

# RED ROCK

by  
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Pelc

Running a profitable brewery-restaurant in a state that limits alcohol content in beer to 3.2 percent by weight isn't easy. But in 1994 four partners launched a brewpub in the heart of downtown Salt Lake City, Utah, with the notion that they could do this and do it better than anyone else. Successfully translating that philosophy into a business strategy has made Red Rock Brewing Co. one of the best brewpubs in North America.

Keeping the atmosphere casual, with professional and friendly service, high-quality food, and fresh beer, is what Red Rock

is all about. "The secret of Red Rock's success is a constant eye on quality and professionalism where you try to become better than you already are," explains partner Cindy Smith. "We just give our customers a great experience. If you give them great food, then of course they want to come back."

This recipe for success is one reason Red Rock was given the Brewie Award for Brewpub of the Year at the fourth annual National Brewpub Conference and Tradeshow in October.

Housed in a 9,500-square-foot facility that seats 254, the restaurant, which was recently named



# BUILDS A WINNER

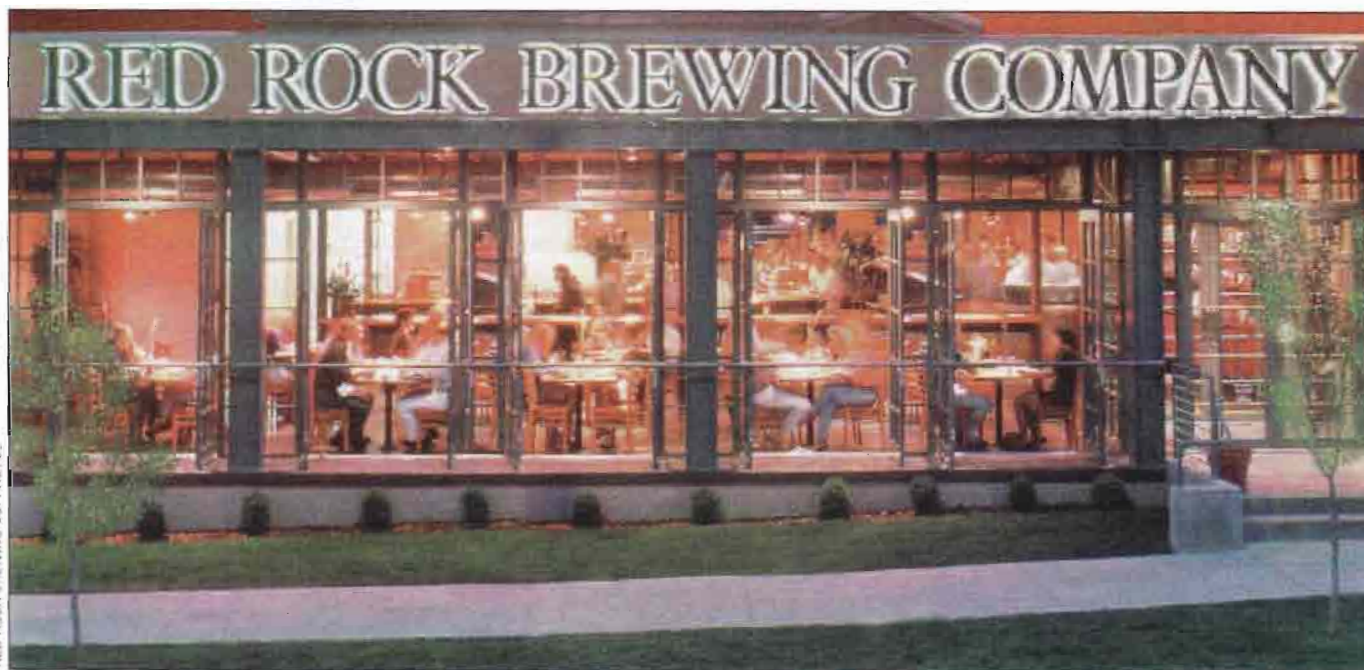
Best Pub in Salt Lake City by CitySearch.com, draws on a large potential customer base. It is located in downtown Salt Lake City at the heart of the restaurant district. Lunch attracts local business people, while the evening crowd is an upscale mix of 25- to 60-year-olds. Additionally, Red Rock brings in convention-goers and tourists. It is located only half a block from the convention center and is near downtown hotels.

