

Celebrating five years: Olive Oil Marketplace hosts ribbon cutting for its customers

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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ALTON - After five years in business, the Olive Oil Marketplace, located at 108 Third St. in Alton, celebrated its anniversary Friday morning with an 11 a.m. ribbon cutting celebration.

The celebration included the ribbon cutting, which was presented by the RiverBend Growth Association (RBGA), as well as samples of several of the assorted items sold at the Olive Oil Marketplace - not only gourmet olive oils and balsamics. Several items from the in-house "Get-R-Smoked" collection, marketed toward grill enthusiasts were also on sale, and the homemade barbecue sauce was available for sample alongside pulled pork made fresh by Mike Meeks, the son of Olive Oil Marketplace owners, Tim and Julie Meeks.

"It's not just a great place to get olive oils and balsamics," RBGA President Monica Bristow said Friday morning. "They have all sorts of dips, mixes and kitchen gadgets. It is awful hard to come in here and leave without buying anything."

Some of those "dips and mixes" were available for sampling Friday morning as well. James Dennis of Thompson Farm Soups brought a few pots of soup made from the pre-

packaged homemade blends sold at Olive Oil Marketplace for samples. Dennis also brought dips from the Wentzville, Missouri-based business. Flavors such as cilantro lime and loaded baked potato were on hand for customers to enjoy.

Another vendor selling at Olive Oil Marketplace is Nuwati Teas. Justin Stauder of Nuwati Teas had two brewed containers of specially-made iced tea on hand for the event for people to sample as well.

"Everything we make and sell is designed to benefit the body in some way," Stauder said of the herbal teas and spa products marketed by his company. "We have mixes for allergies, relaxation, focus and many other things as well."

Two of those teas, Laughing Coyote and Wind Dancer, were being served ice to customers as free samples. Laughing Coyote is blended with herbs said to promote happiness and laughter, while wind dancer is designed for energy and stamina with a caffeine content as high as 20 percent.

Friday's events were only the beginning of a week long celebration of events and specials. Many of those specials will also be available at the second location of the Olive Oil Marketplace in Belleville.



