

Fine Living REVIEW

a taste of dakota's culture, cuisine & spirits

December 2009/January 2010

Christmas Culture

Irish Pub

Taste of the Past

Caroling



Going Green *Irish Pub opens in downtown Bismarck*

GUINNESS AND IRISH MUSIC NOW GRACE THE downtown area of Bismarck. An authentic Irish pub, The Blarney Stone, opened its doors for business in October.

“We had been talking for some time about starting a new place in Bismarck,” said Jim Poolman, one of the owners. “We were looking for something that was different, that people would enjoy. We loved the idea of an Irish pub where you could get some authentic Irish pub food and have a variety of beers to enjoy. We wanted a place that reminded you of a neighborhood place where you can come,

STORY BY JESSE BRADLEY

PHOTOGRAPHY BY AMY TABORSKY

be comfortable, enjoy good food, visit and be with friends.”

The Blarney Stone is owned by Matt and Kelly Geiger, Jim and Nicole Poolman, Bil and Michele Rydquist, and Russ Wanner. The group worked together to make decisions on location, décor and the menu.

“When making that kind of investment, we want to be active,”

Poolman said. “We want the pub to say something about us as well, and we feel like being active owners will do that.”

The group looked at a number of establishments outside of North Dakota to come up with the concept. “The partners looked at places as far away as Ireland, Toronto, New York, Boston and Minneapolis, and then closer to home like Fargo as well,” Poolman said. “We were looking to combine the best of many of those places.”

Poolman explains that the group’s focus was on an area in downtown Bismarck when they started exploring the idea of a new bar. “The downtown area was a perfect setting for our pub,” Poolman said. “We are committed to downtown, the local business community, and we want to be a great addition for the people in Bismarck who frequent downtown. We found the perfect building that would provide a great atmosphere



With over 25 different tap beers to choose from, one is sure to find a flavor to suit their own style at The Blarney Stone.



and would be beneficial to downtown Bismarck.”

Crews worked for months to convert the 408 E. Main Ave. location to a neighborhood bar feel. “The older building couldn’t complement the feel and atmosphere any better,” Poolman said. “The Blarney Stone has exposed brick, dark woods, and a rich feel that is great for an Irish pub.”

Patrons visiting The Blarney Stone will be able to sample typical Irish fare like shepherd’s pie and Irish stew. The bar also serves burgers, sandwiches, steaks, salads and other menu items. It features approximately 26 tap beers and a variety of bottled beers and cocktails.

“It has a warm, friendly feel with a menu that has something for everyone,” Poolman said. “A tremendous selection of tap beers including Irish and other foreign beers will give a beer connoisseur plenty to choose from. Along with a great cocktail list, people will definitely find this unique to the Bismarck area.”

Bismarck’s new establishment, The Blarney Stone, seems to be a hot spot in town for lunch and after-work socializing.