"I think for the time that we opened up we were in the perfect place," Smith says. "Because Utah doesn't have a lot of people who drink alcohol, we had to

draw from a really large population. For us to go to a small town (in Utah), it probably wouldn't have worked."

Having a great relationship with hotels has earned Red Rock the ability to compete with national chain restaurants that are beginning to pop up within the surrounding area. "We're actually in what is now starting to become known as the Little Restaurant District," says Smith. "A lot of national chain restaurants are moving into the area because they said if Red Rock could do it, so can we.

"We won't have problems competing, however, because we



RED ROCK BREWING CO. PHOTOS

will always be unique. And when people visit a new city, they don't say, 'Where are all the chain restaurants?' They say, 'What's unique to your city, and where are all the good restaurants that the locals like to go to?'

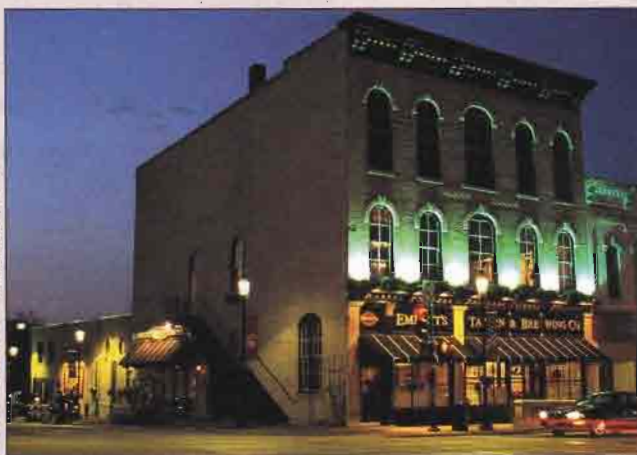
"We get a real good feed from the hotels just for that reason, because they feel we are a really good recommendation when their guests come back to the hotel and say, 'That choice was great, thanks.' From

there it just keeps rolling."

At the same time, Red Rock has positioned itself as a neighborhood place, and customers know it will be open when they want to eat. "We have become a local institution, and we try to

## START-UP OF THE YEAR

MICHAEL CAMACHO & ASSOCIATES PHOTOS



Giving customers that little something special that many chain restaurants leave out of the equation is what gives Emmett's Tavern & Brewing Co., Start-up of the Year, the winning edge. Located in West Dundee, Ill., this independent establishment that opened Sept. 13, 1999, offers "the look and feel of an upscale American tavern mixed with a complete sense of community," says Andrew T. Burns, Emmett's president and CEO.

This family-owned pub draws primarily on the 180,000 people who live within a seven-mile radius of its location, which is 35 miles outside of Chicago. To compete with the numerous national restaurant chains located in its neighborhood, Emmett's has positioned itself as a unique and comfortable alternative to the casual dining experience

through a historic 14,000-square-foot and 270-seat location; a courteous, well-trained staff; upscale American cuisine; and traditionally brewed beer.

With a little more than 66 percent of revenue coming from its restaurant side, the tavern's menu consists of hand-crafted, made-from-scratch food diligently prepared by classically French-trained chefs, which results in a high level of sophistication and presentation. As for the beer, Emmett's makes only traditionally brewed, all-malt ales and lagers.

No restaurant could be successful without a properly trained staff, and Emmett's is no exception. The brewpub's training program extends beyond normal kitchen and dining-room duties to include the brewing process, product sampling, raw materials, company structure, and history. Each of Emmett's

servers spends a minimum of 25 hours in training prior to stepping in front of a customer alone. The tavern empowers its serving staff by training employees to recognize problems, fix them, and keep guests satisfied without having to check with a supervisor.

To compete with other restaurants, Emmett's has come up with many successful promotions, including small classes in cooking and homebrewing taught by its executive chef and head brewer during off-hours. The brewpub also offers live entertainment on Friday nights and a \$2.50 Pint Night every Monday.

