



BREW & BREW

BY RICH BELMONT

Coffeehouse chains like Starbucks, Caribou and McCafé are seemingly everywhere. So it's gratifying to know there are still young people willing to take a chance and risk everything they own to open up a small independent coffee café.



One such person is Becca Miller, who with her mother Jill Miller's help purchased Brew & Brew in Dyersville, Iowa. Becca began serving coffee and sandwiches on January 23, 2017.

Brew & Brew is in a building constructed in 1901 or 1902. There is a freight elevator in the back which indicates it was a commercial business and the front part of the building has a very high tin ceiling. This suggests there was a retail store in place since tin ceilings were once used to impress customers. Some people believe the space might have been part of a JC Penney Department Store that occupied the adjoining building.

Then for a while it became a flower shop, then Groovy Grounds Coffeehouse for about 10 years and then new owners changed the name to Brew & Brew who operated it for about a year and a half before selling it to Jill and Becca Miller.

Becca is only 25 and already she has four employees. She also has a lot of good ideas on how to grow the business and when you visit you can see she obviously knows what she is doing.

Becca grew up on a farm in Manchester, IA. She graduated from Kirkwood Community College in Cedar Rapids with a degree in Beef Production Management. She tended bar and was recently an AI Technician living in Rochester, Minnesota.

She is also a fabulous baker! She has done cakes and pastries for numerous bridal showers and birthday parties.



It is not surprising, then, she has introduced her bakery items at Brew & Brew. There is always an assortment of Danish, Scones, Muffins and her scrumptious Cinnamon Rolls and Sticky Buns.

Becca also bakes fabulous cupcakes. The Cupcake of the Day is a special treat. You might find for example: Butterfinger, Mocha, Chocolate Mint, Vanilla Bean or Chocolate Peanut Butter just to name a few.

Of course, it goes without saying a coffeehouse must have good coffee. Becca only uses Organic Fair Trade Beans roasted in Iowa. The beans are ground to order for each cup of coffee and brewed through a drip process.

Espresso coffee drinks include Mocha, Cappuccino, Latte, Macchiato, Café Ole, Breve and Americano. The Specialty Coffee Drinks are excellent. They include Turtle Mocha, Chocolate Peppermint Mocha, White Russian Mocha and Caramel Macchiato.



REUBEN WITH POTATO SOUP



There are a number of Ice Cream Drinks and Blended or Iced Coffee Drinks for your drinking pleasure. My favorite is the Chocolate Mocha Freeze: a rich, creamy chocolate flavored coffee blended with vanilla ice cream mix and topped with homemade whipped cream and chocolate sauce.

Fruit Smoothies are always a good choice. The current menu includes these flavors: Strawberry, Wild Berry, Peach, Mango, Strawberry Banana and Strawberry Lemonade.

Becca says she is starting to see regular customers coming in for her Protein Shakes. There are eleven of them so there is probably one with your name on it. They include Vanilla and Chocolate and also some unusual ones like Chai Vanilla with low sugar spiced chai and vanilla protein; Crazy Monkey chocolate vanilla protein and banana and Superman Energy Shake blend of vanilla protein, chai seeds and peanut butter.



Of course, a coffeehouse that opens at 6:30 in the morning must have breakfast sandwiches and Brew & Brew has some really good ones. They are a Fried Egg and American Cheese with your choice of sausage or ham on sourdough bread, English Muffin or a Bagel.

There is a different soup every day. Some examples are Corn Chowder, Cheesy Potato, Chicken Wild Rice and Chili.

The salads are fresh and crispy because the mixed greens are grown at FarmTek right here in Dyersville. The four salads listed on the menu are all outstanding. Two of them are especially interesting:

Mandarin Chicken – grilled chicken, mandarin oranges, walnuts, tomatoes, celery, Monterey Jack cheese, croutons with Pineapple Mango Vinaigrette.



Fiesta Bean Salad – grilled chicken, salsa, tomatoes, green bell peppers, red onion, black olives, black beans, a grated cheese blend and ranch dressing. This salad is delicious because all the flavors are so compatible with each other.



The Wraps are quite good. I especially like the Walnut Turkey Dijon. The tortilla is stuffed with turkey, tomatoes, walnuts, celery, mandarin oranges, honey mustard, cheese and mixed greens.



CINNAMON ROLLS



The menu boasts nine excellent sandwiches. They are served Panini style meaning they are pressed and contain several slices of meat and/or melted cheese. In my opinion there are several standouts:

The Philly – roast beef, sautéed onions, green peppers, mushrooms and provolone on a hoagie bun.

The Chicken – chicken salad, bacon, greens and provolone on a hoagie bun.

The Reuben – thinly sliced corned beef, Swiss cheese, Thousand Island dressing and sauerkraut on marble rye bread.



The Wilbur – this is the Specialty of the House and is my favorite! It is an impressive sandwich consisting of smoked BBQ pulled pork, served on a toasted brew pub bun. Becca prepares pork shoulder with her own blend of spices and then smokes it for twelve hours.

(Fun Fact: This sandwich is named for a very famous pig. He was the main character in a children's book written by E.B. White and published on October 15, 1952. It tells the story of Wilbur the pig and his friendship with a barn spider whose name is the title of the book. Can you guess the name of this book? It is Charlotte's Web!)

Brew & Brew has free Wi-Fi and is open on some nights for Live Music Special Events. Check the Facebook page for dates and band information.



Cakes and cupcakes can be special ordered. Catering is available. Already Becca has done several bridal showers and rehearsal dinners. Her facility is available for private parties during the off hours.

When she provides the catering you get the room for free. Last week she did a dinner for 80 people. The guests enjoyed Pulled Pork Sandwiches, beans, coleslaw and cupcakes for dessert!

Brew & Brew is only a 23 mile ride and takes only 30 minutes from the intersection of HI Way 20 and Northwest Arterial. Just take HI Way 20 to exit 294. Turn right onto 9th Street SE and head into downtown Dyersville. (Fun Fact: In Dyersville the main roads are all numbered and Avenues go East and West and Streets go North and South. Brew & Brew is near the intersection of 1st Ave. E and 2nd Street NE).

BREW & BREW

211 FIRST AVENUE E., DYERSVILLE, IA 52040
563-875-6251 • FACEBOOK.COM/BREW DYERSVILLE

Hours: Mon–Sat: 6:30 AM–2 PM; Sun: Closed

Dining Style: Coffee House

Noise Level: Conversational

Recommendations: All Coffees; Chocolate Mocha Freeze; Breakfast Sandwiches; The Wilbur BBQ Pulled Pork; The Cuban Ham, Pork & Swiss; The Reuben Corned Beef & Swiss; The Philly Roast Beef; The Clucker Chicken Salad; Mandarin Chicken Salad; Sticky Bun, Cinnamon Bun, Cup Cakes

Liquor Service: Beer and Wine

Prices: Breakfast: \$3.25; Lunch: \$7.25–\$8.95

Pay Options: Cash, Debit, Local Checks, Visa, MasterCard, AMEX, Discover

Accessibility: One Step at Front Door

Kids Policy: Kid's Size Sandwiches or Wraps, High Chairs, Boosters

Reservations: Only on Music Nights

Catering: Yes • **Take Out:** Yes

Delivery: No • **Parking:** On Street