

State Street Market in Alton is RBGA January Small Business of Month

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ALTON - The RiverBend Growth Association selects a small business to honor each month. Winners are selected based on a scoring system that awards points for number of

years in business, number of employees, overcoming adversity and community service. State Street Market in Alton was selected Small Business of M



onth for January 2018.

Two years and 7 months ago, Glenn (Beau) and Terri Beaubien decided to leave their current jobs and open a restaurant in Alton. It was fate that lead them to Alton in the beginning (read their story at <http://www.visitalton.com/feature-stories/detail/232/state-street-market>) but since arriving, the business has continued to evolve; even with parking issues, two floods and operating in such a small space. They started with a “turnkey” opportunity that included a small “lunch only” menu.

Since that time, they have added additional salads and many more sandwiches, quiche, several daily specials and desserts. They also now offer brunch on Saturday mornings (9 a.m.-2 p.m.) as well as over 120 retail wines.

Although in the past, they have not been open for regular evening hours, “Evenings at State Street” have been very successful for them. These were random “pop up” evening events featuring a special dinner menu and usually live music. Their unique space is perfect (and quite popular) for special events but it’s kept them from opening for Sunday Brunch; each Sunday is normally reserved for showers, birthday parties, or other special gatherings. Wine dinners and tastings have been another popular addition that will certainly be continued.

Baby steps have been the key to getting things right before moving ahead with new ideas.

“I wish I had a dollar for everyone that said, “you know what you ought to do?” Terri said. “It’s not as easy as people make it sound; but we do listen.”

Each small step has lead them to where there are now. They have recently signed a three-year lease to take over the space next door (formally Lucianna’s Pastries) to put in a wine bar (complete with beer, wine and spirits) as well as a Wine Retail Store that offers wine from all over the world in various price ranges. The restaurant will also take on evening hours offering food. Although the exact time of operation has not been decided, they are leaning toward the times of 11 a.m.-9 p.m. Tuesday through Thursday, 11 a.m.-10 p.m. on Friday and 9 a.m.-10 p.m. on Saturday. They are hoping to have the expansion completed by February.

“Our wine retail business has really taken off, but we realize in order to be a good service to our customers, we have to have convenient hours of operation. If we are going to be open longer hours for retail wine sales, we may as well serve food and drinks.”

The restaurant has been known as a charming, quaint space with indoor and outdoor seating available, and that won’t change with the expansion.

“We are hoping to obtain a “café license” in order to have front sidewalk seating available in addition to our outdoor courtyard,” Beau said.

The new “bar” side will be a touch more masculine with wood, brick and metal décor.” The furnishings (provided by Henley Forge) will all be available for purchase.

State Street Market's mission will not change. They will continue to provide healthy fresh food prepared specifically for each individual as ordered and continue to be as accommodating as possible. They always want customers to be treated as guests in their home; ensuring customers for life. When it comes to wine, they treat each customer as an individual, respecting their opinions, tastes and price points. “We make wine buying fun; whether you know a great deal or a little about wine, we are here to help make it a good experience.”

Staffing has been minimum thus far with Beau and Terri being on site 99 percent of the time. In the past, Nicci Buehlman has been the only server and main employee.

“We have been blessed with Nicci. She has been loyal and trustworthy and we consider her family,” Terri said. “The customers expect to be greeted by her when they walk in. Now, State Street Market is growing their staff and carefully choosing people with the same qualities.

Aimee Hughes (who Terri and Beau “cherry picked” based on previous encounters with her at other restaurants) will be a familiar face on the bar side and will be present most nights. One thing that is pointed out in most of State Street Market reviews is that owners are present, interactive and accommodating with the guests. That won’t change. When it comes to staffing, it’s their mission to provide proper coaching to embrace their unique culture while empowering growth.

“It takes a good attitude to be willing to grasp our culture of always accommodating guests. Many don’t have the patience for this type of service; but it is the unique culture at State Street Market.”

When arriving in Alton, Terri and Beau knew only a handful of people from this area but were committed to getting involved in the community. State Street Market is a big believer in supporting the community and charitable events. The Boys and Girls Club of Alton, Girls on Grapes/Boys on Brew, Duck Plucker's Ball and many other various silent auctions are just some of the charities State Street Market supports. State Street Market is a member of the Alton East End Organization, Alton Main Street and the RiverBend Growth Association.

For more information on State Street Market, visit them at statestreetmarketofalton.com or on Facebook at [Statestreetmarketofalton](https://www.facebook.com/Statestreetmarketofalton). You can also call them at (618) 462-8800 or (618) 925-1730.

