

Traveler

Where to Eat, Shop, and Stay in Jackson Hole, WY

Written by Zoe Settle · December 07, 2015

Outgrowing their ski-bum days, three accidental entrepreneurs discover the Jackson area to be the perfect fit for their small businesses rooted in life's necessities: food, spirits and shelter.

Local and small businesses have been enjoying the spotlight (and marketing buzz) for several years. In the Wild West, where there's more unspoiled land in the form of National Parks and the roaming cattle and other wildlife that call them home, the phrase "everyone's talking about it" is a literal one. As local restaurateur Gavin Fine put it, "People in Jackson are starving for anything, because the region is so raw. Some things haven't changed in decades." But that doesn't make it any easier to start something new. Jamie Mackay's prefab housing business started because "the Teton County commissioners denied my permit for an affordable housing unit." Here are three small businesses—devoted to food, drink, and shelter—that the Jackson area is proud to call its own, and multiple reasons to extend your visit beyond the ski slopes.

WINE AND DINE

Chicagoan Gavin Fine moved to Jackson to be a ski bum two decades ago, and now has something of a local empire. A graduate of Cornell's Hotel and Restaurant Management School, he teamed up with chef Roger Freedman to open Rendezvous Bistro in 2001. Now approaching its fifteenth anniversary, his **Fine Dining Group** has six restaurants, a catering company and the newest, Bodega, a take on the corner market, all in the Jackson area.

Driven by what he calls "enlightened hospitality," Fine says he looks to create different experiences at each of his restaurants: think French bistro at Rendezvous Bistro, a riff on Mediterranean tapas at Bin 22, and house-smoked BBQ, homemade craft beer enjoyed on a floor full of peanut shells at Q Roadhouse & Brewery—an impressive culinary coup in just a few square miles between downtown Jackson and Teton Village. Sampling risotto with black garlic, ricotta, preserved lemon and lavender from Hotel Terra's Osteria, I found it rivaled versions found in Italy and New York. Despite his successes, Fine says his mission is simple: "Jackson is still, at heart, pretty raw. We have more cows than people in this state. I just want to add to the community and deliver good food."