

Irish Gem

SMALL PUB BRIMS WITH PATRONS By Sydney Zuelke

Walking through the dense, cherry-wood front door of The Pint Pot Public House, you're greeted by many things: the sound of bagpipes, the smell of hearty spices, snug armchairs in dimly lit corners, stacks of board games and smiles from welcoming strangers.

Immediately, your eyes are drawn to writing in chalk atop the bar: "May your home always be too small to hold all your friends." And while The Pint Pot may be small, its collection of patrons is brimming.

"You wouldn't realize how much of a following there is for Scottish and Irish heritage in Eugene, but it's huge," owner Barbie Walker tells *EW*.

And the loyalty is apparent — just look up. Dozens of silver mugs hang from the ceiling, engraved with the names of the pub's regulars. It's part of the "Mug Club," a not-so-secret society of sorts. For an annual fee, patrons can receive a personalized mug and heaps of benefits, including happy hour every day and free first fills.

It wasn't exactly easy creating a space where people can feel at home. Walker and her husband Justin, also co-owners of The Webfoot, have owned the pub since June 2014, transforming the building's tornado of red-and-white checkers as a former hot dog shop on the corner of 17th and Pearl into the warm and inviting public house it is today.

Justin Walker, who comes from both Irish and Scottish backgrounds, made it a priority to keep the pub authentic, even filling it with artifacts from his grandfather's house.

There aren't any garden salads or vegan burgers here, just good ol' traditional Irish grub. The Pint Pot's meat is all locally sourced from Long's Meat Market, and the soda bread from local nonprofit Reality Kitchen. The Walkers say they pride themselves on simple, clean yet bold flavors, with dishes incorporating carrots, peas, lamb, beef, chunks of potatoes and bangers — each with a different spice or twist to it.

When it comes to drinking (as the Irish are known to do now and again) it's even more important to stay true to the mission.

"It's all traditional Irish and Scottish, and we're not going to stray from that. We had people stop in when we first opened and ask for an IPA — it's the big craze, you know, very hip to have all these IPAs. I would say, 'No, but we've got this beautiful Belhaven. It's on nitro, and you're gonna love it!'" Barbie Walker laughs.

The pub is unwavering on imported beers, though it carries 56 different kinds of whiskey (or whisky) from the highlands and lowlands, while offering just a few options when it comes to vodka or gin. They make their ginger ale in house, with a prominently original, fierier flavor. Plop in a giant, hand-molded circular ice ball and you've got yourself not just a delicious drink, but also an experience.

"You can go anywhere to get beer and wine and liquor, but you're not going to find those small-town intricacies in other bars," Barbie Walker says. "It's a place to come and solve the day, sing and laugh and cheer to old friends." ■

The Pint Pot is at 195 E. 17th Ave. and is open 11 am to 2 am daily. See The Pint Pot's Facebook page for more info.



CHARCUTERIE
PLATE,
INCLUDING
IRISH CHEESE,
CURED MEATS,
DUCK CONFIT
AND HOUSE-
MADE PICKLED
VEGGIES

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BARBIE AND
JUSTIN WALKER



SAUSAGE POUTINE