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HENRIETTAHAUS: CHARMING COCKTAILS, HAMTRAMCK-STYLE PIZZA

BY: MELANIE GRINNELL | MAY 31, 2022



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After you pass through Hamtramck's downtown, just before the viaduct, you will find [HenriettaHaus](#). It will catch your eye in the daytime with its striking turquoise façade. At night, the warm glow from within lights up the colored panes of glass in the salvaged factory windows like jewels. Even if you can't stop, you will at least pump the brakes and gawk as you slowly roll by. It's enchanting.

Inside, your eyes won't know where to land first. The décor is hard to nail down. It's part old-timey-parlor, part 1920s speakeasy, part museum of wondrous curiosities, and part Germanic kitchen, like something out of the Brothers Grimm. Similarly, it's part coffee house, part bar, part pizza joint, and part weird dream.

Owners Amy and Jeremy Duncan had a vision, years in the making. They took decades-old, heavy, dark wooden furniture and painstakingly repurposed it to make their bar. They are collectors of kitsch with a flair for boldness and whimsy. Old enamel-topped tables and dangling lights of every shape and shade create a mood that transcends time. Look down, and you might spot the cast iron talons from ancient clawfoot tubs supporting the bar or cabinetry. Look up, and you're met with carved wooden faces where the walls meet the ceiling that make you feel as if you're in an old schooner. Amy collected them for years and then discovered their true calling as she was pulling the bar together. Now, the faces look down upon the room in glee, judgment, and surprise. Even the plants stare curiously out at patrons.

They are only the third business to occupy the 102-year-old building. And they are only the second family to occupy the flat upstairs. The first business was a Polish meat market, then in 1967, a Ukrainian butcher shop. In his advanced years, the man who built the building and opened the first meat market lived in the basement. When his young granddaughters would go down to visit him, he'd make them coffee on a small antique stove so it seems fitting that coffee is served upstairs now. Amy thinks he's made his ghostly presence known—enough to have made a cocktail called The Ghost Whistle after a particularly interesting experience (ask for the story when you visit!)

It's the perfect place for a first date, a reunion with friends, a drink after a [Detroit City FC](#) match or just a cocktail on your own. It's the type of place where you could go alone and never feel the need to take out your phone. Amy and Jeremy and their waitstaff are all fun to talk to and even if you're not chatting with someone, you could spend an evening just soaking up the surroundings while drinking a beer.

The quirks of HenriettaHaus all combine to create the charm that sparkles in the air like fairy dust. It's a place of delightful incongruity. They serve coffee they roast themselves, but they are only open in the evenings (Thursday through Sunday—check times on their social media—they have no website. Or phone.) Their specialty is pizza, but there's not a pepperoni in the joint. And you can't call to order. You order it there and they have plenty of beer or cocktail options to keep you happy while you wait. Their food is vegetarian, but they also don't do typical pizzas so you're unlikely to find a green pepper anywhere either. Just go with it. Enter with an open mind and leave feeling fulfilled.

Discover something weird you've never seen before, something intoxicating you've never drunk before, or something delightful you've never eaten before—case in point: The Polglish. It's a dill pickle pizza with potato pancakes and an amazing white sauce (on the menu in the cooler months so it's gone for now). Or, The Penniman, a pizza with a savory peach-based sauce, (named after Little Richard, the Georgia Peach). Each is unique. And wonderful.

The aroma as you walk through the door will float you across the room on scent waves as you are led by the nose to the back counter. Jeremy experimented with his dough and landed on a sublime sourdough that takes 3 days to proof. His pizzas are similar to Detroit style in that they have those heavenly caramelized crispy edges we all know and love, but his has a distinctive sourdough kick that melds with the sweet caramelization in divine harmony. He jokes about it being "Hamtramck Style" because it's Detroit around the edges. It can hold its own against any pie in the city. Order early though. When the dough runs out, the pizzas are done.

The coffee is as good as the pizza. They had a coffee bar in Rust Belt Market for several years. "Amy started roasting coffee in 2003," Jeremy noted. "And I always liked brewing beer. We don't brew anymore, but we've always had a love of making our own stuff." For beers and cocktails, you can't go wrong however you decide to imbibe. If you're up for an interesting beer, they have a cooler with an enticing variety and a special focus on Belgian beers. There's wine too. And non-alcoholic options. If you're in more of a cocktail mood, Night Owls, you've found your roost. And your roast. There are several different coffee cocktails on the menu (and some without for the non-caffeine drinkers, both alcoholic and non). They'll keep you bright-eyed for the evening.

"Over the years, the ideas for the business have been fluid," Amy says, "but we've always had a love for coffee, beer, and pizza. So that's always been the focus. But who knows where else it'll go." You can practically see the ideas bubbling up around her head. After years of wrangling, they were finally able to purchase the two empty lots on either side of their building. Amy's eyes shine and Jeremy becomes animated as they talk about their vision in the side lot. You can already picture the summer evenings and the inviting glow of twinkling lights overhead. If it's anything like the inside, it might take a long time...but it's going to be magical.

This article got a lot of attention on the [Detroit Metro Chevy Dealerships website](#) and it got some really wonderful comments on the restaurant owners' [Facebook page](#)...please go to the next page if you'd like to check some of them out...

A text from the Content Manager:

Hi Mel! Home with Covid right now so not in the office. You should know that article has done better than anything we've put out for months

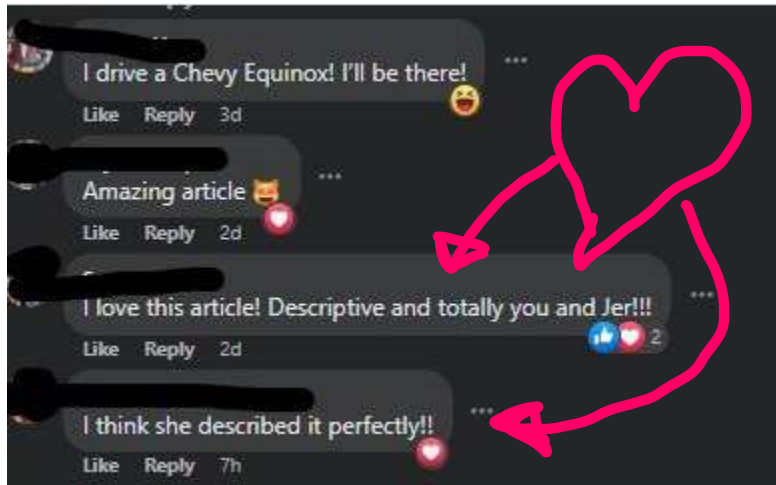
And I got this follow-up about its performance in an email a couple days later...

Again, phenomenal work with HenriettaHaus. A “successful” story yields a 1% click-through rate. Most stories don't hit that. HenriettaHaus broke 3% on day 1, and settled in around 1.5% by day 2. Curious to see how it did over the weekend, but regardless, it was already a massive success. Big W on the In the D front.

The owners of the restaurant loved it and shared on their own Facebook page and it got some lovely feedback:



And this....



Articles were syndicated out to local news websites. Here is some hilariously unfortunate placement on the channel 7 site:

