

WINTER 2025

KENTUCKY

RESTAURANT JOURNAL

The Official Publication of the Kentucky Restaurant Association



Chefs That Sizzle

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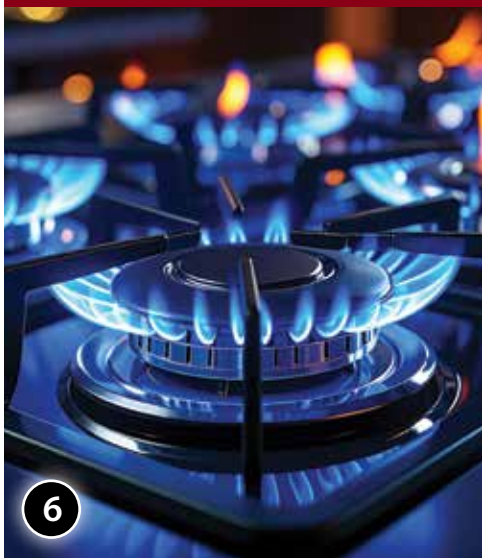
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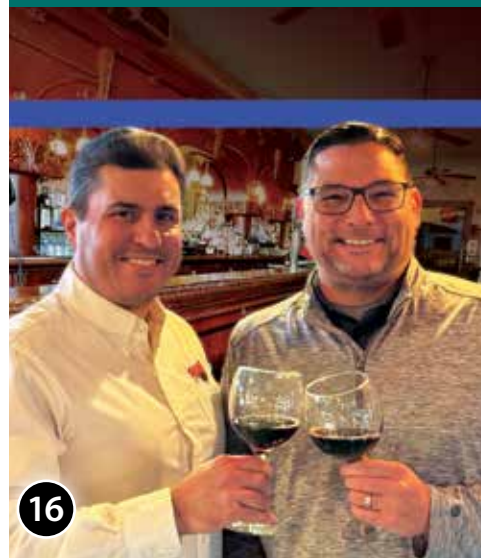
FRONT BURNER



TOP TEN THINGS TO DO TO INCREASE YOUR BAR SALES AND PROFIT



CHEFS THAT SIZZLE



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Do you know a chef in your area who is creating a buzz with innovative cuisine, exceptional presentation or fresh new ideas?

KRA wants to tell the state about them in a quarterly feature in the Kentucky Restaurant Journal. Submit your favorite chef du jour to stacy@kyra.org. Please include restaurant and contact information. Selected submissions will be featured in the magazine as Chefs That Sizzle.

SAVE THE DATES

- January 26 **Restaurateur's Gala**
- February 17 **Mardi Gras for Homeless Children**
Northern Kentucky Convention Center
- April 9 **Chefs for Hope at Savor**

Chefs That **Sizzle**

A WORD FROM OUR PRESIDENT

What a year, what a year. Unpredictable business, seemingly endless construction problems and traffic disruptions, food prices that make menu planning beyond challenging ... sounds like the last few years, doesn't it? Let's hope that 2026 holds a bit more stability for restaurant operators. According to the National Restaurant Association's What's Hot Culinary Forecast for next year, the Top Ten Overall Trends are: local sourcing; comfort foods; value menus & options; smashed burgers; clear menu labeling/icons and cues; allergen-friendly menus; global comfort foods; "cleaner" recipes with fewer additives and dyes; proteins as add-ons, and compostable and reuseable packaging.

Local sourcing is important to us too. KRA continues to engage with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture's Kentucky Proud/Buy Local representatives, which has been a priority for Chairman David Danielson this year. Pamela Holbrook was recently hired as Buy Local Program Coordinator, and we are thrilled to be working with her and her team on their upcoming showcase for restaurants.

The next big KRA event is the Restaurateur's Gala on January 26 at Savor, and we're reviewing nominations for awards now. It's a great opportunity to recognize and spend time with valued staff members! We'll have our Sporting Clays tournament at Elk Creek Hunt Club

again on June 8. Watch your email for our Taste of the Commonwealth date – we'll have about a dozen Kentucky based restaurants go to the capitol and feed our legislators and their staff lunch in February or March. They love this event, and it's great for us to have their attention for a few hours.

I know operating a restaurant in these unknown times is hard for you. Now more than ever the discounts and resources KRA offers should help you stay competitive. Are you part of the Dining Alliance GPO? Are you using Harford Mutual for your workers' comp and saving on your premiums? Just a couple of ways to save some money, and your dues investment is mostly tax deductible. If I can help you I hope you'll get in touch. Thank you for your support of KRA, and happiest of holidays as we usher in another year!

Stacy Roof

Stacy Roof

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Calendar of Events

Make sure to mark your calendars for Chefs for Hope, April 9 at Savor!

DECEMBER

- 2 ServSafe Louisville - KRA Office
- 8 Lexington Area Holiday Mixer - Sedona Taphouse Palomar
- 9 Bowling Green Area Holiday Mixer - Springhill Suites
- 10 Louisville Chapter Holiday Mixer - Brasserie Provence
- 14 Hanukkah begins
- 15 ServSafe Louisville - KRA Office
- 22 Hanukkah ends
- 24 Christmas Eve
- 25 Christmas Day
- 31 New Year's Eve

JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day
- 6 ServSafe Louisville - KRA Office
- 13 ServSafe Lexington
- 19 Martin Luther King Jr. Day
- 20 ServSafe Louisville - KRA Office
- 26 KRA Board of Directors meeting
- 26 Restaurateur's Gala at Savor

FEBRUARY

- 9 ServSafe Louisville - KRA Office
- 14 Valentine's Day
- 16 Presidents' Day
- 17 Fat Tuesday
- 17 Mardi Gras for Homeless Children
Northern Kentucky Convention Center
- 24 ServSafe Louisville - KRA Office



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FRONT BURNER

by SHANNON STIGLITZ

Centralized Collection of Occupational Taxes:

The supporters of the centralized collection of local government incomes taxes testified before the Interim Joint Committee on Local Government in September, and so October was the opportunity for local government groups opposed to the proposal to testify before legislators. For businesses including restaurants, there is difficulty in collecting and remitting local occupational taxes, especially considering there are over 400 cities, 120 counties, and a few school boards who levy an occupational tax.

Many of these local governments don't allow for electronic payments, others require remittance of lengthy forms when paying the tax. The cities and counties argued that due to the large amount of revenue generated by the occupational tax, the risk of a centralized collection process is too great for local governments to accept. The advocates for local governments stated there is a standard form on the Kentucky One-Stop Business portal that all local governments are required to accept. Current law contains a penalty for the local government if they refuse to

accept the universal form.

From a business perspective, telling any government the laws and how to navigate local tax collection is difficult. The lack of a centralized collection process also could lower compliance with local occupational tax collections. The Local Government Committee didn't ask questions of the groups, except House Local Government Committee Chair Patrick Flannery (R-Olive Hill) asked the representatives if their argument is that they don't want to send local tax revenue to Frankfort. The response was a

definitively no, they don't want to send local tax revenue to Frankfort. Flannery continued that he believed proponents of the legislation didn't really want centralized collection but instead wanted the process to be streamlined.

Restaurant Tax:

The Kentucky League of Cities (KLC) is once again asking legislators to amend the Constitution to allow local governments to levy a local sales tax. Arguing that cities are limited in the amount of revenue they can generate by the Constitution, but they have more expenses. In the same theme as revenue expansion, they are also asking the General Assembly to expand authority to levy a restaurant tax to all cities, and expand the local alcohol regulatory fee to all cities. These are consumption taxes that will impact consumer spending, it is still unclear if there will be any legislation proposed on this issue in the 2026 legislative session. The final KLC general legislative item is protect against any laws that would impair local control or create preemption. The government affairs team will continue to educate legislators on the negative impacts on consumer spending, especially in the time of inflation and tariffs.

Penny Circulation:

The U.S. Mint eliminated production of the penny, which has placed pressure on the circulation of the penny. Kentucky doesn't have any law prohibiting rounding practices. In talking with the Department of

revenue they are hesitant to tell private businesses how to handle cash customers and rounding in the wake of a penny shortage. The sales tax is a factor that must be taken into consideration. The Federation will continue to work with the Department of Revenue to provide additional information on penny circulation. There is federal legislation called the Common Cents Act that would help retailers manage the penny circulation issue.

City of Hazard Restaurant Tax Case:

The City of Hazard sued General Assembly over its inability to levy a restaurant tax. The restaurant tax law only allows cities formerly classified as fourth or fifth class cities to levy a restaurant tax. The idea is that these smaller cities don't have a hotel tax base to generate tourism revenue, and so they are allowed to levy such a tax. Franklin Circuit Court Judge Phillip Shepherd ruled in favor of Hazard allowing the city to implement a restaurant tax. Attorney General Coleman appealed the decision to the Kentucky Court of Appeals, who agreed with the attorney general that the General Assembly can establish parameters it wants for the restaurant tax based on city classifications. For restaurants this is good news, as the appeals court ruled in favor of the attorney general. The City of Hazard is supposed to suspend levying the restaurant tax, but the city has clearly stated that they intend to appeal the decision to the Kentucky

Supreme Court. If the Supreme Court agrees to accept the case, it will likely take months for a final ruling to be issued. If they don't accept the City of Hazard's appeal, then the opinion of the Court of Appeals stands, and the City of Hazard will no longer be eligible to implement a restaurant tax.

This is also a victory for the restaurant industry, as KRA filed an *amicus curae* brief in support of the attorney general's opinion. If the Supreme Court accepts the case, it may require an additional brief to be filed in opposition to expansion of the restaurant tax.

Jefferson County Property Tax Case:

The Kentucky Supreme Court will review and rule on a property tax case where Jefferson County PVA Colleen Younger, where the PVA assessed leased properties using a different formula than properties owned by the retailer. The PVA used the drug store lease assessment method on properties leased by the retailer. The Kentucky Restaurant Association filed an *amicus curae* brief in the case in support of retailers utilizing triple net leases. The decision in the case represents a pivotal inflection in property tax assessments of leased properties.

THE GOLDILOCKS OF MENU CHANGES

FINDING THE BALANCE IN HOW OFTEN YOU CHANGE YOUR MENU - NOT TOO MUCH, NOT TOO LITTLE BUT JUUUUST RIGHT

by ANNE SHADLE

FOUNDER OF LEFT BRAIN SOLUTIONS CONSULTING CO
& CO-OWNER OF MAYAN CAFÉ

What is the best schedule to use for menu changes? What is too often, or not often enough? What is the goldilocks – just the right amount? I wish there was one singular gold standard we could all adhere to but unfortunately, we all have different customer bases with different sets of needs and desires. There are also outside forces we have to reckon with – like price increases, product shortages and seasonal availability of certain menu items that will all affect menu change schedules.