Emmett's is also very active in its surrounding community through its support of the Dundee Mainstreet Program, a non-profit, preservation-based program that has raised more than \$5 billion to rehabilitate downtown historic properties and create new businesses and jobs.



## NORTHEAST

Since 1997 Southport Brewing Co., this year's Northeast region winner, has been making the dining experience entertaining for its guests.

Located in Fairfield, Conn., Southport provides an upbeat atmosphere to its 24- to 54-year-old clientele by giving them high-quality food and beer. Guests of this 7,000-square-foot, 220-seat establishment can watch their lunch or dinner being prepared in Southport's open exhibition kitchen as well as keep an eye on their beer while it's brewed in the pub's open brewery.

Recently named "Best Brewpub in Connecticut" by *Connecticut* magazine, Southport boasts a menu laden with tantalizing treats such as brick-oven pizzas and New England staples, along with 16 fresh-brewed beers on tap with head-turning names such as Mashing Pumpkin Ale, Olde Blue Eyes Blueberry Ale, and Melonhead Ale.

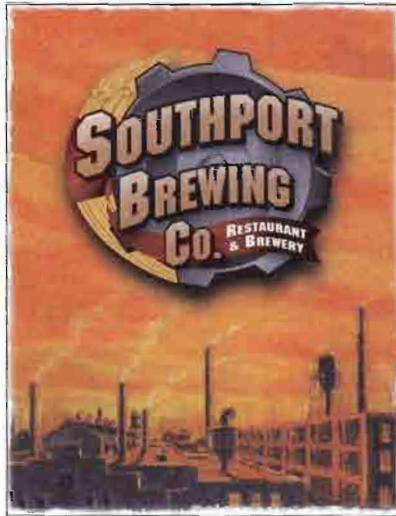
Southport markets itself with radio and print advertisements as well as its quarterly newsletter, *The Southport Brew Times*. Additionally, the brewpub is very active in numerous cause-related activities, such as donating beer for a high-school scholarship fund-raiser and giving support to local organizations, such as libraries and Little League.

Southport's plans include the opening of a new brewpub in Stamford, Conn., and taking over an existing facility in New York.

serve customers in that we're always open," says Smith. "We only close for Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas Day, and we're open until late into the evening.

"A lot of places in Salt Lake do not stay open late, so we're

open when you get out of the theater or a triple-overtime Jazz (NBA basketball) game. I think that has lent itself in the community where people can say, 'We can go to Red Rock.' Other than that, we have just always tried to do a really good job. We really



BOB ABBATE MARKETING PHOTOS

Southport Brewing Co. uses radio and print advertisements to market its menu and 16 house beers, including Mashing Pumpkin Ale.

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CIRCLE 33 ON READER SERVICE CARD

Consistently providing excellent food, outstanding beers, wines, and spirits at great prices in a fun, family atmosphere is the mission of Powerhouse Restaurant & Brewery in Puyallup, Wash., this year's West region winner.

Located in an elegantly restored, 2,300-square-foot, historic brick building, the restaurant serves lunch and dinner daily to families from the South Puget Sound area. With seating for 120 and fair-weather deck seating for 32, Powerhouse has put together a complete dining experience package for its customers that includes a non-smoking environment, an eclectic menu, fresh ales brewed in its showcase brewhouse, and a good selection of wine and spirits. Additionally, Powerhouse uses an alert, personable staff to ensure a high level of customer service.



DUSTY TRAIL PHOTOS

Rated one of the top 10 restaurants in the Puget Sound area for 1999, Powerhouse participates in various fund-raisers that benefit its selected charity, Mary Bridge Children's Hospital, with the help of its sister brewpub in Tacoma, Wash. For the future, Powerhouse plans to broaden its community position through "constant diligence, word of mouth, and customer satisfaction," says President Dusty Trail.



*Powerhouse Restaurant & Brewery, situated in a former electric substation in Puyallup, Wash., serves an eclectic menu and fresh beer in a non-smoking environment.*

appreciate our customers, and I think that they know that so they keep coming back."

