

Snow Peak Brewing now open in Stayton

Emily Teel

Salem Statesman Journal
USA TODAY NETWORK

Thanks to more than a year of work and with the support of a successfully-backed crowdfunding campaign, three couples have rolled open the doors of Stayton's first brewery.

Snow Peak Brewing, located at 280 East Water Street, is in the soft opening phase. They're currently open on a limited basis as they brew beers and prepare for an official opening on August 7.

Five beers with more to come

Snow Peak is housed in a big brick building. Two garage-style doors open onto Water Street and spill plenty of light into the space. There's a short bar on the right side of the room and the brewing system in full view on the left. Couches along one wall offer seating, as do a handful of custom-built tables.

Of Snow Peak's six owners, couple Crystal and Matt Spenner are the brewers.

Their own brews are currently on a handful of the 12 taps. Smoked chocolate malt gives Snow Peak's Schmokin Porter a toasty, depthful aroma. Eukanot hops offer fruity, mellow hoppiness to Eukanot Do That on Television, named for 80's kids show You Can't Do That on Television. Matt said of Snarl IPA, one made with Citra and Cascade hops, "I've been chasing this one for a long time."

Three more beers are in the works, including a Kolsch and two that have previously won awards.

Matt won second place in the American strong ale category of the 2016 Oregon Brew Crew Fall Classic. Brewed with Citra hops, he called it Citra-Lee, named after Crystal, whose name is Crystal Lee.

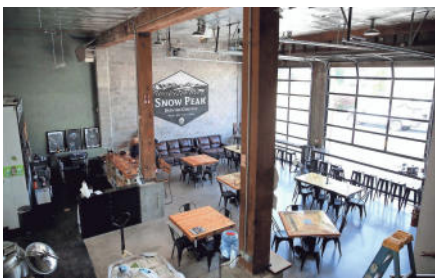
In 2017, Crystal's recipe for a beer called Haybox Amber earned her a first-place ribbon at SheBrew, an annual competition for female-identified brewers in Portland.

Other local and seasonal offerings round out the selection: Ratchet Brewing's Shake-N-Bake IPA, 2 Towns Easy Squeezy raspberry lemonade cider, Barley Brown's Ratchet Strap IPA, Da-Hi-Life Lager from Maui Brewing and more. Non-alcoholic options include soft drinks, seltzer, McKenzie Brewing Root Beer, and a passionfruit turmeric CBD soda from Boneyard Elixir.

The brewery does not have a kitchen and is not serving food, but they're working with the city of Stayton to be able to host food trucks on the street in front of the brewery. Currently, city requirements prohibit food trucks from operating in the public right-of-way, aka the street, but a proposal tabled by Stayton's city council would allow private businesses to host food trucks on an individual basis. The proposal is tabled until the September council meeting.

Building a brewery

The idea for the brewery that would eventually become Snow Peak started with wife and husband home-brewers Crystal and Matt Spenner. Excited by their wins in local brewing competitions, the Spenners were inspired to open a brewery. They enlisted friends Brittany and Chris Klein and Cari and Doug Naugle, and the idea took shape. Of the six owners, five have known one another since high school. Each person brings a different skill set to the ven-



The interior of Snow Peak Brewing in Stayton. MICHAELA ROMÁN / STATESMAN JOURNAL



Owners Matt Spenner and Crystal Spenner are pictured at Snow Peak Brewing in Stayton on July 26, 2019. MICHAELA ROMÁN / STATESMAN JOURNAL

ture.

Matt, a welding inspector, is president and head brewer. Crystal also brews, and she lead the charge on all of the permitting.

Brittany Klein, who has a retail background, oversees product merchandising. Her husband, Chris Klein, has decades of experience in sales and will act as Snow Peak's director of sales and marketing.

Doug Naugle will handle logistics and distribution, and accountant Cari Naugle, "she's our budget boss," said Crystal.

They chose to name their brewery Snow Peak, a nod to a local landmark and a name that, for many area residents, captures the warm nostalgia, said Crystal, of "building a fire in the snow with your friends," and maybe also, added Matt, of getting your pick-up stuck.

In order to help secure a space and buy some initial equipment, the team launched a Kickstarter campaign, hoping to raise an initial \$25,000. With the support of 80 backers, they surpassed their goal with a pledge total of \$27,515.