At my restaurant, the Mayan Café, we have tried many different approaches to menu changes over the nearly 20 years we've been operating. Seasonal produce has driven much of these changes but we also have felt tension between our two core brand tenants – authentic Mayan and farm to table sourcing – which has also influenced our approach to menu changes. For many years, we changed the menu every month until I realized that my business partner, Bruce, and I spent 25% of our time – one full week out of each month – preparing for these menu changes. Our customers routinely asked for dishes from a previous month's menu and weren't excited by how often we changed things. We had a lot of waste because we didn't always sell through all the ingredients we purchased before a menu change. So, we either had to sit on a bunch of frozen product, waste it or find some way of using it as a special. So, there definitely are WRONG ways to change your menu. Whether you change your menu once per year, never, every quarter or even more frequently, you'll want to consider all these factors so you can choose the right schedule for you.

CORE DRIVERS OF MENU CHANGES

WHOLESALE PRICES:

Have your wholesale prices changed? What is the year to date food cost percentage on your income statement? If it's above 30%, then cost out all your menu items to see if one particular dish is way out of whack or if most dishes need to be tweaked by 5-10%.

SEASONAL & LOCAL INGREDIENTS:

Do you use local produce and thus can only get certain items at certain times of year? Or do you get meat from local farms and thus you may not be able to get certain cuts of meat all the time? In these cases, you can either change the menu more frequently or offer menu items that incorporate flexibility like a meat of the day dish with rotating meat from farmers.

PRODUCT SHORTAGES:

If you can't get a protein or vegetable that is core to the menu item consistently anymore, it may be worth taking this dish off the menu or substituting this inconsistent item for something more stable.

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK:

Are lots of your customers asking about a dish from a previous menu? Do they complain about you changing the menu too much or do they say they're bored with the menu? Work to create systems where you can get honest feedback from your customers to incorporate into your menu change schedule. Paying attention to dishes mentioned positively and negatively in online reviews can be very helpful.

SALES NUMBERS:

Run sales reports to see how each menu item compares to the others. Of course there's always going to be a loser, but if the range between the lowest selling item and the highest selling item is 4 or 5 times or more, your lowest selling items probably need to go.

INGREDIENT USAGE / COST / WASTE MATRIX:

If there a higher price ingredient that is only used in one dish and that dish is one of the least selling dishes and you are often wasting the ingredient, I would consider removing the dish or trying to use the ingredient in another dish or two.

YOUR TIME INVESTMENT:

You as the owner, or whoever else is involved in the menu change process, need to know what kind of time it takes to make a menu change. There is menu development and testing to do, POS updates to make, printed menu changes to type up, website menus to update, training docs and menu notes for staff to adjust, new staff to train in front and back of house, marketing activities to do to promote the new menu and more. Account for all of this as you're planning your menu change schedule.

Even though we've been at this for nearly two decades, we are still learning how to run the business more efficiently and effectively. Just this calendar year, we decided to try a consistent quarterly menu change rather than the twice per year schedule we had been using. We did a dining room expansion in early 2024, so we have tried different strategies to handle the increased business. Making our menu smaller with items that are faster to execute during service was an idea we wanted to implement; however, out of concern for negative customer response, we decided to increase the frequency of menu changes at the same time. Additionally, we knew that we could shrink or expand the size of the menu based on the seasonal revenue trends of the upcoming quarter. We have a couple dishes on the menu that are "of the day" items that allow us to feature interesting produce or items that we can only purchase in small quantities. For the moment, we feel confident that we have identified a good balance – that elusive goldilocks. But who knows what the future holds – we will continue to generate new ideas and strategies to respond to whatever comes our way!

This year, I am also teaching classes for restauranteurs who want to improve how they run their businesses. Learn more and apply here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/cc/2025-restaurant-trainings-from-anne-shadle-3932173>



In 2007, I opened Mayan Café with my business partner, Chef Bruce Ucán. Over these past 18 years, I have learned countless lessons about how to run our business sustainably and enjoyably. After working with over 400 small business owners as a business coach with the Kentucky Small Business Development Center, I decided to start my own consulting firm. With my clients now, we do a deep dive into their financial management habits, HR practices and marketing strategies with the goal of increasing efficiency, profitability and their quality of life as business owners. If you're interested to learn how to run your business smarter, please reach out to me.

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FOOD SAFETY AT HOME DURING THE HOLIDAY SEASON

{ *by* AMY SHANKLE }

Did you know that approximately 32% of foodborne illness cases happen from food prepared in the home? This can be due to various factors, cross-contamination, poor handwashing, incorrect cooling of hot food or just leaving food out too long giving pathogens a chance to grow to unsafe levels. With the holiday season fast approaching here are some tips to keep your family healthy and celebrations safe.

The holiday season is a time for family gatherings, delicious meals, and festive celebrations. With the increased cooking, baking, and entertaining at home, it is crucial to prioritize food safety to prevent foodborne illnesses and keep everyone healthy. Here are a few things to consider ensuring the food you serve is safe from preparation to storage.

1. Safe Food Handling

- Wash hands frequently: Always wash your hands with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds before, during, and after handling food.
- Clean Surfaces and Utensils: Disinfect countertops, cutting boards, and cooking utensils before and after use, especially when preparing raw meat, poultry, or seafood.
- Avoid Cross-Contamination: Use separate cutting boards for raw meats and ready-to-eat foods like vegetables, breads, and fruits.