### Hip, Fresh Cuisine

To appeal to its local customer base, Red Rock regularly updates its menu, which Smith calls "fresh, contemporary fare,"

restaurants, watching a cooking show on TV, or reading a recipe book," says Smith, "if they see something that might work for Red Rock, they bring it in and we try it."

Red Rock's menu includes items that go beyond the traditional pub-fare concept, for example appetizers such as organically grown tomatoes, fresh mozzarella, and prosciutto (\$7.49) and focaccia (\$3.99). Entrees at the restaurant include baked scallops gratinée (\$11.99) and halibut provençal (\$10.99), while Italian dishes such as eggplant parmesan (\$9.99) and spaghetti (\$8.99) are also popular options.

The menu was recently expanded to include more fish, such as halibut fish and chips (\$10.99) and deep-fried calamari (\$9.99). Red Rock also has a wide selection of sandwiches for both lunch and dinner, including the Red Rock burger (\$5.99), french-onion steak sandwich (\$10.99), and an Italian sausage grinder (\$7.99). Not to be overlooked are Red Rock's soups, salads, and wood-fired gourmet pizzas.

In addition to its extensive menu, Red Rock has a number of promotions set in place for its customers. "Everyday Specials" include pasta of the day, fish sandwich of the day, pizza of the day, beef du jour, and homemade ice cream. Additionally, each day of the workweek features a "Weekday Special," such as Tuesday's chicken pesto linguini special and Friday's beef stroganoff. On Saturday and Sunday, Red Rock hosts a brunch from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Brunch offerings includes crab cakes benedict, buttermilk pancakes, crunchy french toast, and an omelette of the day.

Other changes to the menu have come with the addition of non-alcoholic drinks, desserts, and specialty coffees. Red Rock brews its own root beer, orange

## CANADA

Providing a neighborhood pub with a casual and relaxed environment for family and friends to meet in is what Yaletown Brewing Co. of Vancouver, B.C., is all about. Built in a circa-1910 abandoned warehouse, this year's Canada winner includes an open kitchen with an authentic, wood-burning pizza oven, a focus on seasonal and specialty beers, a loyal customer base, and a friendly, trained staff.

Through its younger customer base of 20- to 45-year-olds, Yaletown has become the headquarters for monthly networking parties of local e-businesses. The brewpub also targets tour companies and keeps on good terms with area hotels.

In addition, Yaletown keeps its customers coming back through a long list of promotions, including "Pizza Sundays," a DJ on the weekends, live music during the week, a house magician and comedian, and a variety of weekly specials. Yaletown also has made itself a family place with face painting, children's menus, and coloring books always available.

On the community side, Yaletown regularly donates to local team sports, a children's hospital, the Sierra

Club, and the Canadian Cancer foundation. The restaurant also hires young adults from the Destinations placement facility, which helps to retrain them and give them a second chance through participating employers.



## SOUTHWEST

The Bricktown Brewery Restaurant and Pub in Oklahoma City, Okla., give its customers a total brewpub experience through its constantly changing menu features,



fresh beers on tap, and rustic atmosphere. The Southwest region winner is located in a restored warehouse, circa 1903.

Drawing from an area population of 1 million, Bricktown has expanded three times to accommodate its growing popularity. It now seats a whopping 700.

With 67 percent of its clientele in the age range of 26 to 45, Bricktown sought to create more of a family atmosphere with the addition of three big screens, 16 billiards

tables, 20 interactive video games, shuffleboard, and electronic darts.

Bricktown's other entertainment options include live music Friday and Saturday nights. Past acts include the Dixie Chicks and the Goo Goo Dolls. The restaurant also has hosted 10,000-person block parties for acts such as Creed and the Dave Matthews Band.

Bricktown is currently undergoing a \$100,000 remodeling project to keep an up-to-date look in a historic restored-warehouse district area that is expecting a boom of new restaurants and pubs. Its plans include opening other locations in Oklahoma.

soda, and cream soda, which are used in its "Sunday Suds" \$2 pints and ice-cream floats promotion. The menu also includes home-made ice cream and Italian sodas in three flavors.

