

Picnic Pleasures

Planning a gourmet picnic? Stop at the Railway Deli in Canmore for all the fixin's - by Janet Bertsch

The [Railway Deli](#) in Canmore is quickly becoming a legend for hungry travellers on the Banff-Calgary highway.

The restaurant's owners, brothers Harry and Roland Griesser, worked in fancy hotels and resorts in Austria and the Rockies before starting their own gourmet restaurant, deli and catering business.

We talked to Harry to find out more about the food – including the restaurant's famous turducken!



Tell us about your restaurant.

We had the old location, Valbella Deli, but it was just a deli with a couple of tables. When the lease ran out, we decided to do a deli in town here with a restaurant attached. It made sense to do something fresher, younger, more upbeat, in a better location. We also do custom catering and weddings, which is busiest in the summer.

We're on the busiest corner of Canmore, where all the people are coming and going. We've been in business for two years – we opened in July 2007.

Everything is custom. That's why people like to come to our store, because we like to interact with our customers and fulfill their wishes. You want to make sure that people come back and spread the word. That word of mouth is our best advertising.

What about the food?

Nothing too complicated – it's very simple food. Something simple is the key. Everyone can come in here and enjoy the food and a nice atmosphere.

Our custom sandwich section is very popular. You can write down your choices in meats and breads and cheeses and hand it in to our sandwich artist, and then you can eat it in the restaurant or take it with you. That's one of our top sellers.

What do you like best about Canmore?

Living in Canmore is great. It's a good place to live, very quiet and safe, good air, good water. It's fantastic.

We're used to the Alps – maybe it's a bit colder than Austria, but

we're happy. You come here, start making friends, and after a while you just don't want to leave!

You'll be making 400 turducken this year? Tell us more!

A man came into the old store in 2003 and was talking about turducken, and we said "What are you talking about?" So we did a little research.

A lot of businesses make them in the US, but no one was making them in Canada. So we started at Thanksgiving in 2004, and now last Christmas we made 280 of them.

It's a chicken stuffed inside a duck, inside a turkey. People love that product – it just beats your regular turkey. The majority are just in awe.



We make everything from scratch – we get everything in fresh, the chickens, duck and turkey. We make our own stuffing with Italian sausage and breadcrumbs. It's a slow-cooking process, so it's really flavourful. Everything melts together.

We send them all over the province with Greyhound. They know what it is, and the bird is insured.