

Bringing Canning Back

The Cannery adds authentic flavor to pub fare BY CAROLINA REID



Settled where The Bier Stein used to pour pints for locals lies The Cannery, a hip but homey restaurant where owner Mike Wares is “trying to put an honest culinary effort behind pub fare.” The restaurant has 20 beers on tap, a full bar and a menu that boasts homemade food with a true Northwest feel.

The Parmesan Crusted Reuben, which won Wares the title of King of Battledish (an October Dish Crawl competition between six local restaurants), is the best seller. But other combinations, like the kale Caesar salad, deep-fried pickles and spinach and goat cheese lasagna, introduce foodies to clever, unique flavors they might not expect.

Even The Cannery’s mayonnaise, fry sauce, salad dressings and soups are made in-house. Wares, who has been growing food for years, is currently in the process of getting licensing to can in house. He could use a co-packer to produce sellable cans off-site, but he says this would be contradictory to the homemade style of his restaurant.



TOP: BURGER, FRIES & BREW

PHOTOS BY TRASK BEDORTHA

BOTTOM: KALE CAESAR SALAD

“We eat what we can and can what we can,” he says. Starting in the next few months, Wares is hoping his restaurant won’t just display the colorful veggie-packed jars on the walls as decoration but will send them out the door with customers.

Canning is an old-school method of food preservation that, as Wares sees it, is usually “talked about in the hallways of churches amongst the older ladies.” But he and his restaurant are here to bring it back.

If you ask Wares, he can talk your ear off about the quality of The Cannery’s Diner Burger thanks to Oregon Valley Natural Beef — not in a *Portlandia* way, but in a way that proves he knows what he’s doing with flavor profiling. He studied at Le Cordon Bleu in Portland and is the man in the kitchen every weekday.

The house drinks are special too. The Bucha-cha, a tangy vodka-kombucha blend created by mixologist Morgan Pharis, won second in the Battledish competition, and the bloody mary causes a change of heart for drinkers who usually can’t stand the savory spice.

Wares opened the restaurant last April with his spouse, Laurie, whom he says does a lot of the behind-the-scenes work. The space only needed a minor facelift to expand the bar and revamp the kitchen, which is now separated by delicate, vintage windows taken from an old house. Upcycled wood pallet tables add to the authentic feel. The vibe is casual and honest, and the artwork brings the essence of the outdoors inside.

Customers can score a basket of fries in exchange for a “Like” on Facebook and can enter a weekly drawing to win a free entrée, salad or sandwich. Every night features a different deal and every Wednesday, The Cannery welcomes local musician Jeremy Clark Pruitt. Saturday open mics attract a more acoustic crowd, and on weekends, the restaurant opens at 10 am for brunch until 2 pm.

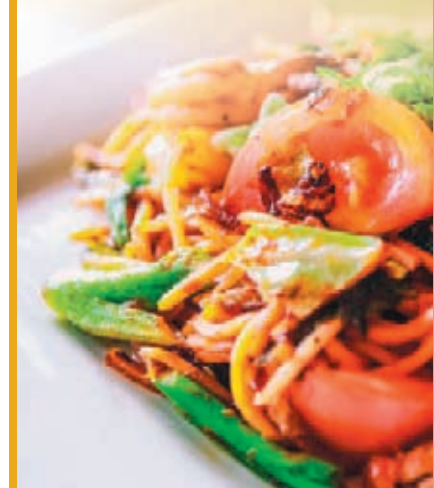
The Cannery is located at 345 E. 11th Ave., 345-5435, theeugenecannery.com. Hours are 11:30 am to 10 pm Monday through Thursday, 11:30 am to midnight Friday, 10 am to midnight Saturday and 10 am to 10 pm Sunday.



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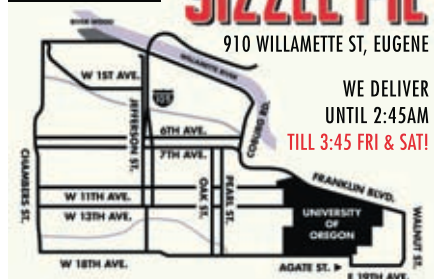
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