

Greasy Luck Brewpub revitalization and improvements in pursuit of excellence go far beyond name change

While the Greasy Luck Brewpub, formerly known as Greasy Luck Brewery, has a new name, this is symbolic of the significant, positive changes to the restaurant as a whole. Since these changes are to the ownership, servers, managers, and the pricing, a name change is only fitting. When you make changes this monumental, the name has to change to reflect it – it's no longer what it was and the owners want to mark this progress...and progress is exactly what it is.

If you frequented the brewpub in the past or knew someone that had, you may have heard some mixed reviews. One thing that I have learned in the past few years, and something you likely have as well, if you are a foodie or a “local-yokel”, is that operating a restaurant is as risky as a venture as anyone can undertake. There really is no room for error and a successful restaurant has a recipe that is a perfect balance of things like the menu, location, service, management, pricing, marketing and atmosphere.



To gloss over or neglect – even lessen your focus or attention – only one aspect is to invite, inevitable ruin. Even more important is to have the sensitivity that comes from listening to your customer's feedback. That feedback is integral to any success a restaurant desires.

Make no mistake – a successful restaurant that offers superior, mouth-watering fare, excellent customer service, a menu that is priced appropriately to the area, and makes its patrons happy, happy, happy is exactly what owners Howie, Mark and Al want. This comes from knowledge through experience. To achieve these goals, they are willing to learn from the feedback and make whatever improvements it takes to rise in ranks and gain the favor of locals. So, what exactly separates the old Greasy Luck Brewery from the new, improved Greasy Luck Brewpub?

Well, the “brewery” part has been dropped and replaced with “brewpub.” They are not a brewery. You know they aren't a brewery, they know they aren't a brewery they are a brewpub which is an eatery that revolves around beer. Locals take

their beer very seriously – heck, I’ve had people tell me that the beer that I like is wrong, and “Here’s why your favorite beer is garbage.” Many took “offense” to a place that wasn’t a brewery yet marketing itself so. Now, to be clear: they **do** brew their own beer – but there is so much more to the process than that.

Now, I am a wine drinker, so I won’t get “beer snob” on you. I simply am not very knowledgeable on the brewing process so I had to speak with co-owner Howie who made it easy for a layperson to grasp. In essence, before the fermentation process that makes beer become beer, one must take the flavors – the hops and grains – to make what is called *wort*. Wort is the malty liquid that hot water is added to and will convert the starches to sugars and the alcohol that gives you your buzz. This step is skipped: Greasy Luck’s brewologist receives the wort and using their own recipes add additional ingredients to create the desired style and taste – the Greasy Luck brand.



So, while they do brew, they do not produce the initial stage involving the wort. This makes them much more than an eatery, but a little less than a brewery – somewhere in between. They simply have a passion – like many locals do – for beer and want to create the flavors they love. So, what you get is that passion. Passion can be a good thing.

The menu changes are more of a fine tuning. The owners, who work closely with the knowledgeable, experienced staff dialed in what it was that customers like most from “Greasy’s” start. When they first opened their doors there were items on the menu that people raved about and there were things people didn’t care for or felt they should include. That feedback was the deciding factor on the menu changes: a lower price (on drinks and food) that more accurately reflects the other pubs and alehouses in the area, more Portuguese favorites, and more dishes that reflect pub style fare.

“The menu was starting to get a little too elegant prior to

when I came on board.” said Howie. “We want to bring it back down to more of a pub style. Our kitchen is a team of experienced cooks. We don’t want and will not have a “head chef” who calls it his/her menu. It’s a collaboration from what the kitchen at will produce, and we have some new kitchen employees with a lot of experience who execute the team collaboration we’re looking for.”

As someone who has had a number of lunches and dinner at the brewpub, I can attest to the high quality of food coming out of the kitchen. The Greasy Luck hasn’t had much of an issue in that department at all and I would pit their menu against anyone’s on the city. Both my brother and I have had a substantial amount of the menu and since we generally have different eating habits we’ve sampled a large variety of their offerings.

For appetizers the brewpub offers many standards that will make people feel comfortable and at home right away – chicken wings, chicken tenders, calamari, chef’s daily flatbread, a cheeseboard, Portuguese Littlenecks, and Buffalo chicken dip. While they might be standards, there is nothing standard about them – they are not cookie cutter versions of our favorites, but high quality offerings. For those who like something a little different they offer a few options: my favorite being a simply amazing “Vault Poutine” and if you are like me, a Poutine fanatic, you’ll be ecstatic – Hand cut fries, cheddar cheese curds, house beer pulled pork and black pepper gravy. Oh man, it’ll make you happy!



There is a **Buffalo Chicken Cracklings** -fried chicken skin, Buffalo dry rub, and bleu cheese dip. The Portuguese Stuffed Quahog is their version of a classic stuffed quahog, but with chouriço, and a Ritz cracker stuffing. The **Craft Beer Mustard Mussels** which you can add angel hair pasta to, are mussels delicately sautéed in their own house beer and .creamy mustard sauce. A full array of soups and salads including, a **Roasted**

Beet Salad of arugula, house roasted beets, orange slices, goat cheese, toasted pumpkin seeds and basil citrus vinaigrette.

