

E TRADE FINANCIAL Corp
 Form 424B4
 March 15, 2013
Table of Contents

Filed Pursuant to Rule 424(b)(4)

Registration No. 333-181390

CALCULATION OF REGISTRATION FEE

Title of Each Class of Securities to be Registered	Number of Shares to be Registered	Offering Price per Share(1)	Maximum Aggregate Offering Price	Amount of Registration Fee(2)
Common Stock, \$0.01 par value per share	27,394,448	\$11.59	\$317,501,653	\$43,307.23

- (1) Estimated pursuant to Rule 457(c), the offering price per share is based on the average of the high and low prices for our common stock on March 13, 2013, as reported on the NASDAQ Global Select Market.
- (2) Calculated pursuant to Rule 457(r) under the Securities Act at the statutory rate of \$136.40 per \$1,000,000 of securities registered and relating to the Registration Statement on Form S-3 (No. 333-181390) filed by E*TRADE Financial Corporation on May 14, 2012.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

(To prospectus dated May 14, 2012)

27,394,448 Shares

E*TRADE Financial Corporation

Common Stock

The selling stockholder named in this prospectus is selling 27,394,448 shares of our common stock. We will not receive any of the proceeds from the shares of common stock sold in this offering.

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol ETFC. The last reported sale price of our common stock on March 13, 2013 was \$11.82 per share.

Investing in our common stock involves risks. See Part I, Item 1A, Risk Factors of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2012, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement.

The underwriter has agreed to purchase our common stock from the selling stockholder at a price of \$11.28 per share, which will result in \$309,009,373.44 of proceeds to the selling stockholder before expenses.

The underwriter proposes to offer the shares of common stock from time to time for sale in negotiated transactions or otherwise, at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to such prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved of these securities, or determined if this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The underwriter is offering the shares of our common stock as described in Underwriting. Delivery of the shares will be made on or about March 19, 2013.

Citigroup

Edgar Filing: E TRADE FINANCIAL Corp - Form 424B4

The date of this prospectus supplement is March 13, 2013

Table of Contents**TABLE OF CONTENTS****PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT**

	Page
<u>ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT</u>	S-ii
<u>CAUTIONARY STATEMENT CONCERNING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u>	S-ii
<u>REVERSE STOCK SPLIT</u>	S-iii
<u>PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY</u>	S-1
<u>THE OFFERING</u>	S-3
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	S-4
<u>PRICE RANGE OF COMMON STOCK</u>	S-4
<u>SELLING STOCKHOLDER</u>	S-5
<u>DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK</u>	S-6
<u>MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL TAX CONSIDERATIONS FOR NON-U.S. HOLDERS OF COMMON STOCK</u>	S-10
<u>UNDERWRITING</u>	S-12
<u>LEGAL MATTERS</u>	S-18
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	S-18

PROSPECTUS

<u>THE COMPANY</u>	1
<u>WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION</u>	2
<u>SPECIAL NOTE ON FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS</u>	3
<u>USE OF PROCEEDS</u>	5
<u>DIVIDEND POLICY</u>	5
<u>RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS</u>	6
<u>DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK</u>	7
<u>DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK</u>	10
<u>DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES</u>	11
<u>DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS</u>	21
<u>DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASE CONTRACTS</u>	21
<u>DESCRIPTION OF UNITS</u>	21
<u>FORMS OF SECURITIES</u>	22
<u>SELLING SECURITY HOLDERS</u>	24
<u>PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION</u>	25
<u>VALIDITY OF SECURITIES</u>	26
<u>EXPERTS</u>	27

Neither we nor the selling stockholder has authorized anyone to provide you any information other than that contained in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, any related free writing prospectus issued by us (which we refer to as a Company free writing prospectus) and the documents incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. We and the selling stockholder take no responsibility for, and can provide no assurance as to the reliability of, any other information that others may give to you. This prospectus supplement may be used only where it is legal to sell the common stock offered hereby. You should not assume that the information in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, any related Company free writing prospectus or any document incorporated herein by reference is accurate as of any date other than the date of this prospectus supplement. Also, you should not assume that there has been no change in the affairs of E*TRADE since the date of this prospectus supplement. Our business, financial condition, results of operations and prospects may have changed since that date.

Edgar Filing: E TRADE FINANCIAL Corp - Form 424B4

We refer to E*TRADE Financial Corporation in this prospectus supplement as E*TRADE, the Company, we, us, our or comparable terms. All such references refer to E*TRADE Financial Corporation and its consolidated subsidiaries unless expressly indicated or the context otherwise requires.

Table of Contents

ABOUT THIS PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

This prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus are part of a registration statement that we filed with the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC), utilizing a shelf registration process. This document contains two parts. The first part consists of this prospectus supplement, which provides you with specific information about the shares of our common stock that the selling stockholder is selling in this offering and about the offering itself. The second part, the accompanying prospectus dated May 14, 2012, provides more general information, some of which may not apply to this offering. If the description of this offering varies between this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, you should rely on the information contained in this prospectus supplement.

Both this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus include or incorporate by reference important information about us, our common stock and other information you should know before investing in our common stock. Before purchasing any shares of common stock, you should carefully read both this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, together with the additional information described under the heading *Where You Can Find More Information*.

CAUTIONARY STATEMENT CONCERNING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Certain information included in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus and the documents we incorporate herein or therein by reference may be deemed to be forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act), and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act). Statements that are not statements of historical facts are hereby identified as forward-looking statements for these purposes. In particular, statements that we make under the heading *Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations* in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012 relating to our overall volume trends, regulatory matters, industry forces, loan losses, margin trends, anticipated capital expenditures and liquidity, and our strategies are forward-looking statements. When used or incorporated by reference in this document, the words *may*, *believe*, *expect*, *intend*, *anticipate*, *estimate*, *project*, *plan*, *should* and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements. We claim the protection of the safe harbor for forward-looking statements contained in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 for all forward-looking statements.

These statements are based on assumptions and assessments made by our management in light of their experience and their perception of market conditions, historical trends, current conditions, expected future developments and other factors they believe to be appropriate. Any forward-looking statements are not guarantees of our future performance and are subject to risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results, developments and business decisions to differ materially from those contemplated by such forward-looking statements. Except as expressly stated herein, we disclaim any duty to update any forward-looking statements. Some of the factors that may cause actual results, developments and business decisions to differ materially from those contemplated by such forward-looking statements are set forth under *Risk Factors* and discussed under the heading *Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations* in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, including the following:

adverse changes in governmental regulations or enforcement practices, including those that may result from the implementation and enforcement of recently enacted regulatory reform legislation;

our potential inability to service our substantial indebtedness and, if necessary, to raise sufficient additional capital, and the potential negative regulatory consequences that may result therefrom;

our potential inability to return to and maintain profitability on a consistent basis;

potential increases in our provision for loan losses if the residential real estate and credit markets deteriorate beyond our expectations;

Table of Contents

our potential inability to retain our current customer assets and accounts;

our potential inability to reduce the credit risk in our loan portfolio;

liabilities and costs associated with investigations and lawsuits, including those relating to our losses from mortgage loans and asset-backed securities;

our dependence on payments from our subsidiaries, many of which are subject to laws and regulations that authorize regulatory bodies to block or reduce the flow of funds to us;

our potential inability to compete effectively;

our potential inability to manage the effects of changes in interest rates;

adverse changes in general economic conditions, including fluctuations in interest rates; and

other factors described elsewhere in this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus or in our current and future filings with the SEC.

We do not undertake any obligation, other than as required by law, to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events, future risks or otherwise. New information, future events or future risks may cause the forward-looking events we discuss in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus or the incorporated documents not to occur.

REVERSE STOCK SPLIT

In June 2010, we completed a 1-for-10 reverse stock split and a corresponding decrease to our authorized shares of common stock to a total of 400 million shares. All prior periods presented in this prospectus supplement or the documents incorporated herein by reference have been adjusted to reflect the impact of this reverse stock split, including the impact on basic and diluted weighted-average shares and shares issued and outstanding.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT SUMMARY

The following summary highlights information contained elsewhere in, or incorporated by reference into, this prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus. Before deciding whether to invest in our common stock, you should carefully read the entire prospectus supplement and the accompanying prospectus, including the section entitled Risk Factors, as well as the documents incorporated by reference herein and any Company free writing prospectus.

Overview

E*TRADE Financial Corporation is a financial services company that provides online brokerage and related products and services primarily to individual retail investors, under the brand E*TRADE Financial. Our primary focus is to profitably grow our online brokerage business, which includes our self-directed trading and investing customers. We also provide investor-focused banking products, primarily sweep deposits and savings products, to retail investors. Our competitive strategy is to attract and retain customers by emphasizing value beyond price, ease of use and innovation, with delivery of our products and services primarily through online and technology-intensive channels.

We operate directly and through numerous subsidiaries, many of which are overseen by governmental and self-regulatory organizations. Our most significant subsidiaries are described below:

E*TRADE Bank is a federally chartered savings bank that provides investor-focused banking products to retail customers nationwide and deposit accounts insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation;

E*TRADE Securities LLC is a registered broker-dealer and is a wholly-owned operating subsidiary of E*TRADE Bank. It is the primary provider of brokerage products and services to our customers;

E*TRADE Clearing LLC is the clearing firm for our brokerage subsidiaries and is a wholly-owned operating subsidiary of E*TRADE Bank. Its main purpose is to clear and settle transactions for customers of other broker-dealers, including E*TRADE Securities LLC; and

G1 Execution Services, LLC (formerly known as E*TRADE Capital Markets, LLC) is a registered broker-dealer and market maker. We provide services to customers in the U.S. through our website at www.etrade.com. In addition to our website, we also provide services through our network of customer service representatives and financial consultants. We also provide these services over the phone or in person through our 30 E*TRADE branches.

Table of Contents

Risk Factors

An investment in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. For more information regarding the risks related to an investment in our common stock, see the risks disclosed in Part I, Item 1A, "Risk Factors" of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the fiscal year ended December 31, 2012, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement. These risks include, but are not limited to, the following:

We have incurred significant losses in recent years, primarily losses in our mortgage loan portfolio and other securities held on our balance sheet, and cannot assure that we will be profitable in the future.

We will continue to experience losses in our mortgage loan portfolio.

We rely on third party service providers to perform certain functions, and an interruption in or the cessation of service by any third party service provider and our inability to make alternative arrangements in a timely manner could have a material impact on our business and financial performance.

Loss of customers and assets could destabilize us or result in lower revenues in future periods.

We have a large amount of debt and we are substantially restricted by the terms of our corporate debt. Moreover, we may not be able to generate sufficient cash to service all of our indebtedness and may be forced to take other actions to satisfy our obligations under our indebtedness, which may not be successful.

We are subject to investigations and lawsuits as a result of our losses from mortgage loans and asset-backed securities.

We conduct all of our operations through subsidiaries and have no revenue sources other than dividends from our subsidiaries, which are subject to advance regulatory approval in the case of our most significant subsidiaries. In particular, the Office of the Comptroller of the Currency (OCC), together with the Federal Reserve, must approve any dividends to us from our banking subsidiary, E*TRADE Bank, and from our primary brokerage subsidiaries, E*TRADE Securities LLC and E*TRADE Clearing LLC.

Recently enacted regulatory reform legislation may have a material impact on our operations and, if we are unable to meet the new requirements, including any new requirement under applicable implementing regulations, we may face negative regulatory consequences.

If we do not maintain the capital levels required by the regulators, we may be fined or even forced out of business. In particular, pursuant to memoranda of understanding that we entered into with the Federal Reserve and that E*TRADE Bank entered into with the OCC, we and E*TRADE Bank implemented both capital and de-leveraging plans and are required to continue to monitor and address these matters with the Federal Reserve and the OCC.

Corporate Information

Our corporate offices are located at 1271 Avenue of the Americas, 14th Floor, New York, New York 10020 (tel: 646-521-4300). We were incorporated in California in 1982 and reincorporated in Delaware in July 1996. We maintain a website at www.etrade.com where general information about us is available. The information on or accessible through our website is not a part of, or incorporated by reference in, this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus.

Table of Contents

THE OFFERING

Issuer	E*TRADE Financial Corporation, a Delaware corporation.
Selling stockholder	Citadel Equity Fund Ltd.
Common stock offered by the selling stockholder	27,394,448 shares.
Common stock outstanding as of March 11, 2013	286,741,268 shares.
Use of proceeds	We will not receive any proceeds from the sale of shares in this offering. See Use of Proceeds.
Risk factors	An investment in our common stock involves a high degree of risk. Please refer to Prospectus Supplement Summary Risk Factors and other information included in this prospectus supplement, the accompanying prospectus, the documents incorporated by reference herein and therein and any Company free writing prospectus for a discussion of factors you should carefully consider before investing in our common stock.
Registrar and transfer agent	American Stock Transfer & Trust Company.
Market and trading symbol for the common stock	Our common stock is listed and traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol ETFC.

The number of shares of common stock outstanding as of March 11, 2013 does not include:

- (1) 2,261,391 shares subject to outstanding options at a weighted average exercise price of \$65.64 per share as of March 11, 2013;
- (2) 4,292,805 shares underlying outstanding restricted stock units as of March 11, 2013;
- (3) 7,768,914 additional shares reserved as of March 11, 2013 for future issuance under our equity incentive plans; and
- (4) 4,124,984 shares of our common stock issuable upon conversion of outstanding Class A Senior Convertible Debentures and Class B Senior Convertible Debentures due 2019 as of March 11, 2013.

Table of Contents**USE OF PROCEEDS**

All of the shares of our common stock covered by this prospectus supplement are being sold by the selling stockholder identified in this prospectus supplement. We will not receive any of the proceeds from the sale of shares in this offering.

PRICE RANGE OF COMMON STOCK

Our common stock is traded on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol ETFC. The following table sets forth, for the periods presented, the high and low sales prices per share of our common stock as reported on the NASDAQ Global Select Market.

