

New Chateau chef excited for season

By Dan Mancuso
IVN Staff Writer

The head chef at the Oregon Caves Chateau is creating a buzz with both guests at the lodge and Valley residents who have already eaten there this year.

Those who have taken the opportunity to sample B.J. Hyatt's cuisine say they are impressed with the food presentation and quality, and that the service seems to have gone up a notch at the already renowned restaurant.

Hyatt attributes her success to teamwork.

"We're all a team. We work together and get it done. I couldn't do it all myself," she said.

"Two of our servers, Angelique Trowbridge and Deanne DeSoto, bake all our desserts, from specialty cobblers and pies to cr me brulee. They come up with some great ideas."

Hyatt also credited David Wonderling, her second in command lead chef on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, as well as daytime lead cook Linda Spliethof, with being great team players.

Hyatt also praised food and beverage manager Adrianna Kymala.

"She's a wonderful manager; it would be hard to do this without her," Hyatt said.

Kymala was equally complimentary about Hyatt.

"BJ has an awesome attitude in the kitchen," Kymala said. "She works in a calm, methodical, can-do manner which allows the kitchen staff to perform at their best. She consistently produces excellent quality and visually-pleasing presentations. We're pleased to have her as Head Chef. It is hard to just mention a few staff when they all have a unique contribution towards the function of the Chateau. Many have been working here for years and everyone is passionate about their own contribution to our guest experience."

Hyatt said she became interested in cooking at an early age.

"My aunt was a great home cook," she said. "She let me watch her in the kitchen and I started to help her at about age 5. She had a knack for making things look pretty and taste good."

Hyatt grew up in Montana, and moved here in 2004 for the climate and amenities.

"Oregon is the closest thing to Montana, without being Montana," she said with a laugh.

"I started out as a dishwasher on my first restaurant job, and after awhile



(Courtesy photo for The Illinois Valley News)

B.J. Hyatt, new head chef at the Chateau at the Oregon Caves, working on a dish for the restaurant.

they let me make some dishes. They liked what I did and they liked my ideas, and I worked my way up from there."

Hyatt first worked as a breakfast cook at the Chateau in 2004, when the two lead chefs both quit just before opening night. Hyatt was immediately promoted to sous chef – the second in command under the lead chef – and finished the season in that position.

Hyatt then moved to Connecticut and lived there for about 6 years, working in a couple of restaurants. She then returned to Oregon and worked at The Vine for 3 years before returning to the Chateau.

"I've worked my way up in every restaurant I've been at," she explained. "I like to start at the bottom. Then I know all the aspects and what's going on."

Hyatt said she enjoys her job.

"I've worked in the industry 21 years, and it's been a lot of fun," Hyatt said. "I especially enjoy what's called the 'chef's challenge,' when a guest can't eat certain ingredients. That's when I can be creative and find substitutions to fit their special dietary needs."

One of Hyatt's favorite Chateau recipes is the apple brandy pork, she said.

"It's a fun recipe," Hyatt said. "I enjoy making all the items on the menu. We chefs do all our own prep work. We also bake our own fresh bread every day."

Kymala said she encourages Valley residents to experience dinner at the Chateau this season.

"The drive to the Chateau is a pleasant precursor for taking time to relax and enjoy respite from our busy lives," Kymala said. "Our entire staff are I.V. residents and pride themselves on providing the best customer service and food in an awesome setting."

Kymala recommended the Caves' "Candlelight Tour," offered daily at 6 p.m. through Labor Day weekend, as a unique and enjoyable experience to include either before or after dinner. The tour is restricted to 8 years of age and older.

The authentic 1930s style Caves Caf  is open 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. daily. Reservations are recommended for the Canyonview dining room, but not necessary. Room or dinner reservations can be made by calling 541-592-3400.



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	Thursday, July 7 Mostly Sunny High -- 87 Low -- 52
	Friday, July 8 Showers High -- 68 Low -- 49
	Saturday, July 9 AM Showers High -- 69 Low -- 45
	Sunday, July 10 Partly Cloudy High -- 76 Low -- 46
	Monday, July 11 Clear High -- 79 Low -- 47
	Tuesday, July 12 Partly Cloudy High -- 79 Low -- 46
	Wednesday, July 13 Clear High -- 85 Low -- 50

Following are the high & low temperatures, and rainfall recorded at The End of the Road in O'Brien by Cheryl & Harry Johnson:

June	High	Low
24	77.1	48.1
25	89.	43.9
26	93.1	47.7
27	94.6	47.4
28	89.7	50.6
29	87.6	54.8
30	84.1	60

June Rain: .37" YTD Rain: 88.60"
Average Yearly Rain Total: 72.00"

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