Adding these items to its menu has allowed Red Rock to bring in Utah residents who do not drink alcohol. It also has helped establish the restaurant as family oriented, a key to maintaining its original customer base.

"When Red Rock opened, we had a certain clientele that was in their 20s. Now they're in their 30s and are getting married and having children," says Smith "They don't want to stop coming here, and we don't want them to stop. A children's menu was definitely something we needed to come up with and make accessible. We just tried to make (Red Rock) more family friendly."

### Low-Alcohol Beer

Red Rock began brewing three varieties six years ago and is currently marketing a list of more than 35 different house beers (a beer board lists the ones currently on tap). The brewery is able to produce this wide variety of beers — all of which must have an alcohol by weight of less than 3.2 percent or an alcohol by volume of less than 4 percent under Utah law — because it has 80 barrels of fermentation space and 14 serving tanks, 310 gallons each.

"We made the brewery large and state of the art when it went in, and it functioned really well," says Smith. "We added more serving tanks, but other than that we haven't added too much to it." Production today totals more than 1,300 barrels a year.

Red Rock's beers — most of which are only sold on draft on-site — have won more than 20 awards and honors, most recently the silver medal for Red Rock Black Bier in the German-Style

Schwarzbier category at the 2000 Great American Beer Festival. Red Rock won a 1999 GABF silver medal for its Spalty Alt in the German-Style Ale/Dusseldorf-Style Altbier category after taking home the bronze in 1998.

The brewpub also won a number of medals at the 1997 and 1998 World Beer Championships, as well as silver medals in the Belgian-Style White and Scottish-Style Ales categories at

the 1998 World Beer Cup.

As its food menu has changed to meet the trends of the time, so has its beer list. Red Rock recently added a lower-calorie "light" lager to its varieties, which according to Smith has done well and is extremely popular. So popular, in fact, that Red Rock soon will begin bottling the light beer for distribution. This will be Red Rock's second bottled beer, the first of which is its top-selling

## MIDWEST

**A happy, motivated staff is what The Great Dane Pub and Brewing Co. believes provides the highest level of service and quality.**

**The Great Dane, the Midwest region winner, provides**

**a host of incentives and perks to staff members, including purchase discounts, bonuses, and special events.**

**The Great Dane serves its 14 different styles of ales and lagers in a 100-year-old historic building that seats 280 inside and 120 outdoors. Customers can view the brewhouse and fermentation room when in the main bar room, take dinner in the main dining room, play darts in the Rathskellar bar, kick back in The Billiards Lounge or, during the summer, sit on The Great Dane's patio that overlooks the garden.**

**The Great Dane's menu**



**continues to change to reach more sophisticated levels while not losing its hearty pub-fare edge. As for its beer, the brewpub's pilsner has won GABF gold and bronze medals, its Red Lager has won bronze, and its Oktoberfest took silver in 2000. More than 30 restaurants in the area carry Great Dane beers.**

**The brewpub also contributes to the community through such acts as the sponsorship of an annual Easter egg hunt and contributions to the Wisconsin Special Olympics. The Great Dane has been commended on the state level for its employment of developmentally challenged youths.**

A touch of France can be found in Philadelphia at the Dock Street Brasserie. This year's Middle Atlantic region winner, the 170-seat brewpub features authentic classical French cooking and hearty dishes paired with handcrafted beer. The unique concept of Dock Street plays on the idea of "la brasserie" — "brewery" in French — as it strives to be the rendezvous place for Philadelphians and visitors to the city.

The Deco-style brasserie includes a private billiards room with two antique pool tables, an open kitchen, and an on-site brewery that can be toured. Dock Street offers six freshly brewed beers daily as well as one cask-conditioned ale to complement

its authentic French menu. Annually the restaurant brews 50 to 75 beers, one of which is Savage Beer, which Dock Street began bottling in 1999.

Along with fresh beer, Dock Street keeps its diverse clientele happy through its knowledgeable staff. To become a server or bartender, each candidate must pass a grueling three-part examination to become a "certified zymurgist." Additionally, staff members are quizzed daily about the types

of beers available that day.

