

Bristol Discount Beverage & Redemption



Quite often, people will run into a store, pick up what they need and then get on their way as quickly as possible. That's where Bristol Discount Beverage & Redemption is different.

"I think people come in here for two reasons," Owner Adam LaPerle says. "Our selection is one reason, maybe the top reason. But I think that the store — me and my staff — we do a great job with customer service and friendliness. We're a very inviting place to come and shop."

LaPerle acquired the store — a smaller space at the time — in December of 2006. He immediately set about increasing the beer and wine selection and expanding the physical space. He recently added a liquor agency to the store, but when he first arrived, he brought with him a sense of community.

"The biggest difference between the former agent and now, is that people actually shop in here," he says. "They come in and spend time. In other stores, you run in and get what you want and get out. That's not the case here. People will stand in front of the coolers, browse the wine set and the liquor set and shop. They enjoy it."

BY BILL BURKE

And that's how LaPerle wants it. After years of experience in retail, the Middlebury native worked at the Beverage Warehouse while at the University of Vermont, and worked as a wholesaler for the Middlebury-based Otter Creek Brewing for five years just prior to taking over the Prince Lane store.

I try to find those more obscure beers and wines and incorporate that same thought process into my liquor orders, too.

"I'm just a retail guy," he says from the downtown Bristol shop. "I did some retail when I was in high school, I did it in college, I sold for a lot of years — I like selling. But of all the selling I've done, retail is my favorite."

The welcoming shop in this central Vermont town primarily serves Bristol and four surrounding communities: New Haven, Starksboro, Monkton and Lincoln. Step inside the store, located right in Bristol's picturesque, classic downtown, and customers are greeted by a large counter with three registers and lottery. Just beyond, the extensive series of glass-paneled coolers begins, running two-thirds the length of the building — nearly 90 feet long —

and holding a wide range of beverages. LaPerle carries much of what you might find in grocery stores, but he takes it beyond that, often ordering items not found in typical chain stores.

"I try to give people a reason to come in," he says. "I try to find those more obscure beers and wines and incorporate that same thought process into my liquor orders, too."

To the left of the main entrance, customers will find the new liquor agency. At nearly 550 square feet, it holds a diverse selection of liquor, including a selection of Vermont-crafted spirits.

"We have hosted tastings here in the store," he says. "We've had Metcalfe and we've had Mad River Distillery and St. Johnsbury Distillery. We'll also be hosting Appalachian Gap."

"I'm still in the infancy of understanding what I can and cannot order, but I've got some things in here that people say they haven't seen before. I've got a bunch of stuff like that."

A bright, open floor plan and plenty of natural light make it a pleasant place to browse. The liquor agency opens up into the wine room and then into the beer room. The airy design — and creative use of the space in the 4,500-square-foot building — allows customers to walk straight through and easily

and quickly spot what's needed — though, browsing, shopping and catching up on the latest news in Bristol is encouraged. It's what sets Bristol Discount Beverage & Redemption apart from most shops.

"Quite honestly, I've never referred to it as a job," LaPerle, a father of two girls, says. "If you really enjoy it, which I do, it's not like that. It's like I have friends coming to visit me every day. You get to know people, and I sincerely enjoy that." ☿

Bristol Discount Beverage & Redemption
21 Prince Lane • Bristol
(802) 453-3990