2. Proper Cooking Temperatures

- Use a Food Thermometer: Ensure meats are cooked to their recommended internal temperatures:
- Poultry (chicken, turkey): 165°F (74°C)
- Beef, pork, lamb: 145°F (63°C) with a four-minute rest
- Ground meats: 155°F (71°C)
- Fish: 145°F (63°C)

3. Safe Thawing Practices

- Refrigerator Thawing: Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator, never on the countertop. Allow adequate time—large turkeys may take several days.
- Cold Water Thawing: Place food in a leak proof bag and thaw under running water.

- Microwave Thawing: If using a microwave, cook food immediately after thawing to prevent bacteria growth.

4. Storing Leftovers Safely

- Refrigerate Promptly: Store leftovers within two hours of cooking. Divide large portions into smaller shallow containers for quicker cooling.
- Label and Date: Mark containers with the date so you know when food was prepared.
- Consume Timely: Most leftovers are safe for three to four days in the refrigerator. Freeze portions for longer storage.

5. Special Considerations for Holiday Foods

- Egg Dishes: Ensure egg-based dishes like custards and eggnog are cooked thoroughly. Use pasteurized eggs for recipes that call for raw or lightly cooked eggs.
- Buffet Safety: Keep hot foods hot (above 135°F) and cold foods cold (below 41°F) during holiday parties. Use chafing dishes and ice trays as needed.
- Food Allergies: Clearly label dishes that contain common allergens and avoid cross-contact when preparing allergy friendly foods.

6. Tips for Safe Entertaining

- Monitor Food Out Time: Perishable foods should not sit out for more than 2 hours. Reduce to an hour if the room temperature is above 90°F.
- Encourage Hand Hygiene
- Manage Leftovers: Offer labeled containers for guests to take home leftovers safely.

Careful planning, cleanliness, and attention to food handling will help keep your celebrations memorable for all the right reasons.

Happy Holidays!

Amy Shankle

Director of Training

Kentucky Restaurant Association



DELICIOUS HOLIDAY SPIRITS AND BEVERAGES AND SOME POINTERS TO SERVE THEM SAFELY

{ by AMY SHANKLE }

The Holiday season is a time when restaurants often see an increase in celebrations. The joy of gathering with family and friends often includes delicious beverages that capture the spirit of the season. Here's a list of some beverages from traditional favorites to trendy new concoctions.

Classic Hot Chocolate – Hot chocolate remains a timeless favorite during the holidays. Elevate your cocoa with gourmet touches like peppermint sticks, whipped cream, or marshmallows. Adding peppermint schnapps, or an Irish cream brings that warm holiday feeling home.

Mulled Wine – Originating from European holiday markets, mulled wine is a warm, spiced beverage that brings comfort and cheer to any gathering. Simmer red wine with orange slices, cloves and cinnamon sticks. For a non-alcoholic version, use spiced apple cider instead.

Eggnog – Eggnog is classic holiday drink that continues to delight guests. Whether you make it from scratch or buy a high-quality store version, offer both alcoholic (with bourbon, rum, or brandy) and non-alcoholic options. Sprinkle with nutmeg and serve chilled or warm for a creamy, rich experience. **Sparkling Holiday Punch** – A festive punch bowl is a centerpiece for any holiday party. Try a sparkling punch made with cranberry juice, orange juice, ginger ale, and a splash of sparkling wine. Add fresh cranberries and orange slices for a decorative touch. Perfect for toasting the holiday season.

Apple Cider Variations – Warm apple cider, spiced with cinnamon and cloves, is a comforting choice for chilly evenings. For adult guests, consider adding a splash of bourbon or spiced rum.

Seasonal Mocktails – Not everyone wants alcohol during the holidays. Offer creative mocktails like a cranberry-lime spritzer, pomegranate rosemary fizz, or a gingerbread iced tea. Colorful festive glasses make these drinks feel special and inclusive for all ages.

Champagne and Sparkling wine – These beverages embody the festive spirit perfectly. Champagne is classic and elegant. Prosecco, originating from Italy, is light and fruity, and Rosé Sparkling wine with beautiful colors and hints of berry, are festive and food friendly. Many restaurants will have their own special holiday spirits and beverages to help their guests enjoy their celebrations with family and friends. But we can't forget the responsibility that comes along with serving alcohol. With the heightened activity, it is important for restaurants to prioritize safe alcohol service to protect guests, staff, and the establishment's reputation. Below are key steps to take to ensure responsible alcohol service during the holiday season.

Staff Training and Education – ensure all staff members are properly trained in responsible alcohol service. This includes recognizing signs of intoxication, understanding legal responsibilities, and knowing how to refuse service when necessary. Consider scheduling refresher courses before the Holiday rush.

Check Identification Rigorously – With larger crowds and seasonal staff, it’s vital to consistently check IDs to prevent underage drinking. Train staff to recognize valid forms of identification and to spot fake IDs. Implement a clear policy for handling questionable cases.
Monitor Alcohol Consumption – Keep an eye on guests’ alcohol intake. Encourage staff to engage with patrons and observe signs of overconsumption, such as slurred speech or impaired coordination.

Provide Food and Non-Alcoholic Options – Encourage guests to eat while drinking by offering appetizers or pairing meals with drinks. Ensure a variety of appealing non-alcoholic beverages are available, making it easier for guests to choose alternatives or pace their alcohol consumption.