For mains there are some hearty options like the very popular **Pulled Pork Sandwich** (you'll hear other tables ordering it) "House made I.P.A slow roasted pork, Chipotle BBQ/, pickled red onions on sesame seed bun" served with fries and housemade pickle like all the sandwiches. This was the very first thing I tried when they opened and what led to the realization that the kitchen was producing superior food. Great portion, perfectly balanced BBQ sauce with the right amounts of spicy, tangy, and sweet, and fries exactly the way I like – very hot, golden crispy on the outside and large enough to savor the creaminess inside. A real winner.

Coming a close second for me is – you may want to sit down for this one – the **Veggie Burger**. Say what? I've lost my mind, you say? Trust me this, very tasty, large, satisfying burger is so good that you won't even realize it's veggie. While I couldn't pick out every vegetable in the burger I did see chick pea, so I believe it is a Falafel sort of base. However, there is a clear medley that was carefully crafted for maximum flavor and texture and the roasted garlic aioli is the "icing" on the cake.

Other stand-outs are the **Best Hangover Burger** – ground beef, caramelized onions, bacon, Cheddar cheese, fried egg, arugula and roasted garlic aioli/sesame seed bun and the **The Greasy Linguica** which is Portuguese sausage, house beer, pepper & onion sauce on a roll, You have wraps, quesadilla and burgers, of course, as well as main plates like Shepherd's Pie, Vegetable Stir Fry, Asian Salmon, Beer Braised Short Ribs which are to die for, and Shrimp or Chicken Mozambique.

Desserts are a Warm Apple Crisp, Brownie Sunday, Crème Brulee, the PB&J which is a glazed doughnut, peanut butter ice cream, and strawberry compote. If you have the kiddos with you there

is a Kid's Menu featured their favorites – grilled cheese with fries, Kraft Mac & Cheese, Chicken Tenders & Fries and Classic Burger & Fries.



This changing of the guard when it comes to some of the employees was another, necessary improvement and in my opinion perhaps the most important of all. Some of the social media reviews and word-of-mouth was becoming negative. Most didn't have an issue with the food that as arriving to the table, but with the atmosphere and treatment they were getting – many were not happy with the service. That has been addressed and will continue to be addressed.

"There was definitely a deficiency in training from a staff perspective," acknowledges Howie. "We are committed to having the right staff who will tend to customers needs properly." In that vein, he has not only pruned the staff, but brought people on board that have the expertise and experience, from bus service to waitstaff, to management. Properly greeting customers immediately, timely drinks being brought to the table, increased speed of food getting out of the kitchen, and

making sure customers are checked in on during their stay are priorities.

Howie suspects that there will be a few hiccups in the short term, but fixing this is the single most important area that Greasy Luck Brewpub had to do. Earlier, I mentioned that neglect in just one minor area can determine the success of a restaurant, and the owners and staff as a collaborating force, have recognize this critical fault.

This alone is a good enough reason to give Greasy Luck Brewpub a return visit. If you were dissatisfied with a prior experience or have heard about a negative experience someone else had, you can rest assured you will have an altogether different service that you had or heard. Pursuit of excellence is an ongoing process and if anyone thinks they have achieved that perfection, they stop learning and improving. This pursuit of excellence is exactly their aim and based on recent visits they are succeeding.

If you know the history of the eatery, you know the name Christian is missing. Since rumors travel fast, there is a lot of misinformation and even completely untrue stories. I asked Howie to clarify and put the rumors and untruths to rest.



“His primary business, Farland Corp, has taken off and requires much more of his attention, thus any attention he could provide was too limited and he felt I was a great candidate to take over his stake due to my experience and success with being one of the founders of Rose Alley and Cultivator.”

So, while there has been the departure of one of the three original owners, the addition of Howie means a wealth of experience and knowledge in the industry is being brought to the table. All three are equal owners and now all three have similar experiences and backgrounds. Mark grew up operating the popular, Antonio’s restaurant for his family and he was always a fixture there – as anyone who knows Mark can attest. Al was one of the co-founders of Rose Alley alone with Howie and one of those who got on board with Cork causing its turnaround into the success it is today.

One of the aspects that has always been a part of Greasy Luck Brewpub is the live entertainment – they are always hosting local and distant talent at one of two internal venues – their main showcase and the “Vault.” Most Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays you’ll find some talent in the Vault and it will alternate between someone you likely know from greater New Bedford and bands or musicians that tour nationally. Most of the local entertainment will be free, meaning no cover or tickets. With some of the touring acts, they typically are pretty costly due to their fees to travel, hotels, etc, so for such shows there’ll be small ticket prices. Most of the time, guests can expect to come to see live entertainment in the Vault free of charge though.

If you have a private event coming up, like a business promotion to celebrate, a birthday, anniversary, rehearsal dinner, reunion or some other special occasion, you can have Greasy Luck Brewpub host! The Vault can seat up to 175 guests, or 350 standing. If you have a smaller group, there is a “boardroom” upstairs that also serves as a private space and accommodates around 60 people.

The Greasy Luck Brewpub website and Facebook are great resources to peek at the menu, check their coming events, purchase tickets via TicketFly, see photos, inquire about a private party or event, and find out more about their brew menu.

The Greasy Luck Brewpub

791 Purchase St.

New Bedford, Massachusetts

Phone: (774) 425-4600

Sunday-Wednesday: 11:30am-10:00pm

Thursday-Saturday: 11:30am-12:00pm

Website: greasyluckbrewpub.com

Facebook: facebook.com/GreasyLuckBrewpub/

Email: events@greasyluckbrewpub.com