	High	Low
<u>Fiscal Year Ending December 31, 2013</u>		
First Quarter (through March 13, 2013)	\$ 11.82	\$ 9.06
<u>Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2012</u>		
First Quarter	\$ 11.50	\$ 7.77
Second Quarter	\$ 11.16	\$ 7.39
Third Quarter	\$ 10.09	\$ 7.08
Fourth Quarter	\$ 9.54	\$ 7.70
<u>Fiscal Year Ended December 31, 2011</u>		
First Quarter	\$ 18.13	\$ 14.6
Second Quarter	\$ 16.83	\$ 13.23
Third Quarter	\$ 16.66	\$ 9.07
Fourth Quarter	\$ 11.69	\$ 7.42

Table of Contents**SELLING STOCKHOLDER**

The following table and related footnotes set forth information with respect to the beneficial ownership of our common stock held as of March 11, 2013 by the selling stockholder, the number of shares being offered hereby and information with respect to shares to be beneficially owned by the selling stockholder assuming all the shares covered by the prospectus supplement are sold.

Beneficial ownership is determined in accordance with the rules of the SEC. These rules generally attribute beneficial ownership of securities to persons who possess sole or shared voting power or investment power with respect to such securities. In computing the number of shares beneficially owned by a person and the percentage ownership of that person, shares of common stock subject to options, warrants or other convertible securities held by that person that are currently exercisable or exercisable within 60 days of March 11, 2013 are deemed outstanding but are not deemed outstanding for computing the percentage ownership of any other person. The percentages in the following table are based on 286,741,268 shares outstanding as of March 11, 2013.

Selling Stockholder	Shares Beneficially Owned Prior to the Offering		Shares Offered Hereby	Shares Beneficially Owned After the Offering	
	Number	Percentage		Number	Percentage
Citadel Equity Fund Ltd.	27,394,448	9.6%	27,394,448	0	0%

For information regarding material relationships with the selling stockholder, see **Certain Relationships and Related Transactions** in our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A for the 2012 annual meeting of stockholders, which is incorporated by reference in this prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF CAPITAL STOCK

The following description of our capital stock is based upon our Restated Certificate of Incorporation (Certificate of Incorporation), our Bylaws (Bylaws) and applicable provisions of law. We have summarized certain portions of the Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws below. The summary is not complete. The Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws are incorporated by reference in the registration statement of which this prospectus supplement forms a part and are exhibits to our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012. You should read the Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws for the provisions that are important to you.

Certain provisions of the Delaware General Corporation Law (DGCL), the Certificate of Incorporation and the Bylaws summarized in the following paragraphs may have an anti-takeover effect. This may delay, defer or prevent a tender offer or takeover attempt that a stockholder might consider in its best interests, including those attempts that might result in a premium over the market price for its shares.

General

Our authorized capital stock consists of 400,000,000 shares of common stock, \$0.01 par value per share and 1,000,000 shares of preferred stock, \$0.01 par value per share. As of March 11, 2013, we had outstanding 286,741,268 shares of our common stock. As of March 11, 2013, we had 1,452 stockholders of record. We have no shares of preferred stock outstanding.

Each holder of common stock is entitled to one vote per share held on all matters to be voted upon by the stockholders. Subject to preferences that may be applicable to any outstanding preferred stock, the holders of common stock are entitled to receive ratably the dividends, if any, as may be declared from time to time by our Board of Directors out of funds legally available for the payment of dividends. If we liquidate, dissolve or wind up our business, the holders of common stock are entitled to share ratably in all assets remaining after payment of liabilities, subject to prior distribution rights of preferred stock, if any, then outstanding. The common stock has no preemptive or conversion rights or other subscription rights. There are no redemption or sinking fund provisions applicable to the common stock. All outstanding shares of common stock are fully paid and non-assessable, and any shares of common stock to be issued upon completion of our offering will be fully paid and non-assessable.

Anti-takeover Effects or Provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation, Bylaws and Delaware Law

Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws

Our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws contain provisions that could discourage potential takeover attempts and make more difficult attempts by stockholders to change management.

Our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws permit the board to create new directorships and to elect new directors to serve for a term expiring at the next annual meeting of stockholders. In uncontested elections, each director must be elected to the board by the majority of the votes cast with respect to the director's election, and must submit his or her resignation to the board if he or she does not obtain the required majority. The board has the power to decide whether or not to accept the resignation, but must publicly disclose its decision and, if the resignation is rejected, its rationale within 90 days following certification of the stockholder vote. The board (or its remaining members, even though less than a quorum) is also empowered to fill vacancies on the board occurring for any reason, including a vacancy from an enlargement of the board; however, a vacancy created by the removal of a director by the stockholders or court order may be filled only by the vote of a majority of the shares at a meeting at which a quorum is present. Any director so elected according to the preceding sentence shall hold office for a term expiring at the next annual meeting of stockholders. Our Certificate of Incorporation does not provide for cumulative voting in the election of directors.

Table of Contents

Our Certificate of Incorporation provides that stockholders may take action only at an annual meeting or special meeting and may not take action by written consent. Special meetings of our stockholders may only be called by our Chairman of the Board, our President, a majority of the number of directors constituting the full board, or the holders of not less than 10% of our outstanding voting stock.

Under the terms of our Bylaws, stockholders who intend to present business or nominate persons for election to the board at annual meetings of stockholders must provide notice to our corporate secretary no more than 150 days and no less than 120 days prior to the date of the proxy statement for the prior annual meeting, as more fully set forth in our Bylaws.

Our Certificate of Incorporation provides that, in addition to the requirements of the Delaware General Corporation Law described below, any business combination with an interested stockholder, as these terms are defined in our Certificate of Incorporation and summarized below, requires the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock, unless two-thirds of the number of directors constituting the full board approve the transaction.

A business combination is defined for purposes of this provision of our Certificate of Incorporation as:

a merger or consolidation of us or any of our subsidiaries with an interested stockholder or with a corporation that is or would become an affiliate or associate, with these terms defined for purposes of this provision of our Certificate of Incorporation as they are defined in the Exchange Act, of an interested stockholder,

any sale, lease, exchange, mortgage, pledge, transfer or other disposition to or with, or proposed by or on behalf of, an interested stockholder or any affiliate or associate of an interested stockholder involving any assets of ours or our subsidiaries that constitute 5% or more of our total assets,

the issuance or transfer by us or by any of our subsidiaries of any of our or their securities to, or proposed by or on behalf of, an interested stockholder or any affiliate or associate of an interested stockholder in exchange for cash, securities or other property that constitute 5% or more of our total assets,

the adoption of any plan or proposal for our liquidation or dissolution or any spin-off or split-up of any kind of us or any of our subsidiaries, proposed by or on behalf of an interested stockholder or an affiliate or associate of an interested stockholder, or

any reclassification, recapitalization, or merger or consolidation of us with any of our subsidiaries or any similar transaction that has the effect, directly or indirectly, of increasing the percentage of the outstanding shares of (i) any class of equity securities of us or any of our subsidiaries or (ii) any class of securities of us or any of our subsidiaries convertible into equity securities of us or any of our subsidiaries, in either case, which are directly or indirectly owned by an interested stockholder or an affiliate or associate of an interested stockholder.

An interested stockholder is defined for purposes of this provision of our Certificate of Incorporation as an individual, corporation or other entity which, as of the record date for notice of the transaction or immediately prior to the transaction:

is one of our associates or affiliates and at any time within the prior two-year period was the beneficial owner, directly or indirectly, of 10% or more of our outstanding voting securities, or

is, or was at any time within the prior two-year period, the beneficial owner, directly or indirectly, of 10% or more of our outstanding voting securities, or

Edgar Filing: E TRADE FINANCIAL Corp - Form 424B4

is, under circumstances described in more detail in our Certificate of Incorporation, an assignee of any of the persons described above.

S-7

Table of Contents

A person is the beneficial owner of any voting securities which:

that person or any of its affiliates or associates, beneficially owns, directly or indirectly,

that person or any of its affiliates or associates has, directly or indirectly, the right to acquire (whether such right is exercisable immediately or subject only to the passage of time), pursuant to any agreement, arrangement or understanding or upon the exercise of conversion rights, exchange rights, warrants or options, or otherwise, or the right to vote pursuant to any agreement, arrangement or understanding, or

are beneficially owned, directly or indirectly, by any other person with which the person in question or any of its affiliates or associates has any agreement, arrangement or understanding for the purpose of acquiring, holding, voting or disposing of any shares of capital stock.

These provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws as currently in effect may deter any potential unfriendly offers or other efforts to obtain control of us that are not approved by our Board of Directors. Such provisions could deprive our stockholders of opportunities to realize a premium on their common stock and could make removal of incumbent directors more difficult. At the same time, these provisions may have the effect of inducing any persons seeking to control us or seeking a business combination with us to negotiate terms acceptable to our Board of Directors. These provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws can be changed or amended only by the affirmative vote of the holders of at least two-thirds of our outstanding voting stock.

In addition, our Board of Directors has the authority to issue preferred stock in one or more series and to fix the powers, rights, designations preferences, qualifications, limitations and restrictions applicable to the preferred stock. The issuance of preferred stock may have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing potential takeover attempts without further action by the stockholders and may adversely affect the voting and other rights of the holders of our common stock.

Delaware Law

We are subject to the provisions of Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law regulating corporate takeovers. In general, Section 203 prohibits a Delaware corporation from engaging in any business combination with any interested stockholder for a period of three years following the date that the stockholder became an interested stockholder, unless:

the transaction is approved by the board before the date the interested stockholder attained that status;

upon consummation of the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder, the interested stockholder owned at least 85% of the voting stock of the corporation outstanding at the time the transaction commenced; or

on or after the date the business combination is approved by the board and authorized at a meeting of stockholders by at least two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock that is not owned by the interested stockholder.

Section 203 defines *business combination* to include the following:

any sale, lease, exchange, mortgage, transfer, pledge or other disposition of 10% or more of the assets of the corporation involving the interested stockholder;

Edgar Filing: E TRADE FINANCIAL Corp - Form 424B4

any merger or consolidation involving the corporation or any majority-owned subsidiary and the interested stockholder;

subject to certain exceptions, any transaction that results in the issuance or transfer by the corporation or by any majority-owned subsidiary of any stock of the corporation or of such subsidiary to the interested stockholder;

S-8

Table of Contents

any transaction involving the corporation or any majority-owned subsidiary that has the effect of increasing the proportionate share of the stock of any class or series of the corporation beneficially owned by the interested stockholder; or

the receipt by the interested stockholder of the benefit of any loans, advances, guarantees, pledges or other financial benefits provided by or through the corporation or any majority-owned subsidiary.

In general, Section 203 defines interested stockholder to be any entity or person beneficially owning 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation and any entity or person affiliated with or controlling or controlled by any of these entities or persons.

A Delaware corporation may opt out of this provision either with an express provision in its original Certificate of Incorporation or in an amendment to its Certificate of Incorporation or Bylaws approved by its stockholders. We have not opted out of this provision. Section 203 could prohibit or delay mergers or other takeover or change in control attempts and, accordingly, may discourage attempts to acquire us.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, N.A.

Listing

Our common stock is listed for trading on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the trading symbol ETFC.

Table of Contents

MATERIAL U.S. FEDERAL TAX CONSIDERATIONS FOR NON-U.S. HOLDERS OF COMMON STOCK

The following is a general discussion of the material U.S. federal income and estate tax consequences of the ownership and disposition of our common stock by a beneficial owner that is a Non-U.S. Holder, other than a Non-U.S. Holder that owns, or has owned, actually or constructively, more than 5% of our common stock. Except as otherwise modified for U.S. federal estate tax purposes, a Non-U.S. Holder is a person or entity that, for U.S. federal income tax purposes, is a:

nonresident alien individual, other than a former citizen or resident of the United States subject to tax as an expatriate;

foreign corporation; or

foreign estate or trust.

A Non-U.S. Holder does not include a nonresident alien individual who is present in the United States for 183 days or more in the taxable year of disposition of our common stock. Such an individual is urged to consult his or her own tax adviser regarding the U.S. federal income tax consequences of the sale, exchange or other disposition of our common stock.

If an entity or arrangement that is classified as a partnership for U.S. federal income tax purposes holds our common stock, the U.S. federal income tax treatment of a partner will generally depend on the status of the partner and the activities of the partnership. Partnerships holding our common stock and partners in such partnerships are urged to consult their tax advisers as to the particular U.S. federal income tax consequences of holding and disposing of our common stock.

This discussion is based on the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended (the Code), and administrative pronouncements, judicial decisions and final, temporary and proposed Treasury Regulations, changes to any of which subsequent to the date of this prospectus supplement may affect the tax consequences described herein (possibly with retroactive effect). This discussion does not address all aspects of U.S. federal income and estate taxation that may be relevant to Non-U.S. Holders in light of their particular circumstances (including the Medicare Contribution tax) and does not address any tax consequences arising under U.S. federal gift tax laws or under the laws of any state, local or foreign jurisdiction. Prospective holders are urged to consult their tax advisers with respect to the particular tax consequences to them of owning and disposing of our common stock, including the consequences under the laws of any state, local or foreign jurisdiction.

Dividends

As discussed under Dividend Policy in the accompanying prospectus, we do not currently expect to pay cash dividends. In the event that we do pay dividends, dividends paid to a Non-U.S. Holder of our common stock generally will be subject to withholding tax at a 30% rate or a reduced rate specified by an applicable income tax treaty. In order to obtain a reduced rate of withholding, a Non-U.S. Holder will be required to provide an Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN certifying its entitlement to benefits under a treaty.

If dividends paid to a Non-U.S. Holder are effectively connected with the Non-U.S. Holder's conduct of a trade or business in the United States (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, are attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by the Non-U.S. Holder in the United States), the Non-U.S. Holder, although exempt from the withholding tax discussed in the preceding paragraph, will generally be taxed in the same manner as a U.S. person, except that the Non-U.S. Holder will be required to provide a properly executed Internal Revenue Service Form W-8ECI in order to claim an exemption from withholding. A corporate Non-U.S. Holder receiving effectively connected dividends may also be subject to an additional branch profits tax imposed at a rate of 30% (or a lower treaty rate).

