

STORE SPOTLIGHT



“We feel privileged to be here.”

Raj's Liquor & Beverage: Focus on the Customer

Visit Raj's Liquor & Beverage once, and there's a good chance Rajiv “Raj” Saini and his brother Bedi will know your name the next time you come in.

Call it good customer service. Or caring about people's needs. Or even the easy familiarity that comes with owning a store known for its attention to detail. Raj Saini laughs, though, when he explains the particular skill he and his brother have picked up over the past three years they've owned the Milton store.

BY BILL BURKE

“When you spend 8-10 hours here, every day, you get to know people,” he says. “We know the people that come in, we know their names and we know their kids, too.”

The Sainis were not strangers to the business. After running a store not far from the shores of Lake Champlain, the two began investigating the possibility of opening another location. Three years ago, the planets aligned and, in September of 2018, they bought the business that would become Raj's Liquor & Beverage.

“We had been looking for the right place for

a long time,” Raj Saini says. “We already owned a store in Winooski — a convenience store — but we were interested in a liquor store. Then, everything came together and this popped up. It's been very good.”

The single-story, long building with gas pumps outside had been part of the town, but the brothers saw an opportunity to make improvements — so as soon as it became possible, they went to work improving almost every detail in the 45-by-95-foot space. From air-conditioning to a planned new front door, Raj and Bedi Saini were determined to leave



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nothing unexamined.

“We’ve done a lot of renovations,” Raj Saini says. “New lighting, floors, new paving, new dispensers, new registers, a 12-by-16-foot beer cave, an 802 Spir-its cooler and we upgraded the liquor agency.”

The liquor agency improvements include increasing the whiskey and tequila selection, among other things, allowing the store to stock more high-end spirits selections. Step inside and visitors are greeted by a “sale of the month” display; down one side is an extensive selection of Scotch and Canadian whiskey, facing shelves of brandy, cognac, Irish whiskey, American whiskey and bourbon. The extensive offerings include flavored and regular vodka, a variety of rum, cordials and schnapps, and the pair have also allotted substantial shelf space dedicated to Vermont-produced spirits.

The renovations and upgrades have been met with rave reviews. A quick search online reveals scores of reviews — all supportive of the new ownership and its improvements, and nearly all mentioning the personal touch Raj and Bedi “B” Saini have brought to town.

In the end, it all comes down to customer service — something the pair have taken pride in working to perfect throughout their careers as entrepreneurs. The pair, originally from India, came to the United States in the 1980s. They owned a restaurant in Manhattan, and seeking a change in environment, found themselves in Vermont. They bought a store in Win-oo-ski before taking over in Milton three years ago.

“We always want to make sure the customer is satisfied,” Bedi Saini says. “How you treat someone matters. We feel privileged to be here.” ☺

Raj’s Liquor & Beverage
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