To position itself for the future, Dock Street has recently opened two new properties, at Philadelphia's Convention Center and the Philadelphia International Airport.



amber ale, which it began bottling in the fall of 1999 and sells locally.

### Top-Notch Service

To sell and serve its award-winning brews and contemporary food, Red Rock employs what Smith calls a "top-notch, well-trained waitstaff" that is trained and led by front-of-the-house management staff to keep up with the brewpub's customer-first mentality. To ensure a high level of customer service, Red Rock trains constantly and uses monthly secret shoppers for feedback. The restaurant always has a manager on the floor, and customer comment cards are always available.

For a happy staff that ensures customer satisfaction, Red Rock makes sure its employees are satisfied. "We just love our employees," says Smith. "We pay them well and we offer good benefits. We give (managers) a lot of room to experiment."

Each manager is placed in

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Striving to stay on the cutting edge of the brewpub industry through beer, food, service, and merchandise continues to be the aim of this year's Southeast region winner, Carolina Brewery. Through its location in downtown Chapel Hill,



N.C., Carolina targets the 25- to 40-year-old professional and family crowds but also attracts college students and retirees.

Carolina has aimed for the past five years to give its customers a comfortable and clean environment with friendly, knowledgeable, and efficient service and high-quality food and beer. Within its 8,000-square-foot, 200-seat location, guests can opt for the private dining room where they can be served a variety of items from Carolina's menu that

incorporate the freshest ingredients. The brewpub recently opened its brewery directly behind the bar, from which it currently services more 30 local draft accounts.

Carolina has remained successful in building repeat and regular business by putting the customer first and ensuring that management will protect and uphold its service standards on a guest-by-guest basis. Successful special promotions, such as live blues, private dining for events, and free trolley service to university sporting events also have been instrumental in building a good business for Carolina.

charge of a specific department, and the assignments are rotated after a specific amount of time. While a manager is in charge of retail sales, for instance, he has the authority to decide what types of merchandise to order and sell, such as T-shirts, mugs, and other items.

Red Rock recently expanded its approach to customer satisfaction by establishing a Web site. The site, [www.redrockbrewing-company.com](http://www.redrockbrewing-company.com), allows visitors to glimpse Red Rock's menu and beer offerings and gives information on specials and current events. Visitors can purchase Red Rock merchandise and can send comments to management online. In addition, the site includes general information on beers and the brewing process.

### Community Involvement

Red Rock has worked to establish a sense of community in-house and to establish itself as a member of the local community. The restaurant's servers have

taken the initiative to form a voluntary donation program that is entirely employee generated and administered. "(Employees) all agree on what they want to do, and then they do it," says Smith. "They all contribute, on a daily basis, a dollar or two out of their tips for the day."

Contributions were used to help pay the medical bills of one of Red Rock's cooks who was injured in Mexico. The program also has donated more than \$3,000 to the local Cancer Wellness House and another \$3,000 toward the purchase of a guide dog. "(The employees) have all done this not because they were asked to by owners or management but because they have a desire to help in the community where they can," Smith says.

"As far as the restaurant as a whole, we try to take care of whatever requests we get, within reason," Smith adds. "If it's a donation or staffing help or beer, we just try to take on all comers." In 1999 Red Rock made almost

\$4,000 in charitable donations to such institutions as the Autism Society of Utah, Ronald McDonald House, United Way, and various local organizations.

### Eye on the Future

Maintaining its place as a fixture in the Salt Lake community is a key part of Red Rock's strategy. The company also plans to build distribution by bottling its light beer. The brewery currently bottles its amber ale. Meanwhile, Red Rock's root beer is now being kegged and distributed to other restaurants within the Salt Lake valley. The restaurant plans to put an emphasis on its take-out business, which it sees as another market that is opening up.

But its base remains great food, great beer, and great service. "In the long term," says Smith, "I think we will just keep watching what trends (develop), stay abreast of them, move in the direction that we feel comfortable, and know that we can do it better than anyone else." ■