



The Beachcomber brings on the brew

Editor's Note: The Beachcomber and all Oregon restaurants are following COVID-19 mandates about dining in and taking out. Under Gov. Kate Brown's Executive Order 20-65, the state is in a minimum two-week freeze, which limits restaurants to delivery and take-out only beginning Nov. 18.

STORY & PHOTOS
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Beachcomber Pub, 1355 Bay St., is one of Florence's oldest and most popular pubs and restaurants. Located in Historic Old Town, the "Comber" — as locals refer to the business — offers customers award winning burgers, acclaimed clam chowder and one of the largest selections of microbrews on tap on the Oregon coast.

Scott Waiss has been the owner of the Beachcomber for 15 years. During that time, he has overseen the expansion of the pub's microbrew offerings, the rise in popularity of hard ciders, seltzers and high-end spirits, and major shifts in the economy.

In addition, Scott and his daughter Melissa, who manages the Beachcomber, have had to adapt to major shifts in the model that has proven to be successful for the family owned and operated restaurant and bar.

The COVID-19 pandemic has proven to be the most daunting obstacle to the Weiss family business and most challenging. The Beachcomber has had to reconfigure its business model to adapt



The Beachcomber Pub is owned and managed by father-daughter duo (from right) Scott and Melissa Waiss. Florence's oldest pub continues to offer food and drinks to visitors and locals alike during the COVID-19 pandemic.

to the COVID-related restrictions imposed on eating establishments by state officials.

For Scott and Melissa, the reduction in seating capacity has been one of the most financially challenging changes. However, the Waisses are fortunate, as they have a large room at the back of the establishment which has been modified to incorporate the distance and seating requirements currently mandated by the state.

Scott also purchased new tables and chairs, removing old surfaces that were more likely to retain bacteria.

"Having fewer seats available in our main seating area has been offset by the changes we made to our back room," he said. "We used to just use it for special events and meetings, but now we have distanced the tables and we added some new televisions back there, so we can accommodate up to two groups of 10 people each back there with no problem."

The safety of staff and customers has always been a top priority for the Waisses, and their employees are very familiar with the cleaning and seating requirements created by the Oregon Health Authority and strictly monitor seating for customers.

The addition of new video monitors and satellite TVs makes for the perfect place for Duck and Beaver fans to congregate for games when dining inside the restaurant is an option.

The menu at the Beachcomber has also undergone changes in the past few months as the Waisses and their chefs have reduced the number of items available, while retaining their most popular dishes.

"We have decreased the size of our menu, but have kept our burg-

ers, especially our signature burgers like our Jameson Whiskey bacon cheeseburger, our Angus beef sliders and of course, our fish and chips," Scott said.

When breakfast is available, people can select omelets, French toast, biscuits and gravy and country fried steak.

The menu move was made in part due to the ingredients available from the Beachcomber's distributors, many of which had shifted attention to grocery stores during shutdowns earlier this year.

In addition, some of the menu changes were made for practical reasons involving increased food costs.

It was also important to keep customer favorites.

The Beachcomber menu can be accessed at www.beachcomberpub.com and www.facebook.com/thebeachcomberpub. This includes information on the wide assortment of microbrews and ciders offered from unique distributors like Bandon Rain, 10 Barrell Brewing, Three Creeks Brewing Company and Boneyard Beer.

The history of the Beachcomber also plays a part in the popularity of the restaurant, as the pub has been operating continuously since 1936. The names and faces may have changed in the intervening years, but the sense of spending time in a true local pub has remained the same.

Scott and Melissa intend to continue that trend into the future.

The "Comber" continues to be a spot where locals raise a glass. Even during COVID-19 restrictions when dining in is an option, business owners, working families and visitors sit socially distanced, but still side by side.