



# Old-World Tradition in Jackson

## Persephone Bakery Celebrates Second Year

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Coffee stirred with an antique silver spoon somehow tastes better. Staring out of Persephone Bakery's windows as the parade of passersby and the activity of Broadway Street is dusted by the first white flakes of winter, one is lulled by the heat of piping ovens and the hum of simultaneous conversations. Someone types a note and posts it on a wall of messages created from an old typewriter. The sound of keys hitting ribbon brings a touch of old-world to an otherwise cosmopolitan scene. The aromas are warm, worldly, and perfectly sweet—and so is the morning glory muffin.

Created by Ali and Kevin Cohane, Persephone Bakery's pleasing aesthetic merges with a contemporary café feel, where handmade artisanal breads rise to the epitome of delicate crumb and fine structure. Since its inception in the spring of 2013, this decadent stopover—where Jacksonites hold court with friends and visiting family—has become an optimal lingering ground. Formerly the site of JH Roasters (which has moved to a different Broadway location), the bakery offers an evolving menu of internationally-inspired dishes. The owners also contribute to the community with food donations to many area nonprofits.

Ali's background in the design world facilitates a blend of old and new interior, thoughtfully selected down to the last detail. The couple spent a lot of time doing reconnaissance on the optimal ingredi-

ents for a welcoming décor and menu. They lived in Paris and took inspiration from the *boulangerie*—the Parisian bread bakeries. Consequently, Persephone is a little bit French, a little bit urban America.

A long-term goal of the Cohanes' is to return to the city they fell in love with and the bakery expertise they discovered there. Kevin and Ali got married the same year they opened the bakery and weren't able to take a proper honeymoon. "I'm still holding out for another extended trip to Paris," Ali said. Maybe for their 10-year anniversary the couple will get their dream honeymoon—returning to where their inspiration began.

From the inspired *Kouign-Amann* pastry, to the dark, caramelized crust of a broken baguette shared with friends, carefully crafted pastries and



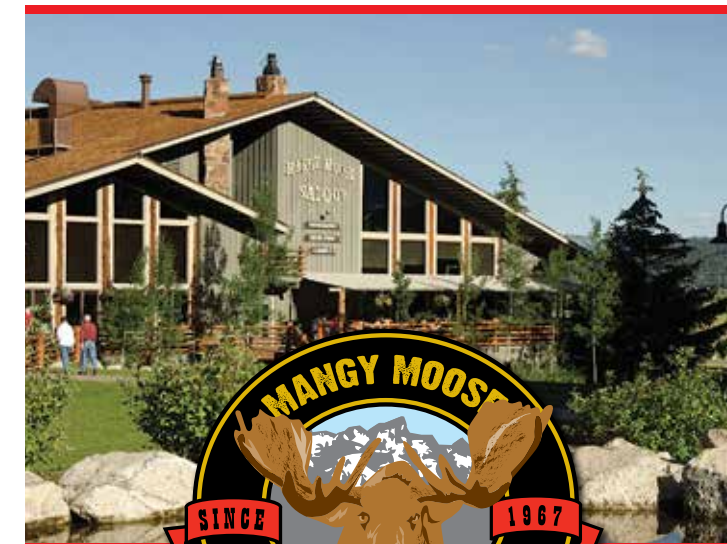
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— Ali Cohane

bread are the result of serious hard work. A Parisian-trained pastry chef, Kevin merges the creative with the classical. To make the perfect handmade laminated croissants, with layers of French butter, is an art unto itself. Ali comments on the attention to detail, the care, training, and skill it takes to do what her husband does, "You make one small mistake, where you put the water in at the wrong temperature and the entire structure of the bread is compromised."

Baking is physical and Kevin rises early, spending 12-hour days literally running on his feet. His workout is going to work and he doesn't sleep much. His 4 a.m. starts, in addition to helping Ali with orders, have made power naps essential. Working hard now with the promise of downtime in the future, Ali hopes that Persephone "will always be theirs to share." She said, "No resting on our laurels. We're trying to do something different and contemporary. We have to keep changing, to leave the soul of the place intact, but also be open to Persephone's growth."

The style of the café is intentional and caters to locals and international visitors accustomed to more European aesthetics. The western motif showcases Wyoming roots, but according to Ali, "We have people visiting from all over. Persephone is a place that makes people feel comfortable and connected to where they come from." After all, food is more than how your taste buds react. Food is a complete sensory experience—and Jackson's senses have never been happier. ■



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