



Local Business Fridays

Pasta Grill

David and Jennifer Eslick

How did you come up with the name 'Pasta Grill'?

"This is actually not the first Pasta Grill. Pasta Grill was created by Wesley and Suzanne Hall. They came up with the recipes and created what Pasta Grill is today."

How long have you been in open?

"We opened this location in December of 2015. It is crazy to think that next year we will be open for 5 years."

What do you sell?

"Our headline is 'Pasta, Steaks, and Seafood'. We serve items from very traditional Italian food, to dishes that have a mix of Cajun. One of our most eye catching dishes is our Roasted Garlic Chicken Cheesecake. Not many people have eaten a savory cheesecake before. I personally have two favorite dishes, the crawfish cornbread and the prime rib. I do also find myself eating a lot of meatballs throughout the week. 'A meatball a day keeps the doctor away'."

What was your background before opening Pasta Grill?

“My wife, Jennifer, was an elementary school teacher for many, many years. I was a pastor at Fellowship of Christians from 1992 to 2015. Both of our past jobs dealt with intangibles. With owning a restaurant it’s very hands on work. I love it. It is fast and chaotic and different every single day.”

What made you decide to start your own business?

“We call Pasta Grill our ‘empty nester project’. We started thinking about owning our own business right when my youngest son was about to graduate from high school. The idea of opening Pasta Grill in Russellville was presented to us by Wesley and Suzanne, who we knew from church. We felt it was a no risk situation and we trusted the business itself, so we jumped on it. We have always loved Downtown. It is the heart of the town and has so much history. We wanted to provide something to bring people together.”

Do you have any past experience in having your own business?

“Not formally. My first job was in a restaurant. I baked bread every night from scratch and made around 60 to 70 rolls. I would start at 3:00 pm and would bake for hours.”

Was it hard to get started

“It took every part of our energy and focus. We worked 70 plus hours a week on average when getting started. As hard as it was, this place feels as much like home as home does. I get up every day and work at it with all my heart. When it feels like this, it is easy.”

What is your favorite thing about owning your own business?

“This restaurant is such a happy place. We have celebrations here all the time, it’s an amazing thing and I love being able to serve that. It’s crazy because we could have a baby shower going on at the same time as a birthday celebration or even have someone about to propose. We love that people want to come to us for their special occasions.”

Where do you see yourself and your business in 5 years?

“Right here in Downtown Russellville. In 5 years it will be close to our 10 year anniversary of being open. I hope it never goes away. I have always felt a call to the place that I live and not what I do. I believe that whatever you do, be a blessing to the city and where you live.”

Anything you want people to know about Pasta Grill?

“I really want to talk about how we see the restaurant. I believe good service and hospitality is powered by love and we strive to have good working relationships with our employees. They are happy and it shows. It is important that everyone loves each other and gets along. We nurture this environment and show the same level of love to our customers and that reward comes in a smile. We want to show our customers that there is more behind our hospitality. Hospitality is a big thing in Christian life. Scripture states that it is one of the best ways we show the love of God to each other.”

