

Chicago Tribune

Buffalo, waffles and 'pig candy' tempt visitors to Jackson Hole

By **Jay Jones**
Chicago Tribune

JULY 25, 2016, 4:55 PM | JACKSON, WYO.

In 1920, three months before the 19th Amendment gave women the right to vote, a peaceful uprising was already underway in western Wyoming, where the citizens of Jackson elected one of America's first all-female town councils.

With women including Genevieve Van Vleck in charge, the "petticoat government" brought progressive changes to the town at the south end of the valley known as Jackson Hole.

The people of Jackson have shown a willingness to embrace change, whether in politics or less critical arenas like the dining scene, where plenty of progress is being made.

"Six or seven years ago, you got a beer and a shot and a steak for dinner," said Chad Brown, co-owner of The Jackson Hole Food Tour (www.jhfoodtours.com).

Now, as Brown walks guests through tastings at downtown restaurants, he boasts, "Our food and drink is world-class."

What has happened to food in Jackson recently could be called a culinary revolution. Some observers credit its start to former ski bum Gavin Fine. Since opening his first restaurant in 2001, Fine has built an empire that now includes seven eateries in Jackson and nearby Teton Village. Sophisticated visitors enjoy the fruits of his labors and those of other entrepreneurs who have dramatically raised the bar on what passes for "good food."

"There was just a couple of cowboy, steak-and-potatoes sort of places," Fine recalled on the patio at Bin22 (www.bin22jacksonhole.com), a restaurant he launched last year.

On a downtown corner, Bin22 exemplifies the new trends in dining. Guests enter through a well-stocked wine shop. They may want to browse before getting a table because the bottles for sale essentially make up the wine list. There's no corkage fee.

An intriguing variety of wines are also sold by the glass. The chalkboard displaying the choices changes every couple of days.

The restaurant serves Spanish- and Italian-influenced small plates ideal for sharing. They include duck rillettes with cherry mostarda (\$13), charred wild octopus with fingerling potatoes and roasted fennel (\$16), and house-pulled mozzarella with pesto, pine nuts and crispy pancetta (\$10). Through the open kitchen window, people can watch Bin22's cheesemonger pulling the fresh mozzarella.



Dig in

(Carrie Patterson)

Diners share small plates at Bin22, one of Jackson's newest restaurants.



Whiskey and wine

(Carrie Patterson)

A barrel of Wyoming whiskey sits beside a chalkboard listing the various wines available by the glass at Jackson's Bin22 restaurant.