



DIVINE SIMPLICITY

Keeping it easy and authentic at Springfield's **Hayden Bridge Tap House** BY ANNA GRACE

The Hayden Bridge Tap House is full of happy customers on a Friday evening. Multiple screens flicker with basketball games, and classic rock is urging us to sing along. But there must be some sort of acoustic magic happening, because my husband and I can still hear each other over it all. We sip a heartwarming stout as an enormous serving of fresh, veggie-topped nachos sits between us. Overall, we find ourselves in a comfortable and comforting place to have a beer and a meal.

The Torres family, Jose, Carima and their son Louie, opened Hayden Bridge Tap House last spring off Mohawk Boulevard in Springfield. The Douglas-fir slab tables, poured concrete bar and metal sheeting give a nod to the surrounding community's roots.

According to Carima Torres, "We handpick every beer we have on tap, we taste everything to test for quality and keep our customer base in mind when choosing our beers." She says, "All together we have 50 taps, two craft sodas for minors, seven hard ciders, three nitro taps, two kombuchas and the rest are all beers. All of our taps rotate so there are different beers and ciders all the time."

In contrast, the menu is intentionally brief: tacos, torta, nachos and maybe chili if you hit the menu on the right night. This has allowed the Torres family to focus on the beer and a few delicious items, rather than getting bogged down in a vast and changing assortment of trend-conscious meals.

Condiments are confined to a bottle of Tapatío on the table. "Our recipes are based on real Mexican street food," Torres says. "We've gotten amazing compliments from customers that our tacos remind them of when they lived in L.A., or when they were in Mexico or Arizona."

What's the best part of running a tap house?

"We've gotten to know so many new people that have become amazing friends," Torres says.

You can feel that sentiment the moment you walk in, that this is a good family eager to include you in a circle of customers enjoying authentic Mexican street food and great beer.

The Hayden Bridge Tap House is at 1910 Marcola Road in Springfield, 541-844-2300. Hours are Monday through Wednesday noon to 9 pm, Thursday through Saturday noon to 10 pm, Sundays noon to 7 pm.

'We handpick every beer we have on tap, we taste everything to test for quality and keep our customer base in mind when choosing our beers.'

— CARIMA TORRES

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