Table of Contents

Gain on Disposition of Common Stock

A Non-U.S. Holder generally will not be subject to U.S. federal income tax on gain realized on a sale or other disposition of our common stock unless:

the gain is effectively connected with a trade or business of the Non-U.S. Holder in the United States (and, if required by an applicable income tax treaty, is attributable to a permanent establishment maintained by the Non-U.S. Holder in the United States), or

the Company is or has been a U.S. real property holding corporation, as defined in the Code, at any time within the five-year period preceding the disposition or the Non-U.S. Holder's holding period, whichever period is shorter, and our common stock has ceased to be regularly traded on an established securities market prior to the beginning of the calendar year in which the sale or disposition occurs.

The Company believes that it is not, and does not anticipate becoming, a U.S. real property holding corporation.

If a Non-U.S. Holder is engaged in a trade or business in the United States and gain recognized by the Non-U.S. Holder on a sale or other disposition of our common stock is effectively connected with a conduct of such trade or business, the Non-U.S. Holder will generally be taxed in the same manner as a U.S. person, subject to an applicable income tax treaty providing otherwise. Such Non-U.S. Holders are urged to consult their own tax advisers with respect to the U.S. tax consequences of the ownership and disposition of our common stock, including the possible imposition of a branch profits tax in the case of a corporate Non-U.S. Holder at a rate of 30% (or a lower treaty rate).

Information Reporting Requirements and Backup Withholding

Information returns will be filed with the Internal Revenue Service in connection with payments of dividends on our common stock. Unless the Non-U.S. Holder complies with certification procedures to establish that it is not a U.S. person, information returns may be filed with the Internal Revenue Service in connection with the proceeds from a sale or other disposition of our common stock and the Non-U.S. Holder may be subject to U.S. backup withholding on dividend payments on our common stock or on the proceeds from a sale or other disposition of our common stock. The Non-U.S. Holder's provision of a properly completed Internal Revenue Service Form W-8BEN certifying its non-U.S. status will satisfy the certification requirements necessary to avoid backup withholding. The amount of any backup withholding from a payment to a Non-U.S. Holder will be allowed as a credit against such holder's U.S. federal income tax liability and may entitle such holder to a refund, provided that the required information is timely furnished to the Internal Revenue Service.

FATCA Withholding

Recent legislation generally imposes withholding at a rate of 30% on payments to certain foreign entities (including financial intermediaries) of dividends on and the gross proceeds of dispositions of U.S. common stock, unless various U.S. information reporting and due diligence requirements (generally relating to ownership by U.S. persons of interests in or accounts with those entities) have been satisfied. This withholding will apply to payments of dividends on our common stock made after December 31, 2013, and to payments of gross proceeds from a sale or other disposition of our common stock made after December 31, 2016. Non-U.S. Holders should consult their tax advisers regarding the possible implications of this legislation on their investment in our common stock.

Federal Estate Tax

Individual Non-U.S. Holders (as specifically defined for U.S. federal estate tax purposes) and entities the property of which is potentially includible in such an individual's gross estate for U.S. federal estate tax purposes (for example, a trust funded by such an individual and with respect to which the individual has retained certain interests or powers), should note that, absent an applicable treaty benefit, our common stock will be treated as U.S. situs property subject to U.S. federal estate tax.

Table of Contents

UNDERWRITING

Under the terms and subject to the conditions contained in an underwriting agreement dated March 13, 2013, the selling stockholder has agreed to sell to Citigroup Global Markets Inc., the sole underwriter, and Citigroup Global Markets Inc. has agreed to purchase, 27,394,448 shares of common stock, subject to receipt and acceptance by the underwriter and subject to its right to reject any order in whole or in part.

The underwriter proposes to offer the shares of common stock offered hereby from time to time for sale in one or more transactions on the NASDAQ Global Select Market, in the over-the-counter market, through negotiated transactions or otherwise at market prices prevailing at the time of sale, at prices related to prevailing market prices or at negotiated prices, subject to receipt of acceptance by it and subject to its right to reject any order in whole or in part. The underwriter may effect such transactions by selling the shares to or through dealers and such dealers may receive compensation in the form of discounts, concessions or commissions from the underwriter and/or purchasers of shares for whom they may act as agents or to whom they may sell as principal. The difference between the price at which the underwriter purchase shares and the price at which the underwriter resells such shares may be deemed underwriting compensation. The underwriting agreement provides that the underwriter is obligated to purchase all the shares of common stock if any are purchased.

We estimate that the expenses for this offering payable by us will be approximately \$300,000.

We have agreed, for a period ending on 90 days after the date of this prospectus supplement, not to (1) offer, pledge, announce the intention to sell, sell, contract to sell, sell any option or contract to purchase, purchase any option or contract to sell, grant any option, right or warrant to purchase or otherwise transfer or dispose of, directly or indirectly, any shares of our common stock or any securities convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for our common stock or (2) enter into any swap or other agreement that transfers, in whole or in part, any of the economic consequences of ownership of the common stock, whether any such transaction described in clause (1) or (2) above is to be settled by delivery of common stock or such other securities, in cash or otherwise, without the prior written consent of the underwriter; provided that the foregoing prohibitions shall not apply to (a) any options or other awards (including without limitation restricted stock or restricted stock units), or shares of common stock issued with respect to such options and other awards, granted under our stock plans or otherwise granted in equity compensation arrangements with our directors, officers, employees and consultants, or (b) any issuance of common stock issued in connection with exchange transactions for our 7.875% Senior Notes, due 2015, 6.75% Senior Notes due 2016, our 6% Senior Notes due 2017, and our 6.375% Senior Notes due 2019 (including any shares of common stock issued upon conversion, exercise or exchange of any securities issued in such exchange transactions, including the issuance and conversion, exercise and exchange of the outstanding convertible debentures).

Our directors and executive officers have entered into lock-up agreements with the underwriter prior to the commencement of this offering pursuant to which we and each of these persons, subject to certain exceptions, for a period ending on 60 days after the date of this prospectus supplement, may not, without the prior written consent of the underwriter, (1) offer, pledge, announce the intention to sell, sell, contract to sell, sell any option or contract to purchase, purchase any option or contract to sell, grant any option, right or warrant to purchase, or otherwise transfer or dispose of, directly or indirectly, (a) any shares of our common stock they beneficially owned prior to March 13, 2013, (b) any securities beneficially owned prior to such date that are convertible, exercisable or exchangeable for our common stock (including, without limitation, common stock which may be deemed to be beneficially owned by such directors and executive officers in accordance with the rules and regulations of the SEC, and securities which may be issued upon exercise of a stock option or warrant) or (c) any shares of our common stock received in connection with the conversion, exercise or exchange of any securities beneficially owned prior to such date, (2) enter into any swap or other agreement that transfers, in whole or in part, any of the economic consequences of ownership of (a) any shares of our common stock beneficially owned prior to March 13, 2013, (b) any securities beneficially owned prior to such date that are convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for our common stock or (c) any shares of our common stock received in connection

Table of Contents

with the conversion, exercise or exchange of any securities beneficially owned prior to such date, whether any such transaction described in clause (1) or (2) above is to be settled by delivery of our common stock or such other securities, in cash or otherwise or (3) make any demand for or exercise any right with respect to the registration of (a) any shares of our common stock or any security convertible into or exercisable or exchangeable for our common stock that are, in each case, beneficially owned prior to March 13, 2013 or (b) any shares of our common stock received in connection with the conversion, exercise or exchange of any securities beneficially owned prior to such date. The foregoing restrictions shall not apply to any of our directors or officers at such time that such person is no longer our employee or director. The underwriter, in its sole discretion, may release the common stock and other securities subject to the lock-up agreements described above in whole or in part at any time with or without notice.

We and the selling stockholder have agreed to indemnify the underwriter against certain liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, and to contribute to payments that the underwriter may be required to make in that respect.

In connection with this offering, the underwriter may engage in stabilizing transactions, which involves making bids for, purchasing and selling shares of our common stock in the open market for the purpose of preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of our common stock while this offering is in progress. These stabilizing transactions may include making naked short sales of our common stock, which involves the sale by the underwriter of a greater number of shares of our common stock than they are required to purchase in this offering, and purchasing shares of our common stock in the open market to cover positions created by any such short sales. A naked short position is more likely to be created if the underwriter is concerned that there may be downward pressure on the price of our common stock in the open market that could adversely affect investors who purchase in this offering.

The underwriter has advised us that, pursuant to Regulation M of the Securities Act, it may also engage in other activities that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of our common stock. These activities may have the effect of raising or maintaining the market price of our common stock or preventing or retarding a decline in the market price of our common stock, and, as a result, the price of our common stock may be higher than the price that otherwise might exist in the open market. If the underwriter commences these activities, it may discontinue them at any time. The underwriter may carry out these transactions on the NASDAQ Global Select Market, in the over-the-counter market or otherwise.

Other Relationships

The underwriter and its affiliates are full service financial institutions engaged in various activities, which may include securities trading, commercial and investment banking, financial advisory, investment management, investment research, principal investment, hedging, financing and brokerage activities. The underwriter and certain of its affiliates have, from time to time, performed, and may in the future perform, various financial advisory and investment banking services for us, for which they received or will receive customary fees and expenses.

In addition, in the ordinary course of their business activities, the underwriter and its affiliates may make or hold a broad array of investments and actively trade debt and equity securities (or related derivative securities) and financial instruments (including bank loans) for its own account and for the accounts of its customers. Such investments and securities activities may involve securities and/or instruments of ours or our affiliates. If the underwriter or its affiliates have a lending relationship with us, they routinely hedge their credit exposure to us consistent with their customary risk management policies. Typically, the underwriter and its affiliates would hedge such exposure by entering into transactions which consist of either the purchase of credit default swaps or the creation of short positions in our securities, including potentially the common stock offered hereby. Any such short positions could adversely affect future trading prices of the common stock offered hereby. The underwriter and its affiliates may also make investment recommendations and/or publish or express independent research

Table of Contents

views in respect of such securities or financial instruments and may hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long and/or short positions in such securities and instruments.

Notice to Prospective Investors in the European Economic Area

In relation to each member state of the European Economic Area which has implemented the Prospectus Directive (each, a Relevant Member State), including each Relevant Member State that has implemented the 2010 PD Amending Directive with regard to persons to whom an offer of securities is addressed and the denomination per unit of the offer of securities (each, an Early Implementing Member State), with effect from and including the date on which the Prospectus Directive is implemented in that Relevant Member State (the Relevant Implementation Date), no offer of shares will be made to the public in that Relevant Member State (other than offers (the Permitted Public Offers) where a prospectus will be published in relation to the shares that has been approved by the competent authority in a Relevant Member State or, where appropriate, approved in another Relevant Member State and notified to the competent authority in that Relevant Member State, all in accordance with the Prospectus Directive), except that with effect from and including that Relevant Implementation Date, offers of shares may be made to the public in that Relevant Member State at any time:

- (1) to qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive, including:
 - (a) in the case of Relevant Member States other than Early Implementing Member States), legal entities which are authorized or regulated to operate in the financial markets or, if not so authorized or regulated, whose corporate purpose is solely to invest in securities, or any legal entity which has two or more of (i) an average of at least 250 employees during the last financial year; (ii) a total balance sheet of more than 43.0 million and (iii) an annual turnover of more than 50.0 million as shown in its last annual or consolidated accounts; or
 - (b) (in the case of Early Implementing Member States), persons or entities that are described in points (1) to (4) of Section I of Annex II to Directive 2004/39/EC, and those who are treated on request as professional clients in accordance with Annex II to Directive 2004/39/EC, or recognized as eligible counterparties in accordance with Article 24 of Directive 2004/39/EC unless they have requested that they be treated as non-professional clients;
- (2) to fewer than 100 (or, in the case of Early Implementing Member States, 150) natural or legal persons (other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive), as permitted in the Prospectus Directive, subject to obtaining the prior consent of the representatives for any such offer; or
- (3) in any other circumstances falling within Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive, provided that no such offer of shares shall result in a requirement for the publication of a prospectus pursuant to Article 3 of the Prospectus Directive or of a supplement to a prospectus pursuant to Article 16 of the Prospectus Directive.

Each person in a Relevant Member State (other than a Relevant Member State where there is a Permitted Public Offer) who initially acquires any shares or to whom any offer is made will be deemed to have represented, acknowledged and agreed that (A) it is a qualified investor , and (B) in the case of any shares acquired by it as a financial intermediary, as that term is used in Article 3(2) of the Prospectus Directive, (x) the shares acquired by it in the offering have not been acquired on behalf of, nor have they been acquired with a view to their offer or resale to, persons in any Relevant Member State other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive, or in circumstances in which the prior consent of the Subscribers has been given to the offer or resale, or (y) where shares have been acquired by it on behalf of persons in any Relevant Member State other than qualified investors as defined in the Prospectus Directive, the offer of those shares to it is not treated under the Prospectus Directive as having been made to such persons.

For the purpose of the above provisions, the expression an offer to the public in relation to any shares in any Relevant Member State means the communication in any form and by any means of sufficient information

Table of Contents

on the terms of the offer of any shares to be offered so as to enable an investor to decide to purchase any shares, as the same may be varied in the Relevant Member State by any measure implementing the Prospectus Directive in the Relevant Member State and the expression "Prospectus Directive" means Directive 2003/71 EC (including the 2010 PD Amending Directive, in the case of Early Implementing Member States) and includes any relevant implementing measure in each Relevant Member State and the expression "2010 PD Amending Directive" means Directive 2010/73/EU.

Notice to Prospective Investors in the United Kingdom

Each underwriter has represented and agreed that:

- (1) it has only communicated or caused to be communicated and will only communicate or cause to be communicated an invitation or inducement to engage in investment activity (within the meaning of Section 21 of the FSMA) received by it in connection with the issue or sale of the shares of our common stock in circumstances in which Section 21(1) of the FSMA does not apply to us; and
- (2) it has complied and will comply with all applicable provisions of the FSMA with respect to anything done by it in relation to the shares of our common stock in, from or otherwise involving the United Kingdom.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Switzerland

The shares being sold by the selling stockholder in this offering may not be publicly offered in Switzerland and will not be listed on the SIX Swiss Exchange ("SIX") or on any other stock exchange or regulated trading facility in Switzerland. This document has been prepared without regard to the disclosure standards for issuance prospectuses under art. 652a or art. 1156 of the Swiss Code of Obligations or the disclosure standards for listing prospectuses under art. 27 ff. of the SIX Listing Rules or the listing rules of any other stock exchange or regulated trading facility in Switzerland. Neither this document nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the offering or the shares being sold in the offering may be publicly distributed or otherwise made publicly available in Switzerland.