Promote Safe Transportation – Partner with local taxi services, rideshare companies or designated driver programs to help guests get home safely. Display information about these services prominently and encourage staff to suggest safe transportation options to patrons who may be intoxicated.

Enforce Responsible Service Policies – Establish and communicate clear policies regarding serving intoxicated guests. Empower staff to refuse service

when necessary and provide support if conflicts arise. Ensure management is available to assist with difficult situations.

Maintain a Safe and Welcoming Environment – Increase security or supervision during peak times to manage crowds and handle potential issues promptly. Foster an atmosphere where guests feel comfortable reporting concerns related to alcohol consumption or safety.

Be Mindful of Local Laws and Regulations – Review local and state alcohol laws, especially any seasonal changes or restrictions. Stay updated on licensing requirements and ensure compliance to avoid legal issues during the busy season.

The holiday season is a perfect time for guests to enjoy those traditional spirits or experiment with new ones. Following responsible alcohol service will make you an important part of their fun and safe celebrations. Cheers!

Amy Shankle
Director of Training
Kentucky Restaurant Association



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by RICH CLEAVES, KENTUCKY PROSTART COORDINATOR

I asked some of our ProStart educators if they could connect with me with any of their former students who have gone on to pursue a career in the hospitality industry. In this issue we will tell you the story of Hannah Corbin who graduated from Arvin Education Center in 2018.

Hannah Corbin

Hannah was a ProStart student at Arvin Education Center in LaGrange and was taught by Chef Garrett Sanborn in 2016-2017. She said about Garrett, “he was a wonderful leader, and I learned so much from him...restaurant concept planning, marketing strategies, graphic design, and of course culinary skills.” Hannah was part of the management team that developed a food truck concept called KENTUCKY PROUD which won the 2017 Kentucky ProStart Invitational competition that went on to compete in the 2017 ProStart National Invitational competition held in Charleston, South Carolina. During her time in high school, Hannah also competed in baking and cake decorating contests. And while in high school Hannah worked at an Italian restaurant in Norton Commons in Louisville giving her practical restaurant experience which would be beneficial to her later.



Hannah (pictured far right) with the 2017 winning ProStart management team from Arvin

After high school Hannah enrolled at Indiana University majoring in English Writing, plus she took photography courses, graduating in 2020. So, she packed her bags and off she went to Seattle, Washington where she knew there were many job opportunities, armed with culinary experience, graphic design and photography skills, composition

proficiency, and a desire to succeed. She was 21 years old. Once in Seattle she immediately landed a job as the marketing manager at the luxury Fairmont Olympic Hotel. "My duties included assisting with the operations teams for the five food and beverage outlets in the hotel, event and wedding planning, social media campaigns." And she had a strong relationship with the chefs. "I understood from my hospitality background what went into the chef's dishes. I felt their creations were like works of art, and when I did a photo shoot they always went well because the chefs knew I appreciated all the hard work and creativity they had put into producing all their different menu items."

After working at the Fairmont Hotel for two years she left to gain more marketing and leadership experience and was hired as the marketing director at Lotte Hotels Seattle. But as time went by, something kept going through her mind. She said to herself, "I have marketing experience, culinary experience, photography experience, event planning experience, social media experience, writing experience, and I think I could start my own business and blend all these talents." She called her father and asked for his opinion. And her father said, "take the jump, do it now, and if it doesn't work out, no worries, you always land on your feet!" And so, she took the jump and started Savor Social Studio, a social media

company, "where we created a one-stop-shop for social media management specializing in creating visually stunning content for the hospitality and tourism industry." She has a staff consisting of a graphic designer, photographer, social media manager, media planner, and a photo editor. Her company services businesses in Seattle, Louisville, and beyond. Her clients include the Fairmont Hotel, Ascend Prime Steak and Sushi, Famous Dave's, Flint Creek Cattle Company,

Rock Creek Seafood and Steaks, and many more. And Savor Social Studio has been featured in Forbes, Food and Wine, and 425 Magazine.

Hannah has accomplished a lot since graduating from the Arvin Education Center in 2018. But she says her time working and studying in the ProStart program certainly triggered her love and passion for the hospitality industry. And because of that she makes an award-winning living promoting and marketing many restaurants and hotel companies. Hannah, you have made Chef Garrett and so many more people very, very proud!



Hannah getting ready for another photo shoot!

We want to thank Toast for their generous contribution to Kentucky ProStart





Chefs That Sizzle

by CHEF DAVID DANIELSON

POMPILIO'S OF NEWPORT: A CENTURY OF SAUCE, STORIES, AND SOUL

By the time you reach the corner of Sixth and Washington in Newport, Kentucky, the scent reaches you first. Garlic and olive oil drift through the air, mingling with the faint sweetness of simmering tomatoes and the savory scent of meatballs baking in the ovens of the second-floor kitchen. Beneath the black awnings that have shaded generations stands Pompilio's Restaurant, a fixture since 1933, and one of the oldest continuously operating Italian restaurants in the Midwest.

Inside, the charm is effortless—original wood trims, wooden bar tops polished by time, the mosaic bar floor from 1901, and walls lined with photographs that seem to whisper stories. This isn't nostalgia on display; it's living history. Every table, every sauce-splattered recipe card, carries a trace of the people who made Newport what it is.

