



BRUCE WINE BAR

BIZLINK SUCCESS STORY





Resilience & Revival

In the heart of South Georgian Bay, the story of Bruce Wine Bar is a testament to entrepreneurial resilience and the vital role of Community Futures South Georgian Bay and its BizLink program.

When Shaun Edmonstone and Nicole Paara took the helm of the established restaurant in March 2020, they faced the onset of a global pandemic. The BizLink program, a cornerstone service offered by Community Futures South Georgian Bay (CFSGB), became their ally in navigating the tumultuous era.

The BizLink program, designed to assist business owners through connections, coaching and financing, successfully transitioned full ownership of Bruce Wine Bar into Shaun and Nicole's hands. Underpinning this transition was financial support, an extensive array of planning tools, and expert guidance provided by CFSGB. This support system allowed the couple to recalibrate their business model effectively, transforming challenges into opportunities.



As they pivoted the restaurant's operations, Shaun and Nicole's initiative was backed by BizLink's resources every step of the way. The 40-seat dining area, once buzzing with patrons, was reimagined as a hub for take-out services. Their Bodega shop came to life, offering the community an array of prepared meals, pastries, and an exclusive selection of wines and craft beers while maintaining the essence of Bruce Wine Bar's philosophy: globally inspired, locally sourced, quality food.

The assistance from BizLink extended beyond financing; it encompassed strategic planning, enabling Nicole and Shaun to meet and exceed their initial business projections. This comprehensive support was a beacon of success during the uncertain times brought on by the pandemic.

With the worst of COVID-19 behind them, the entrepreneurial pair are looking towards a bright future with expansion plans that promise to enrich the community further. The BizLink program has been a foundation for this growth, supporting the duo as they added 40 to 50 new jobs to the local economy. Their success story is a powerful endorsement of the BizLink program's ability to help businesses thrive even in the face of adversity.

Bruce Wine Bar's journey from a local favourite to a robust, community supporting enterprise stands as an example of what the BizLink program and Community Futures South Georgian Bay aim to achieve: empowering business owners to not just survive, but also to prosper and contribute to the community. To learn more about Bruce Wine Bar, visit www.brucewinebar.ca.

Community Futures South Georgian Bay is supported by the Government of Canada through the [Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario](#) (FedDev Ontario) as part of the Community Futures Program — a community-driven, economic development initiative designed to strengthen economic resilience in rural and remote areas.