Neither this document nor any other offering or marketing material relating to the offering, the Company or the shares being sold in the offering have been or will be filed with or approved by any Swiss regulatory authority. In particular, this document will not be filed with, and the offering will not be supervised by, the Swiss Financial Market Supervisory Authority FINMA (FINMA), and the offering has not been and will not be authorized under the Swiss Federal Act on Collective Investment Schemes ("CISA"). The investor protection afforded to acquirers of interests in collective investment schemes under the CISA does not extend to acquirers of the shares being sold in the offering.

Notice to Prospective Investors in the Dubai International Financial Centre

This document relates to an exempt offer in accordance with the Offered Securities Rules of the Dubai Financial Services Authority. This document is intended for distribution only to persons of a type specified in those rules. It must not be delivered to, or relied on by, any other person. The Dubai Financial Services Authority has no responsibility for reviewing or verifying any documents in connection with exempt offers. The Dubai Financial Services Authority has not approved this document nor taken steps to verify the information set out in it, and has no responsibility for it. The shares which are the subject of the offering contemplated by this prospectus may be illiquid and/or subject to restrictions on their resale. Prospective purchasers of the shares offered should conduct their own due diligence on the shares. If you do not understand the contents of this document you should consult an authorized financial adviser.

Table of Contents

Notice to Prospective Investors in Hong Kong

The shares may not be offered or sold by means of any document other than (1) in circumstances which do not constitute an offer to the public within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap.32, Laws of Hong Kong), or (2) to professional investors within the meaning of the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap.571, Laws of Hong Kong) and any rules made thereunder, or (3) in other circumstances which do not result in the document being a prospectus within the meaning of the Companies Ordinance (Cap.32, Laws of Hong Kong), and no advertisement, invitation or document relating to the shares may be issued or may be in the possession of any person for the purpose of issue (in each case whether in Hong Kong or elsewhere), which is directed at, or the contents of which are likely to be accessed or read by, the public in Hong Kong (except if permitted to do so under the laws of Hong Kong) other than with respect to shares which are or are intended to be disposed of only to persons outside Hong Kong or only to professional investors within the meaning of the Securities and Futures Ordinance (Cap. 571, Laws of Hong Kong) and any rules made thereunder.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Singapore

This prospectus has not been registered as a prospectus with the Monetary Authority of Singapore. Accordingly, this prospectus and any other document or material in connection with the offer or sale, or invitation for subscription or purchase, of the shares may not be circulated or distributed, nor may the shares be offered or sold, or be made the subject of an invitation for subscription or purchase, whether directly or indirectly, to persons in Singapore other than (1) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the Securities and Futures Act, Chapter 289 of Singapore (the SFA), (2) to a relevant person, or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions, specified in Section 275 of the SFA or (3) otherwise pursuant to, and in accordance with the conditions of, any other applicable provision of the SFA.

Where the shares are subscribed or purchased under Section 275 by a relevant person which is: (1) a corporation (which is not an accredited investor) the sole business of which is to hold investments and the entire share capital of which is owned by one or more individuals, each of whom is an accredited investor; or (2) a trust (where the trustee is not an accredited investor) whose sole purpose is to hold investments and each beneficiary is an accredited investor, shares, debentures and units of shares and debentures of that corporation or the beneficiaries' rights and interest in that trust shall not be transferable for 6 months after that corporation or that trust has acquired the shares under Section 275 except: (a) to an institutional investor under Section 274 of the SFA or to a relevant person, or any person pursuant to Section 275(1A), and in accordance with the conditions, specified in Section 275 of the SFA; (b) where no consideration is given for the transfer; or (c) by operation of law.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Japan

The securities have not been and will not be registered under the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law of Japan (the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law) and each underwriter has agreed that it will not offer or sell any securities, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to, or for the benefit of, any resident of Japan (which term as used herein means any person resident in Japan, including any corporation or other entity organized under the laws of Japan), or to others for re-offering or resale, directly or indirectly, in Japan or to a resident of Japan, except pursuant to an exemption from the registration requirements of, and otherwise in compliance with, the Financial Instruments and Exchange Law and any other applicable laws, regulations and ministerial guidelines of Japan.

The underwriter and its affiliates are full service financial institutions engaged in various activities, which may include securities trading, commercial and investment banking, financial advisory, investment management, investment research, principal investment, hedging, financing and brokerage activities. The underwriter and certain of its affiliates have, from time to time, performed, and may in the future perform, various financial advisory and investment banking services for us, for which they received or will receive customary fees and expenses.

Table of Contents

In the ordinary course of their various business activities, the underwriter and its affiliates may make or hold a broad array of investments and actively trade debt and equity securities (or related derivative securities) and financial instruments (including bank loans) for their own account and for the accounts of their customers, and such investment and securities activities may involve securities and/or instruments issued by us. The underwriter and its affiliates may also make investment recommendations and/or publish or express independent research views in respect of such securities or instruments and may at any time hold, or recommend to clients that they acquire, long and/or short positions in such securities and instruments.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Australia

No prospectus or other disclosure document (as defined in the Corporations Act 2001 (Cth) of Australia ("Corporations Act")) in relation to the shares has been or will be lodged with the Australian Securities & Investments Commission ("ASIC"). This document has not been lodged with ASIC and is only directed to certain categories of exempt persons. Accordingly, if you receive this document in Australia:

(a) you confirm and warrant that you are either:

(i) a sophisticated investor under section 708(8)(a) or (b) of the Corporations Act;

(ii) a sophisticated investor under section 708(8)(c) or (d) of the Corporations Act and that you have provided an accountant's certificate to us which complies with the requirements of section 708(8)(c)(i) or (ii) of the Corporations Act and related regulations before the offer has been made;

(iii) a person associated with the company under section 708(12) of the Corporations Act; or

(iv) a professional investor within the meaning of section 708(11)(a) or (b) of the Corporations Act, and to the extent that you are unable to confirm or warrant that you are an exempt sophisticated investor, associated person or professional investor under the Corporations Act any offer made to you under this document is void and incapable of acceptance; and

(b) you warrant and agree that you will not offer any of the shares for resale in Australia within 12 months of that shares being issued unless any such resale offer is exempt from the requirement to issue a disclosure document under section 708 of the Corporations Act.

Notice to Prospective Investors in Chile

The shares are not registered in the Securities Registry (Registro de Valores) or subject to the control of the Chilean Securities and Exchange Commission (Superintendencia de Valores y Seguros de Chile). This prospectus supplement and other offering materials relating to the offer of the shares do not constitute a public offer of, or an invitation to subscribe for or purchase, the shares in the Republic of Chile, other than to individually identified purchasers pursuant to a private offering within the meaning of Article 4 of the Chilean Securities Market Act (Ley de Mercado de Valores) (an offer that is not addressed to the public at large or to a certain sector or specific group of the public).

Table of Contents

LEGAL MATTERS

Various legal matters related to the offering will be passed upon for us by Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP, Menlo Park, California. Certain legal matters will be passed upon for the selling stockholder by Fried, Frank, Harris, Shriver & Jacobson LLP, New York, New York and Maples and Calder, Cayman Islands. Certain legal matters will be passed upon for the underwriter by Cahill Gordon & Reindel LLP, New York, New York.

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any document that we file at the Public Reference Room of the SEC at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. In addition, the SEC maintains a website at www.sec.gov, from which interested persons can electronically access our SEC filings, including the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part and the exhibits and schedules thereto.

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with them, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is an important part of this prospectus supplement, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and all documents subsequently filed with the SEC pursuant to Section 13(a), 13(c), 14, or 15(d) of the Exchange Act, prior to the termination of the offering under this prospectus supplement (excluding any portions of any Form 8-K that are not deemed filed pursuant to the General Instructions of Form 8-K, unless specifically incorporated by reference below):

- (a) our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2012, filed with the SEC on February 26, 2013;
- (b) the portions of our Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A for our 2012 annual meeting of stockholders that are incorporated by reference in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011.
- (c) our Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on January 17, 2013, February 5, 2013, March 5, 2013 (but only the report containing Item 5.02) and March 8, 2013; and
- (d) the description of our capital stock and the rights associated therewith included in our Registration Statement on Form 8-A12B filed with the SEC on December 26, 2006, including any amendments or reports filed for the purpose of updating such descriptions.

Any statement contained in a previously filed document incorporated by reference into this prospectus supplement is deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus supplement, or in a subsequently filed document also incorporated by reference herein, modifies or supersedes that statement.

You may request a copy of these filings at no cost by writing or telephoning the office of Investor Relations, E*TRADE Financial Corporation, 1271 Avenue of the Americas, 14th Floor, New York, New York 10020-1302, (888) 772-3477. Information about us, including our SEC filings, is also available at our website at www.etrade.com. However, other than the electronic version of this prospectus supplement and accompanying prospectus that is being made available at www.etrade.com, the information on our website is not a part of, or incorporated by reference in, this prospectus supplement or the accompanying prospectus and should not be relied upon in determining whether to make an investment in our securities.

Table of Contents

PROSPECTUS

E*TRADE Financial Corporation

Common Stock, Preferred Stock, Debt Securities, Warrants, Purchase Contracts and Units

We may issue shares of our common stock and preferred stock, debt securities, warrants, purchase contracts and units, and we or any selling security holders may offer and sell these securities from time to time in one or more offerings. This prospectus describes the general terms of these securities and the general manner in which these securities will be offered. We will provide the specific terms of these securities in supplements to this prospectus. The prospectus supplements will also describe the specific manner in which these securities will be offered and may also supplement, update or amend information contained in this document. You should read this prospectus and the applicable prospectus supplement before you invest.

We and any selling security holders may offer these securities in amounts, at prices and on terms determined at the time of offering. The securities may be sold directly to you, through agents, or through underwriters and dealers. If agents, underwriters or dealers are used to sell the securities, we will name them and describe their compensation in a prospectus supplement.

Our common stock is listed on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the symbol ETFC. On May 10, 2012, the last reported sale price on the NASDAQ Global Select Market for our common stock was \$9.64.

Investing in these securities involves certain risks. See Item 1A. Risk Factors beginning on page 8 of our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011 and Item 1A. Risk Factors beginning on page 95 of our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2012, both of which are incorporated by reference herein. We may include specific risk factors in an applicable prospectus supplement under the heading Risk Factors.

Neither the Securities and Exchange Commission (the SEC) nor any state securities commission has approved or disapproved these securities, or determined if this prospectus is truthful or complete. Any representation to the contrary is a criminal offense.

The date of this prospectus is May 14, 2012

Table of Contents**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	Page
<u>The Company</u>	1
<u>Where You Can Find More Information</u>	2
<u>Special Note on Forward-Looking Statements</u>	3
<u>Use of Proceeds</u>	5
<u>Dividend Policy</u>	5
<u>Ratio of Earnings to Fixed Charges and Preferred Stock Dividends</u>	6
<u>Description of Common Stock</u>	7
<u>Description of Preferred Stock</u>	10
<u>Description of Debt Securities</u>	11
<u>Description of Warrants</u>	21
<u>Description of Purchase Contracts</u>	21
<u>Description of Units</u>	21
<u>Forms of Securities</u>	22
<u>Selling Security Holders</u>	24
<u>Plan of Distribution</u>	25
<u>Validity of Securities</u>	26
<u>Experts</u>	27

We have not authorized anyone to provide you any information other than that contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus, any supplement hereto, or any related free writing prospectus issued by us. We take no responsibility for, and can provide no assurance as to the reliability of, any other information that others may give to you. We are not making an offer of these securities in any jurisdiction where the offer is not permitted. You should not assume that the information contained in or incorporated by reference in this prospectus is accurate as of any date other than the date on the front of this prospectus.

We refer to E*TRADE Financial Corporation in this prospectus as E*TRADE, the Company, we, us, our or comparable terms. All such references refer to E*TRADE Financial Corporation and its consolidated subsidiaries unless expressly indicated or the context otherwise requires.

Table of Contents

THE COMPANY

E*TRADE Financial Corporation is a financial services company that provides online brokerage and related products and services primarily to individual retail investors under the brand E*TRADE Financial. Our primary focus is our online brokerage business, which includes our self-directed trading and investing customers. We also provide investor-focused banking products, primarily sweep deposits and savings products, to retail investors. Our competitive strategy is to attract and retain customers by emphasizing value beyond price, ease of use and innovation, with delivery of our products and services primarily through online and technology-intensive channels.

Our corporate offices are located at 1271 Avenue of the Americas, 14th Floor, New York, New York 10020. We were incorporated in California in 1982 and reincorporated in Delaware in July 1996. We have approximately 3,200 employees. We operate directly and through numerous subsidiaries many of which are overseen by governmental and self-regulatory organizations. Our most significant subsidiaries are described below:

E*TRADE Bank is a federally chartered savings bank that provides investor-focused banking products to retail customers nationwide and deposit accounts insured by the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation;

E*TRADE Securities LLC is a registered broker-dealer and is a wholly-owned operating subsidiary of E*TRADE Bank. It is the primary provider of brokerage products and services to our customers;

E*TRADE Clearing LLC is the clearing firm for our brokerage subsidiaries and is a wholly-owned operating subsidiary of E*TRADE Bank. Its main purpose is to transfer securities from one party to another; and

E*TRADE Capital Markets, LLC is a registered broker-dealer and market maker.

We provide services to customers in the U.S. through our website at www.etrade.com. In addition to our website, we also provide services through our network of customer service representatives, investment professionals and investment advisors. We also provide these services over the phone or in person through our 28 E*TRADE branches.

About this Prospectus

This prospectus is part of a registration statement that we filed with the SEC utilizing a shelf registration process. Under this shelf process, we or selling security holders may sell any combination of the securities described in this prospectus in one or more offerings. This prospectus provides you with a general description of the securities we or selling security holders may offer. Each time we sell securities, we will provide a prospectus supplement that will contain specific information about the terms of that offering. The prospectus supplement may also add, update or change information contained in this prospectus. You should read both this prospectus and any prospectus supplement together with additional information described under the heading **Where You Can Find More Information**.