SINCE 1933
A CORNERSTONE
OF ITALIAN
TRADITION IN
NORTHERN
KENTUCKY

"Every plate tells a story—of family, of patience, of the city that's grown up around us."

A FAMILY DREAM BORN IN HARD TIMES

Pompilio's began during the Great Depression, when an Italian immigrant family turned their recipes and

resilience into livelihood. Their mission was simple: make food that comforted the soul and honored the old country.

The early years were humble—bare wooden tables, mismatched chairs, and a kitchen that never stopped humming—but the flavor was unforgettable. Spaghetti with house-made meatballs, veal cutlets crisped in cast iron, chicken Parmigiana bubbling under layers of cheese—the classics drew crowds from both sides of the Ohio River.

That dedication became tradition, passed down through 2 generations of Pompilio's and future owners who refused to let the spirit fade. Nearly a century later, Pompilio's remains a symbol of endurance—proof that honest food and hospitality never go out of style.

THE BAR THAT KNOWS YOUR NAME

Step through the original wooden door into the bar and you enter another world. The foot rail gleams beneath the stools, the bourbon shelves glow with amber light, and the regulars nod to each other like family. Pompilio's is also able to boast being on the Kentucky Bourbon trail with almost 70 different options. They also are able to say they are the state's original bourbon bar! They hold the very first liquor license after Prohibition ended.

That beautiful cherry bar is actually older than the building itself. The building that houses Pompilio's was completed in 1901. The bar was built by hand by the Weidemann Brewing Company in 1886. It was located at a different location within the city.

The tables still echo with laughter, and the same tile floors that hosted scenes from Rain Man in 1988 are still underfoot. Dustin Hoffman and Tom Cruise might have put Pompilio's on the Hollywood map, but the locals had already made it a legend.

"Everyone has a story that starts at this bar—somewhere between the laughter, the bourbon, and the sound of Sinatra."

THE KITCHEN'S BEATING HEART

At the core of Pompilio's is a kitchen that still cooks the slow way. The red sauce, famous across the region, begins as it always has—with olive oil, garlic, and time. No shortcuts. No jars. They still make in-house all the sauces, along with the meatballs, sausage, raviolis, and more.

The recipe lives in memory, not measurements: a handful of basil, a pinch of salt, a few hours of patient simmering until the flavors merge into something comforting and unmistakably Pompilio's.

The menu honors this foundation while leaving room for renewal. Classics like lasagna and Ravioli, which are made in-house; share space with seasonal specials—butternut squash ravioli, rustic short rib ragù, or a classic made to order carbonara with double smoked pancetta. It's Italian cooking as it was meant to be: simple ingredients elevated by patience and love.

THE ART OF PAIRING AND PATIENCE

In recent years, Pompilio's has tried to build one of the most thoughtful



THE PERFECT POUR – WINES THAT TELL THE SAME STORY

CHIANTI CLASSICO TENUTA ARCENO

Pairs with: House Lasagna, or amatriciana

Notes: blueberries, red oranges, cedar, hints of white pepper & licorice.— an Italian classic for an Italian icon.

DUCA DI SARAGNANO RISERVA

Pairs with: Bolognese, Meatballs, or Eggplant Parmigiana

Notes: Spice and earthy complexity: peppercorn, toasty wood/spice, sun-baked earth, leather, underbrush.

I LAURI TAVO PINOT GRIGIO

Pairs with: Calamari, or Shrimp Ronaldo

Notes: Flavors of ripe apple, white peach, pear, melon, with maybe a note of wet stone / minerality.

MAZZEI SUPER TUSCAN BLEND

Pairs with: Short Rib Ragù, or the Braciolo

Notes: Rich red-fruit flavors (cherry, currant, mulberry), with fine-grained tannins, structure that is "firm yet seamlessly integrated". Also, tobacco, dried herbs, earth and spice.

"Food and wine should speak the same language—ours just happens to have an Italian accent."



Italian wine programs in Northern Kentucky. Each bottle is chosen to complement the kitchen's flavors, not to overshadow them. The restaurant's curated list blends Old World elegance with New World boldness—Chianti beside California Cabernet, Piedmont Nebbiolo next to Mosel German Riesling.

A glass of Alasia Langhe Nebbiolo deepens the warmth of the Bolognese, while a chilled Pinot Grigio brings balance to seafood and herbs. For those who linger longer, Super Tuscan selections reward patience with velvet-smooth finishes.

The philosophy is simple: wine and food should tell the same story. Each pour reveals something new—the sweetness of tomato, the brightness of basil, the warmth of olive oil meeting oak and fruit.

A NEIGHBORHOOD INSTITUTION WITH A NATIONAL SOUL

Newport has changed around Pompilio's. Once a rough-edged river town filled with pool halls and smoke, it's now a blend of grit and rebirth. Yet through it all, the tile floors have stayed, the sauce has kept simmering, and the laughter has never stopped.

Families still gather for birthdays and anniversaries. Young couples on first dates share cannoli dusted with sugar. Old friends trade toasts over Chianti, promising to come back before too long.

To dine here is to participate in a story still being written. Every meal continues the same promise made in 1933: that a plate of good food, shared with good Company, can anchor a community through every generation.

"It's more than a meal—it's a memory passed down one plate at a time."

LOOKING TOWARD 100 YEARS

As Pompilio's nears its centennial celebration, the focus is on honoring the past while embracing the future. Because at its heart, Pompilio's isn't about chasing trends—it's about continuity. About the smell of sauce in the kitchen, the sound of laughter over dinner, the comfort of being known.

