

What's Oconomowoc's best-kept dining secret? Perhaps Cafe LaBelle

[Geoff Bruce](#), Now News Group Published 10:03 a.m. CT May 21, 2018



(Photo: Submitted)

[CONNECT](#)[TWEET](#)[LINKEDIN](#)[COMMENT](#)[EMAIL](#)[MORE](#)

OCONOMOWOC - It's open to everyone, even though a lot of people might not realize it.

Since opening at Shorehaven in Oconomowoc about eight years ago, Cafe LaBelle has made it its mission to supply residents, staff and guests alike with quality meals for breakfast and lunch, necessary caffeine boosts and plenty of pastries and treats.

But while those involved or familiar with the Shorehaven community are well aware of the offerings at LaBelle, cafe manager Ashley Kloss is hopeful that more people from the outside will find their way in.

"A lot of people don't realize that we're actually open to the public. They think that we are just for Shorehaven, but that's not the case," Kloss said. "This whole establishment, mostly that was our main clientele, but now we're getting a lot more people from the public; word's getting out. Some of them call us Oconomowoc's best-kept secret."

Kloss has been a part of the cafe for just over three years after having worked at an abundance of restaurants and cafes throughout her career. A native of Lake Country, Kloss began as a cook at the cafe and took over as manager last year.

"Some people still don't realize that we're open to the public; we get people who come in every weekend and say they didn't know," Kloss said.



The cafe offers a cozy atmosphere to go along with its breakfast and lunch specialties and baked goods. (Photo: Submitted)

Cafe LaBelle serves breakfast and lunch seven days per week, with plenty of classics such as pancakes, omelets, sandwiches and salads.

"Definitely our pancakes are one of our best-sellers as well as our cranberry almond chicken salad sandwich," Kloss said. "We also have an Oriental chicken salad that we make a homemade Oriental dressing for that people keep coming back for."

The menu has remained relatively consistent throughout the restaurant's lifespan, but Kloss and her staff serve new specials every week.

"We have been doing a lot more focus on our specials. so we'll do a Philly cheesesteak one week, or a farmers burger, just to have different things," Kloss said.

[LIKE US ON FACEBOOK: Get the latest Lake Country news in your feed](#)

Dr. John Koehlar counts himself as a frequent visitor at Cafe LaBelle and heaps plenty of praise on Kloss and her staff.

"This is one of the gems of the city. This is a restaurant where you can come and the staff are outstanding. The food is outstanding; anything's my favorite," Koehlar said. "The apple pies are amazing; your mother couldn't do any better. I'm very fussy where I eat."

Kloss points to LaBelle's involvement and location within Shorehaven as being an inspiration for the signature aspect which, in her opinion, separates the restaurant from the competition.

"Since our clientele is often elderly, we always want to make sure that we're serving the freshest ingredients," Kloss said.



One of the favorites for lunch at Cafe LaBelle is the cranberry almond chicken salad sandwich. (Photo: Submitted)

When it first opened, the cafe was open for dinner, in addition to breakfast and lunch. But as time went by, the schedule was cut back.

For LaBelle's boss, keeping the lights on later is a primary goal.

"They were open for dinner, but business would die off. It wasn't paying for us to stay open. If it made sense for us to stay open later, we absolutely would," Kloss said. "I think we're one of the best places to eat outside and to get to look at the lake. The definite plan of growth is to get the word out and let more people know that we're open to the public."

Cafe LaBelle serves breakfast until 10:30 a.m. at which point the menu switches over to lunch. Kloss and her staff also offer catering services.

Cafe LaBelle

ADDRESS: 1306 W. Wisconsin Ave., Oconomowoc

PHONE NUMBER: 262-567-2062

WEBSITE: www.shorehavenliving.org/cafe-labelle

PRICE RANGE: From \$4.49 for oatmeal and \$5.25 for a grilled cheese sandwich up to \$8.25 for an omelet and \$8.99 for an Oriental chicken salad

HOURS: 7 days a week: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.