Table of Contents

WHERE YOU CAN FIND MORE INFORMATION

We file annual, quarterly and current reports, proxy statements and other information with the SEC. You may read and copy any document that we file at the Public Reference Room of the SEC at 100 F Street, N.E., Washington, D.C. 20549. You may obtain information on the operation of the Public Reference Room by calling the SEC at 1-800-SEC-0330. In addition, the SEC maintains a website at www.sec.gov, from which interested persons can electronically access our SEC filings, including the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part and the exhibits and schedules thereto.

The SEC allows us to incorporate by reference the information we file with them, which means that we can disclose important information to you by referring you to those documents. The information incorporated by reference is an important part of this prospectus, and information that we file later with the SEC will automatically update and supersede this information. We incorporate by reference the documents listed below and all documents subsequently filed with the SEC pursuant to Section 13(a), 13(c), 14, or 15(d) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, as amended (the Exchange Act), prior to the termination of the offering under this prospectus and any prospectus supplement (other than, in each case, documents or information deemed to have been furnished and not filed in accordance with SEC rules):

- (a) Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011 filed with the SEC on February 23, 2012;
- (b) Portions of the Definitive Proxy Statement on Schedule 14A for the 2012 annual meeting of stockholders incorporated by reference in the Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011;
- (c) Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2012 filed with the SEC on May 4, 2012; and
- (d) Current Reports on Form 8-K filed with the SEC on January 30, 2012, February 10, 2012, February 29, 2012 and May 11, 2012.

Any statements contained in a previously filed document incorporated by reference into this prospectus are deemed to be modified or superseded for purposes of this prospectus to the extent that a statement contained in this prospectus, or in a subsequently filed document also incorporated by reference herein, modifies or supersedes that statement.

You may request a copy of these filings at no cost by writing or telephoning the office of Investor Relations, E*TRADE Financial Corporation, 1271 Avenue of the Americas, 14th Floor, New York, New York 10020, (646) 521-4340. Information about us, including our SEC filings, is also available at our website at www.etrade.com. However, the information on our website is not a part of, or incorporated by reference in, this prospectus or any prospectus supplement that we file and should not be relied upon in determining whether to make an investment in our securities.

Table of Contents

SPECIAL NOTE ON FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

Certain information included in this prospectus and in the documents we incorporate herein by reference may be deemed to be forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933, as amended (the Securities Act), and Section 21E of the Exchange Act. We claim the protection of the safe harbor for forward-looking statements contained in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995 for all forward-looking statements. Statements in this prospectus that are not statements of historical facts are hereby identified as forward-looking statements for these purposes. In particular, statements that we make under the heading Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011 and our Quarterly Report on 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2012 relating to our overall volume trends, industry forces, margin trends, anticipated capital expenditures and our strategies are forward-looking statements. When used in this document, the words may, believe, expect, intend, anticipate, estimate, project, plan, should and similar expressions are intended to identify forward-looking statements.

These statements are based on assumptions and assessments made by our management in light of their experience and their perception of historical trends, current conditions, expected future developments and other factors they believe to be appropriate. Any forward-looking statements are not guarantees of our future performance and are subject to risks and uncertainties that could cause actual results, developments and business decisions to differ materially from those contemplated by such forward-looking statements. We disclaim any duty to update any forward-looking statements. Some of the factors that may cause actual results, developments and business decisions to differ materially from those contemplated by such forward-looking statements are set forth under Risk Factors and discussed under the heading Management's Discussion and Analysis of Financial Condition and Results of Operations in our Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011 and our Quarterly Report on 10-Q for the quarter ended March 31, 2012, including the following:

our potential inability to maintain profitability;

potential increases in our provision for loan losses if the residential real estate and credit markets deteriorate beyond our expectations;

our potential inability to manage the credit risk in our loan portfolio;

our potential inability to retain our current customer assets and accounts;

our potential inability to service our substantial indebtedness and, if necessary, to raise sufficient additional capital, and the potential negative regulatory consequences that may result therefrom;

our dependence on dividends from our subsidiaries, which are subject to advance regulatory approval in the case of our most significant subsidiaries;

liabilities and costs associated with investigations and lawsuits, including those relating to our losses from mortgage loans and asset-backed securities;

our potential inability to compete effectively;

adverse changes in general economic conditions, including fluctuations in interest rates;

Edgar Filing: E TRADE FINANCIAL Corp - Form 424B4

our potential inability to manage the effects of changes in interest rates;

adverse changes in governmental regulations or enforcement practices, including those that may result from the implementation and enforcement of recently enacted regulatory reform legislation;

our potential inability to fully realize our deferred tax assets and the potential loss of a significant portion of our U.S. federal and state deferred tax assets as a result of a deemed ownership change in 2009; and

other factors described elsewhere in this prospectus or in our current and future filings with the SEC.

Table of Contents

We have no obligation to publicly update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or risks. New information, future events or risks may cause the forward-looking events we discuss in this prospectus not to occur.

Table of Contents

USE OF PROCEEDS

We intend to use the net proceeds from the sale of the securities for working capital and general corporate purposes, including, but not limited to, repayment of indebtedness, funding our operations and financing capital expenditures. We may also invest the proceeds in certificates of deposit, U.S. government securities or certain other interest-bearing securities. If we decide to use the net proceeds from a particular offering of securities for a specific purpose, we will describe that purpose in the related prospectus supplement.

We will not receive any proceeds from sales of securities offered by any selling security holders under this prospectus.

DIVIDEND POLICY

We have never declared or paid cash dividends on our common stock. The terms of our corporate debt currently prohibit the payment of dividends and will continue to prohibit the payment of dividends for the foreseeable future. E*TRADE Bank may not pay dividends to the parent company without approval from its regulators. This dividend restriction includes E*TRADE Securities LLC and E*TRADE Clearing LLC as they are subsidiaries of E*TRADE Bank.

Table of Contents**RATIO OF EARNINGS TO FIXED CHARGES AND PREFERRED STOCK DIVIDENDS**

The following table sets forth our consolidated ratio of earnings (loss) to fixed charges and preferred stock dividends:

	For the Three	For the Year Ended December 31,				
	Months Ended	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007
	March 31,					
	2012					
Ratio of earnings (loss) to fixed charges	1.53	1.38	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
Ratio of earnings (loss) to fixed charges and preferred stock dividends	1.53	1.38	(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)

The ratio of earnings (loss) to fixed charges is computed by dividing fixed charges into income (loss) before income taxes and discontinued operations less equity in the income (loss) of investments plus fixed charges less the preference securities dividend requirement of consolidated subsidiaries. Fixed charges include, as applicable, interest expense, amortization of debt issuance costs, the estimated interest component of rent expense (calculated as one-third of net rent expense) and the preference securities dividend requirement of consolidated subsidiaries.

- (a) Earnings for the year ended December 31, 2010 were inadequate to cover fixed charges. The coverage deficiency was \$2.4 million.
- (b) Earnings for the year ended December 31, 2009 were inadequate to cover fixed charges. The coverage deficiency was \$1.8 billion.
- (c) Earnings for the year ended December 31, 2008 were inadequate to cover fixed charges. The coverage deficiency was \$1.3 billion.
- (d) Earnings for the year ended December 31, 2007 were inadequate to cover fixed charges. The coverage deficiency was \$2.2 billion.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF COMMON STOCK

As used in this section of the prospectus and under the captions Description of Preferred Stock, Description of Debt Securities, Description of Warrants, Description of Purchase Contracts and Description of Units, the terms we, us and our refer only to E*TRADE and not to any existing or future subsidiaries of E*TRADE.

The following description of our common stock is based upon our Certificate of Incorporation (Certificate of Incorporation), our Bylaws (Bylaws) and applicable provisions of law as currently in effect. We have summarized certain portions of the Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws below. The summary is not complete. The Certificate of Incorporation is incorporated in the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part by reference to an exhibit to our Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the quarter ended June 30, 2010 and an exhibit to our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 11, 2012. The Bylaws are incorporated in the registration statement of which this prospectus forms a part by reference to an exhibit to our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 14, 2010 and an exhibit to our Current Report on Form 8-K filed May 11, 2012. You should read the Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws for the provisions that are important to you.

Certain provisions of the Delaware General Corporation Law (DGCL), the Certificate of Incorporation and the Bylaws summarized in the following paragraphs may have an anti-takeover effect. This may delay, defer or prevent a tender offer or takeover attempt that a stockholder might consider in its best interests, including those attempts that might result in a premium over the market price for its shares.

General

Our authorized capital stock consists of 400,000,000 shares of common stock, \$0.01 par value per share and 1,000,000 shares of preferred stock, \$0.01 par value per share. As of May 9, 2012, we had outstanding 285,687,861 shares of our common stock. As of May 9, 2012, we had 1,513 stockholders of record.

Each holder of common stock is entitled to one vote per share held on all matters to be voted upon by the stockholders. Subject to preferences that may be applicable to any outstanding preferred stock, the holders of common stock are entitled to receive ratably the dividends, if any, as may be declared from time to time by our board of directors out of funds legally available for the payment of dividends. If we liquidate, dissolve or wind up our business, the holders of common stock are entitled to share ratably in all assets remaining after payment of liabilities, subject to prior distribution rights of preferred stock, if any, then outstanding. The common stock has no preemptive or conversion rights or other subscription rights. There are no redemption or sinking fund provisions applicable to the common stock. All outstanding shares of common stock are fully paid and non-assessable, and any shares of common stock to be issued upon completion of any offering of our common stock under this prospectus will be fully paid and non-assessable.

Anti-Takeover Effects or Provisions of Our Certificate of Incorporation, Bylaws and Delaware Law

Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws

Our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws contain provisions that could discourage potential takeover attempts and make more difficult attempts by stockholders to change management.

Our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws currently permit the board to create new directorships and to elect new directors to serve for the full term of the class of directors in which the new directorship was created. In uncontested elections, each director must be elected to the board by the majority of the votes cast with respect to the director's election, and must submit his or her resignation to the board if he or she does not obtain the required majority. The board has the power to decide whether or not to accept the resignation, but must publicly disclose its decision and, if the resignation is rejected, its rationale within 90 days following certification of the stockholder vote. The board (or its remaining members, even though less than a quorum) is also empowered to

Table of Contents

fill vacancies on the board occurring for any reason, including a vacancy from an enlargement of the board; however, a vacancy created by the removal of a director by the stockholders or court order may be filled only by the vote of a majority of the shares at a meeting at which a quorum is present. Any director so elected according to the preceding sentence shall hold office for the remainder of the term of the class of directors in which the new directorship was created or the vacancy occurred. Our Certificate of Incorporation does not provide for cumulative voting in the election of directors.

Our Certificate of Incorporation provides that stockholders may take action only at an annual meeting or special meeting and may not take action by written consent. Special meetings of our stockholders may only be called by our Chairman of the board, our President, a majority of the number of directors constituting the full board, or the holders of not less than 10% of our outstanding voting stock.

Under the terms of our Bylaws, stockholders who intend to present business or nominate persons for election to the board at annual meetings of stockholders must provide notice to our corporate secretary no more than 150 days and no less than 120 days prior to the date of the proxy statement for the prior annual meeting, as more fully set forth in our Bylaws.

Our Certificate of Incorporation provides that, in addition to the requirements of the Delaware General Corporation Law described below, any business combination with an interested stockholder, as these terms are defined in our Certificate of Incorporation and summarized below, requires the affirmative vote of two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock, unless two-thirds of the number of directors constituting the full board approve the transaction.

A business combination is defined for purposes of this provision of our Certificate of Incorporation as:

a merger or consolidation of us or any of our subsidiaries with an interested stockholder or with a corporation that is or would become an affiliate or associate, with these terms defined for purposes of this provision of our Certificate of Incorporation as they are defined in the Exchange Act, of an interested stockholder,

any sale, lease, exchange, mortgage, pledge, transfer or other disposition to or with, or proposed by or on behalf of, an interested stockholder or any affiliate or associate of an interested stockholder involving any assets of ours or our subsidiaries that constitute 5% or more of our total assets,

the issuance or transfer by us or by any of our subsidiaries of any of our or their securities to, or proposed by or on behalf of, an interested stockholder or any affiliate or associate of an interested stockholder in exchange for cash, securities or other property that constitute 5% or more of our total assets,

the adoption of any plan or proposal for our liquidation or dissolution or any spin-off or split-up of any kind of us or any of our subsidiaries, proposed by or on behalf of an interested stockholder or an affiliate or associate of an interested stockholder, or

any reclassification, recapitalization, or merger or consolidation of us with any of our subsidiaries or any similar transaction that has the effect, directly or indirectly, of increasing the percentage of the outstanding shares of (i) any class of equity securities of us or any of our subsidiaries or (ii) any class of securities of us or any of our subsidiaries convertible into equity securities of us or any of our subsidiaries which are directly or indirectly owned by an interested stockholder or an affiliate or associate of an interested stockholder.

An interested stockholder is defined for purposes of this provision of our Certificate of Incorporation as an individual, corporation or other entity which, as of the record date for notice of the transaction or immediately prior to the transaction:

is one of our associates or affiliates and at any time within the prior two-year period was the beneficial owner, directly or indirectly, of 10% or more of our outstanding voting securities, or

Table of Contents

is, or was at any time within the prior two-year period, the beneficial owner, directly or indirectly, of 10% or more of our outstanding voting securities, or

is under circumstances described in more detail in our Certificate of Incorporation, an assignee of any of the persons described above.

A person is the beneficial owner of any voting securities which:

that person or any of its affiliates or associates, beneficially owns, directly or indirectly,

that person or any of its affiliates or associates has, directly or indirectly, the right to acquire (whether such right is exercisable immediately or subject only to the passage of time), pursuant to any agreement, arrangement or understanding or upon the exercise of conversion rights, exchange rights, warrants or options, or otherwise, or the right to vote pursuant to any agreement, arrangement or understanding, or

are beneficially owned, directly or indirectly, by any other person with which the person in question or any of its affiliates or associates has any agreement, arrangement or understanding for the purpose of acquiring, holding, voting or disposing of any shares of capital stock.