Pompilio's remains a living testament to Italian hospitality—a place where every meal is a homecoming and every glass of wine is a toast to the next hundred years.

"We've lasted nearly a century by keeping things simple: love your craft, honor your roots, and never rush the sauce."





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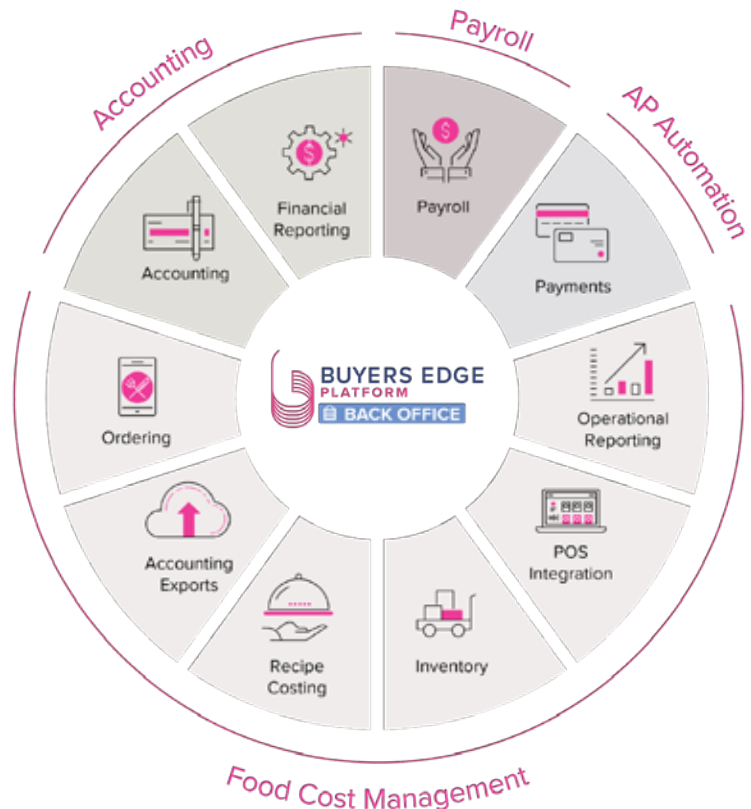
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Questions & Answers

Q: With pennies being less available, what is the recommended protocol for making change in cash transactions?

A: One in four restaurant transactions is cash. We have been advised that your restaurant should have a consistent rounding policy. You can post signage stating that exact change may not be made if a customer paying in cash does not have the exact payment amount. The National Restaurant Association is urging the administration to resume distributing pennies to banks as well as supporting the Common Cents Act to set a national standard allowing businesses to round up or down when pennies are not available.

Q: I received a new wine product this month and according to month end inventory I was missing 3 bottles. What steps do I need to take to investigate this issue?

- A:
1. Recount the bottles just to make sure the count and input is accurate
 2. Check stock locations to make sure it wasn't accidentally stored in the wrong place
 3. Since it is a new product ensure the pack size, volume and cost/unit was put in the inventory system correctly
 4. Check you invoice pricing to make sure you are getting the case of wine for the agreed price from your vendor
 5. Talk with your manager and staff to find out if there was any breakage or waste
 6. Test your bartenders on the wine pour to ensure they are not over pouring.

Q: What are the best practices when using bar inventory systems?

- A:
1. Consistency - Always count at the same time (end of shift, weekly)
 2. Training - Ensure staff know how to measure partial bottles correctly
 3. Integration - connect inventory software with POS accounting and tools for real-time variance
 4. Review Reports - Use variance and pour cost reports to adjust staff training or supplier orders

Q: I have more alcohol incident reports filed out by managers this month than last month. What can we do to tackle this issue?

A: The best answer is to schedule your team for a ServSafe alcohol class. The course teaches the effects alcohol has on the body, the signs of intoxication, and how to stop alcohol service to a guest. It will give your team and managers the knowledge and confidence to serve alcohol safely and reduce any risks of an incident.

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TOP TEN THINGS TO DO TO INCREASE YOUR BAR SALES AND PROFIT

{ by CHARLIE DEIBEL, CPA, SCULPTURE HOSPITALITY }

Hi Everyone! What can I do to increase my bar and restaurant's profit? In overseeing the management of over 400 bars and restaurants, I get asked this a lot!

So here's my list, not all things will apply to all bars and restaurants, as many of you might already be doing some or all of these things.



1. Use an inventory management software program to correctly track your inventory being used and sold. You must do more than just simply count your inventory, tracking your usage and calculating your actual food and beverage costs. You must use a software program to also calculate your ideal numbers for quantities, sales, costs in dollars and percentages.

Average food loss when this isn't done is about 15-20%. Average liquor loss is 22%, wine loss is 19%, Bottle beer loss is 10% and draft beer loss is 16%. If you are not doing this because you "trust your staff", then you should also stop tracking your cash rung up in the drawer. Not really, I am trying to make a point. You need to track your inventory like you track your cash!

2. Make sure you are not overstocked on inventory. For liquor beer and wine, you should not have more than 2.5 weeks of inventory on hand on your lowest inventory day of the week.

For food it's dependent on the duration of how long it's fresh and servable. Your dry goods, shouldn't be more than about 2.5 weeks.

