

# **DOORS OPEN TUESDAY: Elijah P's ready to join Alton's entertainment district**

by Dan Brannan, Content Director  
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The much-anticipated Elijah P's Burgers and Brews bar/restaurant is ready to open its doors at [401 Piasa St. in Alton](#).

Owner Russ Smith is putting the finishing touches on the elegant bar and will show the bar to a few private parties this weekend and open to the public on Tuesday.

## INSIDE LOOK:

[Click for inside view of the new Elijah P's](#)

Smith said there is considerable buzz occurring about the new establishment and expects some of the St. Louis and local media to be publicizing the opening by the end of the week.

“I am hearing more positive buzz about Elijah P’s all the time,” Smith said. “It has been a year-long process of getting it ready. I am very happy with the look of it and the anticipation. We rolled with the punches and here we are today. Hopefully people will enjoy the space and product we have to offer.”

Smith is also owner of [Bossanova](#), an extremely popular bar/restaurant just down the road at 112 W. Third St. in Alton.

Smith plans to have bands and entertainment, with some focus on bluegrass and acoustic type of music, both inside and eventually outside. The outside portion won’t open until later. Smith hopes to have the outside area open by end of May.

As the name of the business implies, burgers and brews will be its mainstay.

A total of 60 brews will be on tap to start, with a variety of local beers, to the St. Louis staples and many other tap products, ranging from light beer to stout.

Smith said Elijah P’s will also have 100 varieties of scotch and whiskey to start, including some bottles of Pappy Van Winkle, much sought after in the bar industry. For those who enjoy wine, the new business will also offer a variety of choice products.

“There is something for everyone,” Smith said. “We will have 60 drafts on tap to begin with and that is the most in the area. We have a wide variety of beers. We have craft brews to regional breweries and will offer light beers and more substantial dark beers and chocolate tasting beers. We also will have ciders and just something for every kind of beer lover.”

Eventually, there will be inside party rooms available, but in the beginning the kitchen staff will be open only at dinner.

“We will have an upscale pub menu,” Smith said. “Jarvis Putnam, the head chef at Bossanova, put together a great menu. We will also have salads, soups, appetizers and entrees.”

The bar in Elijah P's could be about 80 years old and still has great detail, Smith said. "The bar is out of an old excursion riverboat," he adds.

Smith said he was looking for a bar with that kind of character and found it from a person in Wood River who had it stacked in inside storage. Smith's carpenter took the bar and put it together.

"Building a new bar wouldn't look quite the same," Smith said.

Displayed on walls of Elijah P's are several photographs, including a photo depiction of when abolitionish newspaper publisher Elijah P. Lovejoy was shot and killed in Alton in 1837. There are also photos of Robert Wadlow, explorers Lewis and Clark, Abraham Lincoln and much more, representing local history.

Entering the hallway there is a limestone décor and Smith thought that was appropriate with Alton's history.

The new Elijah P's owner sees the opening of his business one more solid addition to an already excellent lineup downtown. The new establishment definitely has an Alton historical touch to it.

"Downtown Alton is the entertainment district in town and everyone takes advantage of it," he said. "Everyone likes to pop from one location to another. Every venue downtown takes advantage of that. One person may enjoy a dessert at one and then go to another place."

In the future, Smith sees the downtown Alton area growing and expanding.

"Entertainment is a big part of the vision of downtown," Smith said.

With a gleam in his eyes, Smith said, "We are just steps away from being part of that regional entertainment district."

For more about Elijah P's, contact 618-433-8445.