As described below under Description of Preferred Stock, our board of directors has the authority to issue preferred stock in one or more series and to fix the powers, rights, designations preferences, qualifications, limitations and restrictions applicable to the preferred stock. The issuance of preferred stock may have the effect of delaying, deferring or preventing potential takeover attempts without further action by the stockholders and may adversely affect the voting and other rights of the holders of our common stock.

These provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws as currently in effect may deter any potential unfriendly offers or other efforts to obtain control of us that are not approved by our board of directors. Such provisions could deprive our stockholders of opportunities to realize a premium on their common stock and could make removal of incumbent directors more difficult. At the same time, these provisions may have the effect of inducing any persons seeking to control us or seeking a business combination with us to negotiate terms acceptable to our board of directors. These provisions of our Certificate of Incorporation and Bylaws can be changed or amended only by the affirmative vote of the holders of at least two-thirds of our outstanding voting stock.

Delaware Law

We are subject to the provisions of Section 203 of the Delaware General Corporation Law regulating corporate takeovers. In general, Section 203 prohibits a Delaware corporation from engaging in any business combination with any interested stockholder for a period of three years following the date that the stockholder became an interested stockholder, unless:

the transaction is approved by the board before the date the interested stockholder attained that status;

upon consummation of the transaction that resulted in the stockholder becoming an interested stockholder, the interested stockholder owned at least 85% of the voting stock of the corporation outstanding at the time the transaction commenced; or

on or after the date the business combination is approved by the board and authorized at a meeting of stockholders by at least two-thirds of the outstanding voting stock that is not owned by the interested stockholder.

Section 203 defines business combination to include the following:

Edgar Filing: E TRADE FINANCIAL Corp - Form 424B4

any sale, lease, exchange, mortgage, transfer, pledge or other disposition of 10% or more of the assets of the corporation involving the interested stockholder;

Table of Contents

any merger or consolidation involving the corporation or any majority-owned subsidiary and the interested stockholder;

subject to certain exceptions, any transaction that results in the issuance or transfer by the corporation or by any majority-owned subsidiary of any stock of the corporation or of such subsidiary to the interested stockholder;

any transaction involving the corporation or any majority-owned subsidiary that has the effect of increasing the proportionate share of the stock of any class or series of the corporation beneficially owned by the interested stockholder; or

the receipt by the interested stockholder of the benefit of any loans, advances, guarantees, pledges or other financial benefits provided by or through the corporation or any majority-owned subsidiary.

In general, Section 203 defines interested stockholder to be any entity or person beneficially owning 15% or more of the outstanding voting stock of the corporation and any entity or person affiliated with or controlling or controlled by any of these entities or persons.

A Delaware corporation may opt out of this provision either with an express provision in its original Certificate of Incorporation or in an amendment to its Certificate of Incorporation or Bylaws approved by its stockholders. We have not opted out of this provision. Section 203 could prohibit or delay mergers or other takeover or change in control attempts and, accordingly, may discourage attempts to acquire us.

Transfer Agent and Registrar

The transfer agent and registrar for our common stock is American Stock Transfer & Trust Company, N.A.

Listing

Our common stock is listed for trading on the NASDAQ Global Select Market under the trading symbol ETFC.

DESCRIPTION OF PREFERRED STOCK

This prospectus describes certain general terms and provisions of our preferred stock. When we offer to sell a particular series of preferred stock, we will describe the specific terms of the securities in a supplement to this prospectus. The prospectus supplement will also indicate whether the general terms and provisions described in this prospectus apply to the particular series of preferred stock. The preferred stock will be issued under a certificate of designation relating to each series of preferred stock and is also subject to our Certificate of Incorporation.

Under our Certificate of Incorporation, our board of directors has the authority to:

create one or more series of preferred stock;

issue shares of preferred stock in any series up to the maximum number of shares of preferred stock authorized; and

determine the preferences, rights, privileges and restrictions of any series.

Our board may issue authorized shares of preferred stock, as well as authorized but unissued shares of common stock, without further stockholder action, unless stockholder action is required by applicable law or by the rules of a stock exchange or quotation system on which any series of our stock may be listed or quoted.

The prospectus supplement will describe the terms of any preferred stock being offered, including:

the number of shares and designation or title of the shares;

Table of Contents

any liquidation preference per share;

any date of maturity;

any redemption, repayment or sinking fund provisions;

any dividend rate or rates and the dates of payment (or the method for determining the dividend rates or dates of payment);

any voting rights;

if other than the currency of the United States, the currency or currencies including composite currencies in which the preferred stock is denominated and/or in which payments will or may be payable;

the method by which amounts in respect of the preferred stock may be calculated and any commodities, currencies or indices, or value, rate or price, relevant to such calculation;

whether the preferred stock is convertible or exchangeable and, if so, the securities or rights into which the preferred stock is convertible or exchangeable, and the terms and conditions of conversion or exchange;

the place or places where dividends and other payments on the preferred stock will be payable; and

any additional voting, dividend, liquidation, redemption and other rights, preferences, privileges, limitations and restrictions.

All shares of preferred stock offered will be fully paid and non-assessable. Any shares of preferred stock that are issued will have priority over the common stock with respect to dividend or liquidation rights or both.

Our board of directors could create and issue a series of preferred stock with rights, privileges or restrictions which effectively discriminates against a then-existing or prospective holder of preferred stock as a result of the holder beneficially owning or commencing a tender offer for a substantial amount of common stock. One of the effects of authorized but unissued and unreserved shares of capital stock may be to make it more difficult or discourage an attempt by a potential acquirer to obtain control of our company by means of a merger, tender offer, proxy contest or otherwise. The issuance of these shares of capital stock may defer or prevent a change in control of our company without any further stockholder action.

The transfer agent for each series of preferred stock will be described in the relevant prospectus supplement.

DESCRIPTION OF DEBT SECURITIES

Our debt securities, consisting of notes, debentures or other evidences of indebtedness, may be issued from time to time in one or more series pursuant to, in the case of senior debt securities, a senior indenture, and in the case of subordinated debt securities, a subordinated indenture, in each case to be entered into between us and The Bank of New York Mellon Trust Company, N.A. as trustee. The senior indenture and the subordinated indenture are referred to herein as the indentures. The terms of our debt securities will include those set forth in the applicable indenture and those made a part thereof by the Trust Indenture Act of 1939, as amended.

Because the following is only a summary of selected provisions of the indentures and the debt securities, it does not contain all information that may be important to you. This summary is not complete and is qualified in its entirety by reference to the indentures and any supplemental

Edgar Filing: E TRADE FINANCIAL Corp - Form 424B4

indentures thereto or officer's certificate or board resolution related thereto. We urge you to read the indentures because the indentures, not this description, define the rights of the holders of the debt securities. The senior indenture and the subordinated indenture will be substantially in the forms included as exhibits to the registration statement of which this prospectus is a part.

Table of Contents

General

The senior debt securities will constitute unsecured and unsubordinated obligations of ours and will rank pari passu with our other unsecured and unsubordinated obligations. The subordinated debt securities will constitute our unsecured and subordinated obligations and will be junior in right of payment to our Senior Indebtedness (including senior debt securities), as described under the heading **Certain Terms of the Subordinated Debt Securities Subordination**.

We conduct most of our operations through subsidiaries. Consequently, our ability to pay our obligations, including our obligation to pay principal or interest on the debt securities, to pay the debt securities at maturity or upon redemption or to buy the debt securities may depend on our subsidiaries repaying investments and advances we have made to them, and on our subsidiaries' earnings and their distributing those earnings to us. The debt securities will be effectively subordinated to all obligations (including trade payables and preferred stock obligations) of our subsidiaries. Our subsidiaries are separate and distinct legal entities and will have no obligation, contingent or otherwise, to pay any amounts due on the debt securities or to make funds available to us to do so. Our subsidiaries' ability to pay dividends or make other payments or advances to us will depend on their operating results and will be subject to applicable laws and regulatory and contractual restrictions. The indentures will not limit our subsidiaries' ability to enter into other agreements that prohibit or restrict dividends or other payments or advances to us.

The debt securities will be our unsecured obligations. Our secured debt and other secured obligations will be effectively senior to the debt securities to the extent of the value of the assets securing such debt or other obligations.

You should look in the prospectus supplement for any additional or different terms of the debt securities being offered, including the following terms:

the debt securities' designation;

the aggregate principal amount of the debt securities;

the percentage of their principal amount (i.e. price) at which the debt securities will be issued;

the date or dates on which the debt securities will mature and the right, if any, to extend such date or dates;

the rate or rates, if any, per year, at which the debt securities will bear interest, or the method of determining such rate or rates;

the date or dates from which such interest will accrue, the interest payment dates on which such interest will be payable or the manner of determination of such interest payment dates and the record dates for the determination of holders to whom interest is payable on any interest payment date;

the right, if any, to extend the interest payment periods and the duration of that extension;

the manner of paying principal and interest and the place or places where principal and interest will be payable;

provisions for a sinking fund purchase or other analogous fund, if any;

Edgar Filing: E TRADE FINANCIAL Corp - Form 424B4

the period or periods, if any, within which, the price or prices at which, and the terms and conditions upon which the debt securities may be redeemed, in whole or in part, at our option or at your option;

the period or periods, if any, within which, the price or prices at which, and the terms and conditions upon which we may otherwise be required to redeem the debt securities;

the form of the debt securities;

Table of Contents

any provisions for payment of additional amounts for taxes and any provision for redemption if we must pay such additional amounts in respect of any debt security;

the terms and conditions, if any, upon which we may have to repay the debt securities early at your option;

the currency, currencies or currency units for which you may purchase the debt securities and the currency, currencies or currency units in which principal and interest, if any, on the debt securities may be payable;

the terms and conditions upon which conversion or exchange of the debt securities may be effected, if any, including the initial conversion or exchange price or rate and any adjustments thereto and the period or periods when a conversion or exchange may be effected;

whether and upon what terms the debt securities may be defeased;

any events of default or covenants in addition to or in lieu of those set forth in the indenture;

provisions for electronic issuance of debt securities or for debt securities in uncertificated form; and

any other terms of the debt securities, including any terms which may be required by or advisable under applicable laws or regulations or advisable in connection with the marketing of the debt securities.

We may from time to time, without notice to or the consent of the holders of any series of debt securities, create and issue further debt securities of any such series ranking equally with the debt securities of such series in all respects (or in all respects other than the payment of interest accruing prior to the issue date of such further debt securities or except for the first payment of interest following the issue date of such further debt securities); provided that if such additional debt securities are not fungible with the initial debt securities of such series offered hereby for U.S. federal income tax purposes, such additional debt securities will have a separate CUSIP number.

You may present debt securities for exchange and you may present debt securities for transfer in the manner, at the places and subject to the restrictions set forth in the debt securities and the applicable prospectus supplement. We will provide you those services without charge, although you may have to pay any tax or other governmental charge payable in connection with any exchange or transfer, as set forth in the indenture.

Debt securities will bear interest at a fixed rate or a floating rate. Debt securities bearing no interest or interest at a rate that at the time of issuance is below the prevailing market rate (original issue discount securities) may be sold at a discount below their stated principal amount. Certain U.S. federal income tax considerations applicable to any such discounted debt securities or to certain debt securities issued at par which are treated as having been issued at a discount for U.S. federal income tax purposes will be described in the applicable prospectus supplement.

We may issue debt securities with the principal amount payable on any principal payment date, or the amount of interest payable on any interest payment date, to be determined by reference to one or more currency exchange rates, securities or baskets of securities, commodity prices or indices. You may receive a payment of principal on any principal payment date, or a payment of interest on any interest payment date, that is greater than or less than the amount of principal or interest otherwise payable on such dates, depending on the value on such dates of the applicable currency, security or basket of securities, commodity or index. Information as to the methods for determining the amount of principal or interest payable on any date, the currencies, securities or baskets of securities, commodities or indices to which the amount payable on such date is linked and certain tax considerations will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

Table of Contents

Certain Terms of the Senior Debt Securities

Covenants

Unless otherwise indicated in a prospectus supplement, the senior debt securities will not contain any financial or restrictive covenants, including covenants restricting either us or any of our subsidiaries from incurring, issuing, assuming or guarantying any indebtedness secured by a lien on any of our or our subsidiaries' property or capital stock, or restricting either us or any of our subsidiaries from entering into sale and leaseback transactions.

Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets

Unless we indicate otherwise in a prospectus supplement, we may not consolidate with or merge into any other person, in a transaction in which we are not the surviving corporation, or convey, transfer or lease our properties and assets substantially as an entirety to any person, unless:

the successor entity, if any, is a U.S. corporation, limited liability company, partnership or trust (subject to certain exceptions provided for in the senior indenture);

the successor entity assumes our obligations on the senior debt securities and under the senior indenture;

immediately after giving effect to the transaction, no default or event of default shall have occurred and be continuing; and

certain other conditions are met.

No Protection in the Event of a Change of Control

Unless otherwise indicated in a prospectus supplement with respect to a particular series of senior debt securities, the senior debt securities will not contain any provisions which may afford holders of the senior debt securities protection in the event we have a change in control or in the event of a highly leveraged transaction (whether or not such transaction results in a change in control).

Events of Default

An event of default for any series of senior debt securities is defined under the senior indenture as being:

our default in the payment of principal or premium on the senior debt securities of such series when due and payable whether at maturity, upon acceleration, redemption, or otherwise, if that default continues for a period of five days (or such other period as may be specified for such series);

our default in the payment of interest on any senior debt securities of such series when due and payable, if that default continues for a period of 60 days (or such other period as may be specified for such series);

our default in the performance of or breach of any of our other covenants or agreements in the senior indenture applicable to senior debt securities of such series, other than a covenant breach which is specifically dealt with elsewhere in the senior indenture, and that default or breach continues for a period of 90 consecutive days after we receive written notice from the trustee or from the holders of 25% or more in aggregate principal amount of the senior debt securities of such series;

Edgar Filing: E TRADE FINANCIAL Corp - Form 424B4

there occurs any other event of default provided for in such series of senior debt securities;

a court having jurisdiction enters a decree or order for:

relief in respect of us in an involuntary case under any applicable bankruptcy, insolvency or other similar law now or hereafter in effect;

Table of Contents

appointment of a receiver, liquidator, assignee, custodian, trustee, sequestrator or similar official of us or for all or substantially all of our property and assets; or

the winding up or liquidation of our affairs and such decree or order shall remain unstayed and in effect for a period of 60 consecutive days; or

we:

commence a voluntary case under any applicable bankruptcy, insolvency or other similar law now or hereafter in effect, or consent to the entry of an order for relief in an involuntary case under any such law;

consent to the appointment of or taking possession by a receiver, liquidator, assignee, custodian, trustee, sequestrator or similar official of ours for all or substantially all of our property and assets; or

effect any general assignment for the benefit of creditors.