3. Update your costs and menu item pricing at least quarterly.

4. Run sales reports for different times of the day, comparing your labor costs to sales for those times.

5. Do social media. Utilize an AI approach to website management and social media postings.

6. Promote carry out sales

7. Greet guests promptly at the door and upon seating within 1 minute, providing menu's and taking a drink order.

8. Make sure your occupancy costs are at least under 10%, the closer to 5% the better.

9. Goals to shoot for.....Food – depending the

concept 22% to 29%, with the upper range being more fine dining. Beverage – lower overall range is 15%, higher range would be low to mid 30 %. For the lower range, it would be night clubs, dance clubs, tourist and downtown spots, for the lower numbers, it would be neighborhood bars and sports bars in the suburbs. If you are in the 22% to 29% range that's generally good, unless you are a destination night club.

10. Labor cost, depending on how you track it as far as FOH vs HOH, under 20% for hourly line people.

Deibel's family owned a German bistro in Columbus, Ohio for over 80 years. He is a CPA and past college accounting and math instructor. He currently oversees the management of 400 bars and restaurants using the Sculpture Inventory Management Platform. He has been the regional VP of operations for Sculpture in Indiana, Kentucky and Ohio since 1994.





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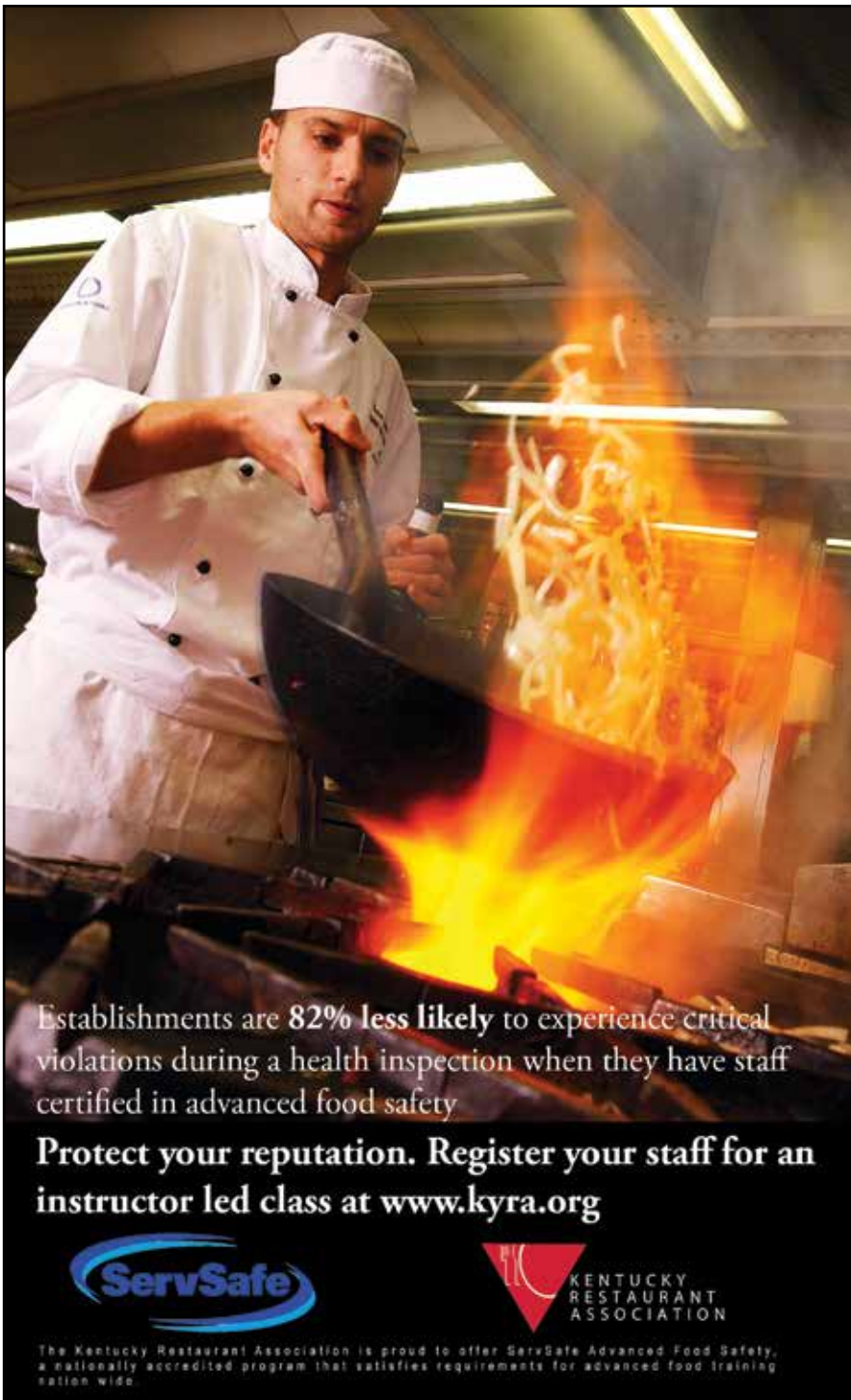
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- Family and Medical Leave Act: must be posted by private sector employers who employ 50 or more employees in 20 or more work weeks, and by all government agencies.

Individual notices may be printed from the US Department of Labor website at www.dol.gov or an all-in-one poster containing these six federal notices may be obtained from the KRA office. Kentucky state law requires all employers post the following notices as well:

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