

Love of community brought owner to The Cottonwood Café

By **Jim Cornelius**
Editor in Chief

David Touvell trained in classical French cuisine and worked for years at Michelin-starred restaurants. He owns several restaurants in Central Oregon, including the highly regarded Chow in Bend. But there's always been one restaurant in Sisters that he has wanted to own and operate — and now he does.

Touvell and Ryan Sturmer of Brasada Ranch are partners in The Cottonwood Café.

"I've been looking at this space for six-and-a-half years," Touvell told *The Nugget*. "It's always been on my mind."

Breakfast is served till 2 p.m. at the cottage on the corner of Hood Avenue and Larch Street, and lunch starts at 11 a.m.

Touvell loves the intimacy of the small cottage space, and sees it as a place to realize a particular culinary and cultural vision for the town he now calls home.

"My favorite thing is making family-friendly hubs that are fun," he said. "Our only goal is to make this place... a hub of the community."

Touvell is pleased to note that everybody who works at The Cottonwood Café lives in Sisters, including him. He and his wife have four children in Sisters schools.

"This whole area reminds us of why we're in Central Oregon," he said.

Touvell's culinary journey began early, in Ventura, California.

"My mother is quite an accomplished cook — Julia Child-level," Touvell told *The Nugget*.

He grew up on cooking shows, and at age nine started working for a friend of his mother's who taught him how to make free-form organic bread.

From there, it was culinary school and work at a variety of restaurants. He earned his chops at Tack Room, French Laundry, Lodge at Pebble Beach and Club 19. He was

sous chef at Couvron in Portland, which earned a coveted James Beard award.

"I was a chef, basically, when I was 19 years old," he said.

When he came to Oregon, "that was it," he recalled. He knew that this was home.

Touvell also learned to design hotels and restaurants, and has continued that work as well.

For all the potency of his resume and all of his rich and

varied experience, Touvell is focused on doing simple things very well.

"To me, the best breakfast in the world is the most simple breakfast," he said.

The culture at The Cottonwood Café is all about service and a quality experience.

"We're very accommodating," he said. "All we want to do is help you. All I really care about is making people happy."

Touvell is excited to be a participant in the community he loves, and he is looking forward to the evolution of The Cottonwood Café.

"We're excited about what we're going to do here in the next year or so," he said.

View The Cottonwood Café menu at www.cottonwoodinsisters.com/menu. The Cottonwood Café is located at 403 E. Hood Ave.



PHOTO BY JIM CORNELIUS

Owners' goal is to make The Cottonwood Café a family-friendly hub of the community.

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— David Touvell



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