The default by us under any other debt, including any other series of debt securities, is not a default under the senior indenture.

If an event of default other than an event of default specified in the last two bullet points above occurs with respect to a series of senior debt securities and is continuing under the senior indenture, then, and in each and every such case, either the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate principal amount of such series then outstanding under the senior indenture (each such series voting as a separate class) by written notice to us and to the trustee, if such notice is given by the holders, may, and the trustee at the request of such holders shall, declare the principal amount of and accrued interest, if any, on such senior debt securities to be immediately due and payable.

If an event of default specified in the last two bullet points above occurs with respect to us and is continuing, either the trustee or the holders of not less than 25% in aggregate principal amount of the senior debt securities of all series then outstanding under the senior indenture (treated as one class) may, by written notice to us and to the trustee, if such notice is given by the holders, declare the entire principal amount of and accrued interest, if any, on each series of senior debt securities then outstanding to be immediately due and payable.

Upon a declaration of acceleration, the principal amount of and accrued interest, if any, on such senior debt securities shall be immediately due and payable. Unless otherwise specified in the prospectus supplement relating to a series of senior debt securities originally issued at a discount, the amount due upon acceleration shall include only the original issue price of the senior debt securities, the amount of original issue discount accrued to the date of acceleration and accrued interest, if any.

Upon certain conditions, declarations of acceleration may be rescinded and annulled and past defaults may be waived by the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of all the senior debt securities of such series affected by the default, each series voting as a separate class (or of all the senior debt securities, as the case may be, voting as a single class). Furthermore, subject to various provisions in the senior indenture, the holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of a series of senior debt securities, by notice to the trustee, may waive an existing default or event of default with respect to such senior debt securities and its consequences, except a default in the payment of principal of or interest on such senior debt securities or in respect of a covenant or provision of the senior indenture which cannot be modified or amended without the consent of the holders of each such senior debt security. Upon any such waiver, such default shall cease to exist, and any event of default with respect to such senior debt securities shall be deemed to have been cured, for every purpose of the senior indenture; but no such waiver shall extend to any subsequent or other default or event of default or impair any right consequent thereto. For information as to the waiver of defaults, see Modification and Waiver.

Table of Contents

The holders of at least a majority in aggregate principal amount of a series of senior debt securities may direct the time, method and place of conducting any proceeding for any remedy available to the trustee or exercising any trust or power conferred on the trustee with respect to such senior debt securities. However, the trustee may refuse to follow any direction that conflicts with law or the senior indenture, that may involve the trustee in personal liability, or that the trustee determines in good faith may be unduly prejudicial to the rights of holders of such series of senior debt securities not joining in the giving of such direction and may take any other action it deems proper that is not inconsistent with any such direction received from holders of such series of senior debt securities. A holder may not pursue any remedy with respect to the senior indenture or any series of senior debt securities unless:

the holder gives the trustee written notice of a continuing event of default;

the holders of at least 25% in aggregate principal amount of such series of senior debt securities make a written request to the trustee to pursue the remedy in respect of such event of default;

the requesting holder or holders offer the trustee indemnity satisfactory to the trustee against any costs, liability, or expense;

the trustee does not comply with the request within 60 days after receipt of the request and the offer of indemnity; and

during such 60-day period, the holders of a majority in aggregate principal amount of such series of senior debt securities do not give the trustee a direction that is inconsistent with the request.

These limitations, however, do not apply to the right of any holder of a senior debt security to receive payment of the principal of or interest, if any, on such senior debt security, or to bring suit for the enforcement of any such payment, on or after the due date for the senior debt securities, which right shall not be impaired or affected without the consent of the holder.

The senior indenture requires certain of our officers to certify, on or before a fixed date in each year in which any senior debt security is outstanding, as to their knowledge of our compliance with all conditions and covenants under the senior indenture.

Discharge and Defeasance

The senior indenture provides that, unless the terms of any series of senior debt securities provide otherwise, we may discharge our obligations with respect to a series of senior debt securities and the senior indenture with respect to such series of senior debt securities if:

we pay or cause to be paid, as and when due and payable, the principal of and any interest on all senior debt securities of such series outstanding under the senior indenture;

all senior debt securities of such series previously authenticated and delivered with certain exceptions, have been delivered to the trustee for cancellation and we have paid all sums payable by us under the senior indenture; or

the senior debt securities of such series mature within one year or all of them are to be called for redemption within one year under arrangements satisfactory to the trustee for giving the notice of redemption, and we irrevocably deposit in trust with the trustee, as trust funds solely for the benefit of the holders of the senior debt securities of such series, for that purpose, the entire amount in cash or, in the case of any series of senior debt securities payments on which may only be made in U.S. dollars, U.S. government obligations (maturing as to principal and interest in such amounts and at such times as will insure the availability of cash), sufficient, after payment of all federal, state and local taxes or other charges and assessments in respect thereof payable by the trustee, to pay principal of and interest on the senior debt securities of such series to maturity or redemption, as the case may be, and to pay all other

sums payable by us under the senior indenture.

Table of Contents

With respect to the first and second bullet points, only our obligations to compensate and indemnify the trustee and our right to recover unclaimed money held by the trustee under the senior indenture shall survive. With respect to the third bullet point, certain rights and obligations under the senior indenture (such as our obligation to maintain an office or agency in respect of such senior debt securities, to have moneys held for payment in trust, to register the transfer or exchange of such senior debt securities, to deliver such senior debt securities for replacement or to be canceled, to compensate and indemnify the trustee and to appoint a successor trustee, and our right to recover unclaimed money held by the trustee) shall survive until such senior debt securities are no longer outstanding. Thereafter, only our obligations to compensate and indemnify the trustee and our right to recover unclaimed money held by the trustee shall survive.

Unless the terms of any series of senior debt securities provide otherwise, on the 121st day after the date of deposit of the trust funds with the trustee, we will be deemed to have paid and will be discharged from any and all obligations in respect of the series of senior debt securities provided for in the funds, and the provisions of the senior indenture will no longer be in effect with respect to such senior debt securities (legal defeasance); provided that the following conditions shall have been satisfied:

we have irrevocably deposited in trust with the trustee as trust funds solely for the benefit of the holders of the senior debt securities of such series, for payment of the principal of and interest on the senior debt securities of such series, cash in an amount or, in the case of any series of senior debt securities payments on which can only be made in U.S. dollars, U.S. government obligations (maturing as to principal and interest at such times and in such amounts as will insure the availability of cash) or a combination thereof sufficient (in the opinion of a nationally recognized firm of independent public accountants expressed in a written certification thereof delivered to the trustee), after payment of all federal, state and local taxes or other charges and assessments in respect thereof payable by the trustee, to pay and discharge the principal of and accrued interest on the senior debt securities of such series to maturity or earlier redemption, as the case may be, and any mandatory sinking fund payments on the day on which such payments are due and payable in accordance with the terms of the senior indenture and the senior debt securities of such series;

such deposit will not result in a breach or violation of, or constitute a default under, the senior indenture or any other material agreement or instrument to which we are a party or by which we are bound;

no default or event of default with respect to the senior debt securities of such series shall have occurred and be continuing on the date of such deposit;

we shall have delivered to the trustee either an officer's certificate and an opinion of counsel that the holders of the senior debt securities of such series will not recognize income, gain or loss for federal income tax purposes as a result of our exercising our option under this provision of the senior indenture and will be subject to federal income tax on the same amount and in the same manner and at the same times as would have been the case if such deposit and defeasance had not occurred or a ruling by the Internal Revenue Service to the same effect; and

we have delivered to the trustee an officer's certificate and an opinion of counsel, in each case stating that all conditions precedent provided for in the senior indenture relating to the contemplated defeasance of the senior debt securities of such series have been complied with.

Subsequent to the legal defeasance above, certain rights and obligations under the senior indenture (such as our obligation to maintain an office or agency in respect of such senior debt securities, to have moneys held for payment in trust, to register the exchange of such senior debt securities, to deliver such senior debt securities for replacement or to be canceled, to compensate and indemnify the trustee and to appoint a successor trustee, and our right to recover unclaimed money held by the trustee) shall survive until such senior debt securities are no longer outstanding. After such senior debt securities are no longer outstanding, only our obligations to compensate and indemnify the trustee and our right to recover unclaimed money held by the trustee shall survive.

Table of Contents

Modification and Waiver

We and the trustee may amend or supplement the senior indenture or the senior debt securities without the consent of any holder:

to convey, mortgage or pledge any assets as security for the senior debt securities of one or more series;

to evidence the succession of another corporation to us, and the assumption by such successor corporation of our covenants, agreements and obligations under the senior indenture;

to cure any ambiguity, defect, or inconsistency in the senior indenture or in any supplemental indenture; provided that such amendments or supplements shall not adversely affect the interests of the holders of the senior debt securities of any series in any material respect, or to conform the senior indenture or the senior debt securities to the description of senior debt securities of such series set forth in this prospectus or a prospectus supplement;

to comply with the provisions described under *Certain Covenants Consolidation, Merger and Sale of Assets* ;

to evidence and provide for the acceptance of appointment hereunder by a successor trustee, or to make such changes as shall be necessary to provide for or facilitate the administration of the trusts in the senior indenture by more than one trustee;

to provide for or add guarantors with respect to the senior debt securities of any series;

to establish the form or forms or terms of the senior debt securities as permitted by the senior indenture;

to make any change that is necessary or desirable provided that such change shall not adversely affect the interests of the holders of the senior debt securities of any series in any material respect;

to add to our covenants new covenants, restrictions, conditions or provisions for the protection of the holders, and to make the occurrence, or the occurrence and continuance, of a default in any such additional covenants, restrictions, conditions or provisions an event of default;

to make any change to the senior debt securities of any series so long as no senior debt securities of such series are outstanding; or

to make any other change that does not adversely affect the rights of any holder.

Other amendments and modifications of the senior indenture or the senior debt securities issued may be made, and our compliance with any provision of the senior indenture with respect to any series of senior debt securities may be waived, with the consent of the holders of not less than a majority of the aggregate principal amount of the outstanding senior debt securities of all series affected by the amendment or modification (voting as one class); provided, however, that each affected holder must consent to any modification, amendment or waiver that:

Edgar Filing: E TRADE FINANCIAL Corp - Form 424B4

changes the stated maturity of the principal of, or any installment of interest on, any senior debt securities of such series;

reduces the principal amount of, or premium, if any, or interest on, any senior debt securities of such series;

changes the place or currency of payment of principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on, any senior debt securities of such series;

changes the provisions for calculating the optional redemption price, including the definitions relating thereto;

Table of Contents

changes the provisions relating to the waiver of past defaults or changes or impairs the right of holders to receive payment or to institute suit for the enforcement of any payment of any senior debt securities of such series on or after the due date therefor;

reduces the above-stated percentage of outstanding senior debt securities of such series the consent of whose holders is necessary to modify or amend or to waive certain provisions of or defaults under the senior indenture;

waives a default in the payment of principal of or interest on the senior debt securities;

adversely affects the rights of such holder under any mandatory redemption or repurchase provision or any right of redemption or repurchase at the option of such holder; or

modifies any of the provisions of this paragraph, except to increase any required percentage or to provide that certain other provisions cannot be modified or waived without the consent of the holder of each senior debt security of such series affected by the modification.

It shall not be necessary for the consent of the holders under this section of the senior indenture to approve the particular form of any proposed amendment, supplement or waiver, but it shall be sufficient if such consent approves the substance thereof. After an amendment, supplement or waiver under this section of the senior indenture becomes effective, the trustee must give to the holders affected thereby certain notice briefly describing the amendment, supplement or waiver. We will mail supplemental indentures to holders upon request. Any failure by the trustee to give such notice, or any defect therein, shall not, however, in any way impair or affect the validity of any such supplemental indenture or waiver.

No Personal Liability of Incorporators, Stockholders, Officers, Directors

The senior indenture provides that no recourse shall be had under or upon any obligation, covenant, or agreement of ours in the senior indenture or any supplemental indenture, or in any of the senior debt securities or because of the creation of any indebtedness represented thereby, against any incorporator, stockholder, officer or director of ours or of any successor person thereof under any law, statute or constitutional provision or by the enforcement of any assessment or by any legal or equitable proceeding or otherwise. Each holder, by accepting the senior debt securities, waives and releases all such liability.

Concerning the Trustee

The senior indenture provides that, except during the continuance of a default, the trustee will not be liable, except for the performance of such duties as are specifically set forth in the senior indenture. If an event of default has occurred and is continuing, the trustee will exercise such rights and powers vested in it under the senior indenture and will use the same degree of care and skill in its exercise as a prudent person would exercise under the circumstances in the conduct of such person's own affairs.

We have normal banking relationships with the trustee under the senior indenture in the ordinary course of business.

Unclaimed Funds

All funds deposited with the trustee or any paying agent for the payment of principal, interest, premium or additional amounts in respect of the senior debt securities that remain unclaimed for two years after the maturity date of such senior debt securities will be repaid to us upon our request. Thereafter, any right of any noteholder to such funds shall be enforceable only against us, and the trustee and paying agents will have no liability therefor.

Table of Contents

Governing Law

The senior indenture and the debt securities will be governed by, and construed in accordance with, the internal laws of the State of New York.

Certain Terms of the Subordinated Debt Securities

Other than the terms of the subordinated indenture and subordinated debt securities relating to subordination, or otherwise as described in the prospectus supplement relating to a particular series of subordinated debt securities, the terms of the subordinated indenture and subordinated debt securities are identical in all material respects to the terms of the senior indenture and senior debt securities. Additional or different subordination terms may be specified in the prospectus supplement applicable to a particular series.

