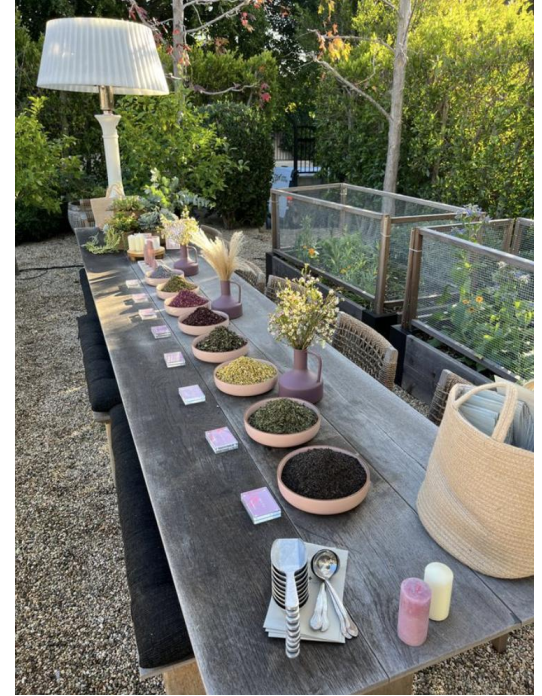
Events



Zoetry Tea Blending



MALIN + GOETZ Popup

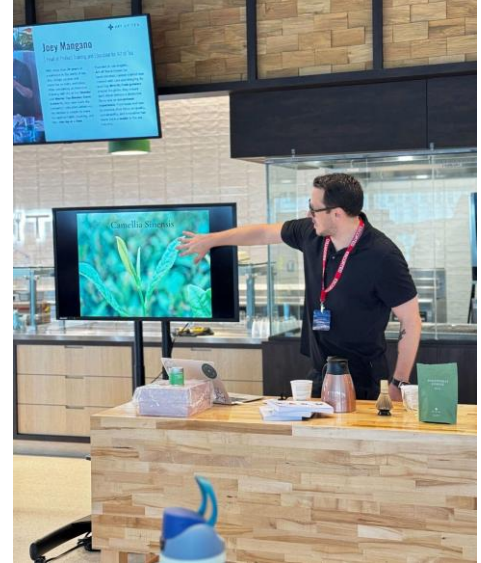


Rare Beauty Influencer Tea Blending

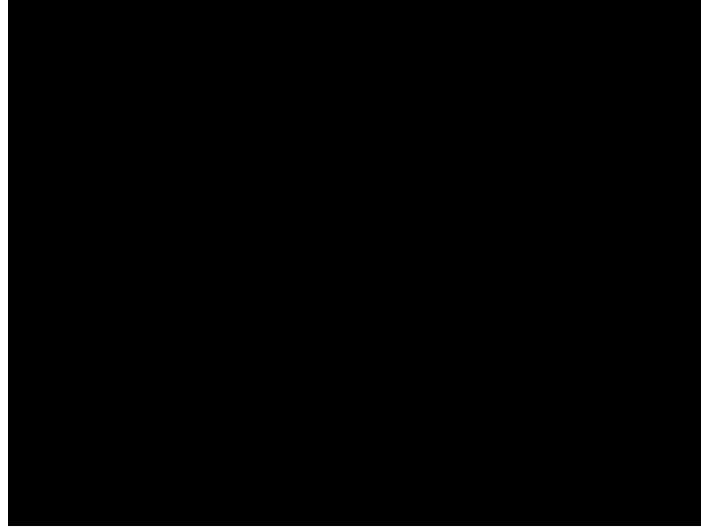
Events



Trainings



Retail



Road to Retail at Art of Tea FLL

Q1/Q2 2026: Operational opening. Curated Tea Tasting Events onsite.

Q3 2026: Buy retail products online, pick up in “store” on Wednesdays.

Q4 2026: Local customers can purchase exclusive line of retail products on-site and come to tea tastings.



Why FLL?

- **Already an established West Coast brand with retail in Erewhon in addition to Wholesale and DTC, now bringing AOT to Florida to better serve the 80% of U.S. population which lives east of the Mississippi.**
- **Have established Wholesale partnerships with large FL-Based Brands,** including Princess Cruises, Holland America Cruiseline, Carnival Cruises, Pier Sixty-Six, Nobu, and more. Once we are up & running on NE 13th St., we will encourage their customers to come check out our space (will drive local traffic)
- **NE 13th St. is an up & coming area with art, cool local businesses, etc., and a great place for our employees to have lunch or go nearby for dinner. Like the “Williamsburg” of FL. We see a lot of potential.**
- **Founder & CEO moved his family to the South FL area to be closer to some of our larger WHS clients (Carnival Cruises, Princess Cruises, Nobu, etc.) and is an active member of the community.**

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HOTELS



**GORDON
RAMSAY**



IHG
HOTELS & RESORTS

**CAESARS
PALACE**



CRA Objectives

- “Our overall goal is to eliminate slum and blight...foster dynamic and vibrant commercial and residential environments and expand economic opportunities.”
 - “These programs and projects include business attraction/retention, affordable housing, infrastructure development, community facilities and other endeavors that promote an improved and safer neighborhood environment and restoration of community pride.”
- “To effect positive redevelopment, the CRA:
 - Orchestrates orderly and progressive business development initiatives.
 - Facilitates infrastructure and other public improvements to stimulate private investment.
 - Encourages the creation of affordable housing.
 - Produces events and seminars that foster economic development and build a community.”
- **NON-RESIDENTIAL FACADE IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (NRFIP):**
 - **NRFIP Objective:** To eliminate slum and blight, remove deterioration; update exteriors of existing buildings in a manner that improves conditions of non-residential areas. (up to \$125k)
- **PROPERTY AND BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (PBIP)**
 - **PBIP Objectives:** Eliminate slum and blight, remove deterioration, retrofitting and rehabilitation of structures to remove undesirable uses, improve the “energy efficiency” of existing buildings in the CRA, or renovations designed to bring the structure into compliance with the current building codes. (Up to \$225k, but we are requesting \$550k)
 - **PBIP Eligible Project Costs:**
 - All costs associated with interior and exterior renovation of existing non-residential buildings including interior improvements, restoration, rehabilitation, and permanently attached fixtures or systems
 - Architectural, engineering, permit fees, application fees, property taxes, tax liens, City liens and property insurance.
 - **PBIP Funding Conditions:**
 - Job Creation and Retention Requirements: Job creation and/or job retention or another approved performance indicator may be a requirement for assistance provided through this program

Thank You CRA!



ART OF TEA