"The biggest thing it did for us," Matt explained, "was show the folks we worked with as lenders that we were serious."

Now that Snow Peak is open a sign on the wall lists their backers by name, a way to thank those who helped make the Spenners dream a reality.

Emily Teel is the Food & Drink Editor at the Statesman Journal. Contact her at eteel@statesmanjournal.com, Facebook, or Twitter. See what she's cooking and where she's eating this week on Instagram: @emily_teel

If you go

Snow Peak Brewing
Where: 280 East Water Street, Stayton
Phone: (503) 767-2337
Hours: (after August 7) Wednesday and Thursday 3 to 9 p.m.; Friday 3 to 10 p.m.; Saturday 12 to 10 p.m.; Sunday 12 to 6 p.m.; closed Monday and Tuesday
Information: Snow Peak Brewing (Facebook)

that, she lived with her mom in Oak Harbor, Wash. At 19, she moved to the Clackamas area, landing in Molalla when she got married.

The next chapter in her life was even more difficult, she said. Her husband was abusive, and, a decade after they moved to Silverton, she was getting a divorce and negotiating the legal system to protect herself and her three boys.

She made her first local cheesecake – blackberry – for the staff at her boys' school and, from there, word spread. In three-and-a-half years, she's made and sold more than 400 cheesecakes. Last Saturday, at the SACA auction, one of her specialty cakes sold for \$850. She's delivered as far north as Vancouver, Wash., and as far south as Albany.

Taking her business to the next level by opening a shop has been exciting and terrifying, she said.

"I don't want to live with regrets," she wrote on Kickstarter. "I've realized that I can integrate my social work practice within my cheesecake business. My dreams are to grow and expand to where I can hire individuals with barriers or need a hand up."

Beloved Cheesecakes' grand opening was Aug. 2, and, now it will be open Wednesday through Saturday each week. On the menu, a single slice costs \$6.95 to \$8, and customers can also buy, tea, coffee and whole cakes to go.



Impacts to the Whitewater Trail, in the Mount Jefferson Wilderness, from the Whitewater Fire. Photo taken late September 2017.

GRADY MCMAHAN/US FOREST SERVICE

Trail

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The blaze ignited just a few hundred feet off the trail, in fact, and killed many of the old-growth trees in the area, but also opened up new views of Oregon's second-tallest mountain.

Crews have worked for almost two years to stabilize the trail and remove the numerous hazard trees from both the pathway and along Whitewater Road.

The Forest Service said hikers should plan for crowds on the weekends, start hikes early and observe Leave No Trace practices.

With the likely increase in visitors, officials said campers should avoid putting down tents on Jefferson Park's

vegetation, stay on established trail systems and camp at designated sites around the lakes.

"We expect the area to be very busy on weekends through August," the Forest Service said in a news release. "Hiking the Whitewater Trail on a weekday would give you more opportunities for solitude."

From the trailhead, it takes about six miles to reach Jefferson Park, which was not burned by the fire, on a moderately difficult hike.

Zach Urness has been an outdoors reporter, photographer and videographer in Oregon for 11 years. Urness is the author of "Best Hikes with Kids: Oregon" and "Hiking Southern Oregon." He can be reached at zurness@Statesman-Journal.com or (503) 399-6801. Find him on Twitter at @ZachsORoutdoors.



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Cheesecakes

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on the website Kickstarter. Online "backers" – 196 of them – logged on and donated. Even her first friend in kindergarten, who lives in the Midwest now, contributed.

Primarily, she was requesting financial help to build a kitchen into the shop space she's renting at 205 Oak St., Suite B., which was most recently home to Klecker Knives.

As money started coming in online, three-dozen friends volunteered alongside Jacobson, contractors agreed to take payment after the fundraising campaign ended, and Beloved Cheesecakes took shape.

"I'm still trying to process all the support," she said. "It's surreal. I feel like I'm in a dream."

In her airy little shop, personal touches are everywhere. Visitors find antique cake stands at the counter, sparkles in the silver paint on the walls and inspirational quotes throughout. On the cake cooler is this one: "Women are angels. When someone breaks our wings, we continue to fly."

It's a one-sentence summary of Jacobson's life. Born in Oregon City, she grew up with a drug-addicted father who died when she was only 14. After

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