Subordination

The indebtedness evidenced by the subordinated debt securities is subordinate to the prior payment in full of all our Senior Indebtedness, as defined in the subordinated indenture. During the continuance beyond any applicable grace period of any default in the payment of principal, premium, interest or any other payment due on any of our Senior Indebtedness, we may not make any payment of principal of, or premium, if any, or interest on the subordinated debt securities. In addition, upon any payment or distribution of our assets upon any dissolution, winding up, liquidation or reorganization, the payment of the principal of, or premium, if any, and interest on the subordinated debt securities will be subordinated to the extent provided in the subordinated indenture in right of payment to the prior payment in full of all our Senior Indebtedness. Because of this subordination, if we dissolve or otherwise liquidate, holders of our subordinated debt securities may receive less, ratably, than holders of our Senior Indebtedness. The subordination provisions do not prevent the occurrence of an event of default under the subordinated indenture.

The term **Senior Indebtedness** of a person means with respect to such person the principal of, premium, if any, interest on, and any other payment due pursuant to any of the following, whether outstanding on the date of the subordinated indenture or incurred by that person in the future:

all of the indebtedness of that person for money borrowed, including any indebtedness secured by a mortgage or other lien which is (1) given to secure all or part of the purchase price of property subject to the mortgage or lien, whether given to the vendor of that property or to another lender, or (2) existing on property at the time that person acquires it;

all of the indebtedness of that person evidenced by notes, debentures, bonds or other securities sold by that person for money;

all of the lease obligations which are capitalized on the books of that person in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as in effect on the date of the subordinated indenture;

all indebtedness of others of the kinds described in the first two bullet points above and all lease obligations of others of the kind described in the third bullet point above that the person, in any manner, assumes or guarantees or that the person in effect guarantees through an agreement to purchase, whether that agreement is contingent or otherwise; and

all renewals, extensions or refundings of indebtedness of the kinds described in the first, second or fourth bullet point above and all renewals or extensions of leases of the kinds described in the third or fourth bullet point above;

unless, in the case of any particular indebtedness, lease, renewal, extension or refunding, the instrument or lease creating or evidencing it or the assumption or guarantee relating to it expressly provides that such indebtedness, lease, renewal, extension or refunding is not superior in right of payment to the subordinated debt securities. Our senior debt securities constitute Senior Indebtedness for purposes of the subordinated debt indenture.

Table of Contents

DESCRIPTION OF WARRANTS

We may issue warrants to purchase our debt or equity securities or securities of third parties or other rights, including rights to receive payment in cash or securities based on the value, rate or price of one or more specified commodities, currencies, securities or indices, or any combination of the foregoing. Warrants may be issued independently or together with any other securities and may be attached to, or separate from, such securities. Each series of warrants will be issued under a separate warrant agreement to be entered into between us and a warrant agent. The terms of any warrants to be issued and a description of the material provisions of the applicable warrant agreement will be set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement.

DESCRIPTION OF PURCHASE CONTRACTS

We may issue purchase contracts for the purchase or sale of:

debt or equity securities issued by us or securities of third parties, a basket of such securities, an index or indices or such securities or any combination of the above as specified in the applicable prospectus supplement;

currencies; or

commodities.

Each purchase contract will entitle the holder thereof to purchase or sell, and obligate us to sell or purchase, on specified dates, such securities, currencies or commodities at a specified purchase price, which may be based on a formula, all as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. We may, however, satisfy our obligations, if any, with respect to any purchase contract by delivering the cash value of such purchase contract or the cash value of the property otherwise deliverable or, in the case of purchase contracts on underlying currencies, by delivering the underlying currencies, as set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement. The applicable prospectus supplement will also specify the methods by which the holders may purchase or sell such securities, currencies or commodities and any acceleration, cancellation or termination provisions or other provisions relating to the settlement of a purchase contract.

The purchase contracts may require us to make periodic payments to the holders thereof or vice versa, which payments may be deferred to the extent set forth in the applicable prospectus supplement, and those payments may be unsecured or prefunded on some basis. The purchase contracts may require the holders thereof to secure their obligations in a specified manner to be described in the applicable prospectus supplement. Alternatively, purchase contracts may require holders to satisfy their obligations thereunder when the purchase contracts are issued. Our obligation to settle such pre-paid purchase contracts on the relevant settlement date may constitute indebtedness. Accordingly, pre-paid purchase contracts will be issued under either the senior indenture or the subordinated indenture.

DESCRIPTION OF UNITS

As specified in the applicable prospectus supplement, we may issue units consisting of one or more purchase contracts, warrants, debt securities, shares of preferred stock, shares of common stock or any combination of such securities.

Table of Contents

FORMS OF SECURITIES

Each debt security, warrant and unit will be represented either by a certificate issued in definitive form to a particular investor or by one or more global securities representing the entire issuance of securities. Certificated securities in definitive form and global securities will be issued in registered form. Definitive securities name you or your nominee as the owner of the security, and in order to transfer or exchange these securities or to receive payments other than interest or other interim payments, you or your nominee must physically deliver the securities to the trustee, registrar, paying agent or other agent, as applicable. Global securities name a depositary or its nominee as the owner of the debt securities, warrants or units represented by these global securities. The depositary maintains a computerized system that will reflect each investor's beneficial ownership of the securities through an account maintained by the investor with its broker/dealer, bank, trust company or other representative, as we explain more fully below.

Global Securities

We may issue the registered debt securities, warrants and units in the form of one or more fully registered global securities that will be deposited with a depositary or its nominee identified in the applicable prospectus supplement and registered in the name of that depositary or nominee. In those cases, one or more registered global securities will be issued in a denomination or aggregate denominations equal to the portion of the aggregate principal or face amount of the securities to be represented by registered global securities. Unless and until it is exchanged in whole for securities in definitive registered form, a registered global security may not be transferred except as a whole by and among the depositary for the registered global security, the nominees of the depositary or any successors of the depositary or those nominees.

If not described below, any specific terms of the depositary arrangement with respect to any securities to be represented by a registered global security will be described in the prospectus supplement relating to those securities. We anticipate that the following provisions will apply to all depositary arrangements.

Ownership of beneficial interests in a registered global security will be limited to persons, called participants, that have accounts with the depositary or persons that may hold interests through participants. Upon the issuance of a registered global security, the depositary will credit, on its book-entry registration and transfer system, the participants' accounts with the respective principal or face amounts of the securities beneficially owned by the participants. Any dealers, underwriters or agents participating in the distribution of the securities will designate the accounts to be credited. Ownership of beneficial interests in a registered global security will be shown on, and the transfer of ownership interests will be effected only through, records maintained by the depositary, with respect to interests of participants, and on the records of participants, with respect to interests of persons holding through participants. The laws of some states may require that some purchasers of securities take physical delivery of these securities in definitive form. These laws may impair your ability to own, transfer or pledge beneficial interests in registered global securities.

So long as the depositary, or its nominee, is the registered owner of a registered global security, that depositary or its nominee, as the case may be, will be considered the sole owner or holder of the securities represented by the registered global security for all purposes under the applicable indenture, warrant agreement or unit agreement. Except as described below, owners of beneficial interests in a registered global security will not be entitled to have the securities represented by the registered global security registered in their names, will not receive or be entitled to receive physical delivery of the securities in definitive form and will not be considered the owners or holders of the securities under the applicable indenture, warrant agreement or unit agreement. Accordingly, each person owning a beneficial interest in a registered global security must rely on the procedures of the depositary for that registered global security and, if that person is not a participant, on the procedures of the participant through which the person owns its interest, to exercise any rights of a holder under the applicable indenture, warrant agreement or unit agreement. We understand that under existing industry practices, if we request any action of holders or if an owner of a beneficial interest in a registered global security

Table of Contents

desires to give or take any action that a holder is entitled to give or take under the applicable indenture, warrant agreement or unit agreement, the depositary for the registered global security would authorize the participants holding the relevant beneficial interests to give or take that action, and the participants would authorize beneficial owners owning through them to give or take that action or would otherwise act upon the instructions of beneficial owners holding through them.

Principal, premium, if any, and interest payments on debt securities, and any payments to holders with respect to warrants or units, represented by a registered global security registered in the name of a depositary or its nominee will be made to the depositary or its nominee, as the case may be, as the registered owner of the registered global security. None of E*TRADE, the trustee, any warrant agent, unit agent or any other agent of E*TRADE, agent of the trustee or agent of such warrant agent or unit agent will have any responsibility or liability for any aspect of the records relating to payments made on account of beneficial ownership interests in the registered global security or for maintaining, supervising or reviewing any records relating to those beneficial ownership interests.

We expect that the depositary for any of the securities represented by a registered global security, upon receipt of any payment of principal, premium, interest or other distribution of underlying securities or other property to holders of that registered global security, will immediately credit participants' accounts in amounts proportionate to their respective beneficial interests in that registered global security as shown on the records of the depositary. We also expect that payments by participants to owners of beneficial interests in a registered global security held through participants will be governed by standing customer instructions and customary practices, as is now the case with the securities held for the accounts of customers in bearer form or registered in street name, and will be the responsibility of those participants.

If the depositary for any of these securities represented by a registered global security is at any time unwilling or unable to continue as depositary or ceases to be a clearing agency registered under the Exchange Act, and a successor depositary registered as a clearing agency under the Exchange Act is not appointed by us within 90 days, we will issue securities in definitive form in exchange for the registered global security that had been held by the depositary. Any securities issued in definitive form in exchange for a registered global security will be registered in the name or names that the depositary gives to the relevant trustee, warrant agent, unit agent or other relevant agent of ours or theirs. It is expected that the depositary's instructions will be based on directions received by the depositary from participants with respect to ownership of beneficial interests in the registered global security that had been held by the depositary.

Table of Contents

SELLING SECURITY HOLDERS

Selling security holders, including their transferees, pledgees or donees or their successors (all of whom may be selling security holders), may from time to time offer and sell pursuant to this prospectus any or all of the securities. When we refer to the selling security holders in this prospectus, we mean the selling security holders we may name in a prospectus supplement, as well as their respective transferees, pledgees or donees or their successors.

If any securities are sold pursuant to this prospectus by any persons other than us, we will, in a prospectus supplement, name the selling security holders, indicate the nature of any relationship such holders have had with us or any of our affiliates during the three years preceding such offering, state the amount of securities of the class owned by such security holder prior to the offering and the amount to be offered for the security holder's account, and state the amount and (if one percent or more) the percentage of the class to be owned by such security holder after completion of the offering.

Table of Contents

PLAN OF DISTRIBUTION

We or selling security holders may sell the securities being offered hereby in any of the following manners or any manner specified in a prospectus supplement:

directly to purchasers;

through agents;

through underwriters; and

through dealers.

We or any selling security holder may directly solicit offers to purchase securities, or agents may be designated to solicit such offers. We will, in the prospectus supplement relating to such offering, name any agent that could be viewed as an underwriter under the Securities Act and describe any commissions that we or any selling security holder must pay. Any such agent will be acting on a best efforts basis for the period of its appointment or, if indicated in the applicable prospectus supplement, on a firm commitment basis. Agents, dealers and underwriters may be customers of, engage in transactions with, or perform services for us or any selling security holder in the ordinary course of business.

If any underwriters or agents are utilized in the sale of the securities in respect of which this prospectus is delivered, we and, if applicable, any selling security holder will enter into an underwriting agreement or other agreement with them at the time of sale to them, and we will set forth in the prospectus supplement relating to such offering the names of the underwriters or agents and the terms of the related agreement with them.

If a dealer is utilized in the sale of the securities in respect of which the prospectus is delivered, we or the selling security holder, as applicable, will sell such securities to the dealer as principal. The dealer may then resell such securities to the public at varying prices to be determined by such dealer at the time of resale.

Remarketing firms, agents, underwriters and dealers may be entitled under agreements which they may enter into with us to indemnification by us and by any selling security holder against certain civil liabilities, including liabilities under the Securities Act, and may be customers of, engage in transactions with or perform services for us or any selling security holder in the ordinary course of business.

In order to facilitate the offering of the securities, any underwriters may engage in transactions that stabilize, maintain or otherwise affect the price of the securities or any other securities the prices of which may be used to determine payments on such securities. Specifically, any underwriters may overallocate in connection with the offering, creating a short position for their own accounts. In addition, to cover overallocations or to stabilize the price of the securities or of any such other securities, the underwriters may bid for, and purchase, the securities or any such other securities in the open market. Any of these activities may stabilize or maintain the market price of the securities above independent market levels. Any such underwriters are not required to engage in these activities and may end any of these activities at any time.

Any underwriter, agent or dealer utilized in the initial offering of securities will not confirm sales to accounts over which it exercises discretionary authority without the prior specific written approval of its customer.

The selling security holders may also transfer, devise or gift the securities by other means not described in this prospectus. Furthermore, any securities covered by this prospectus which qualify for sale pursuant to Rule 144 or other exemptions from registration under of the Securities Act may be sold pursuant to such exemption rather than pursuant to this prospectus.

Table of Contents

VALIDITY OF SECURITIES

The validity of the securities in respect of which this prospectus is being delivered will be passed on for us by Davis Polk & Wardwell LLP.

Table of Contents

EXPERTS

The consolidated financial statements incorporated in this prospectus by reference from the Company's Annual Report on Form 10-K for the year ended December 31, 2011, and the effectiveness of the Company's internal control over financial reporting have been audited by Deloitte & Touche LLP, an independent registered public accounting firm, as stated in their reports (which reports (1) express an unqualified opinion on the consolidated financial statements and include an explanatory paragraph referring to the adoption of the accounting guidance, *Recognition and Presentation of Other-Than-Temporary Impairments*, on April 1, 2009, and (2) express an unqualified opinion on the effectiveness of internal control over financial reporting) which are incorporated herein by reference. Such consolidated financial statements have been so incorporated in reliance upon the reports of such firm given upon their authority as experts in accounting and auditing.

Table of Contents

27,394,448 Shares

E*TRADE Financial Corporation

Common Stock

PROSPECTUS SUPPLEMENT

Citigroup

March 13, 2013