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Now more room to enjoy Thyme and Dough

By LAUREL ROBERTSON

Dramatic changes at Rolling in Thyme and Dough restaurant may seem to have popped up overnight, but – like one of her great yeast-raised breads – expansion plans have been slowly rising and developing in the mind of owner and master chef Fabienne Bollom for a long time.

Over the past seven years, the signature coffee house and bistro on Highway 290 has grown to be a favorite eating and gathering space for the Dripping Springs community.

In the process, Thyme and Dough gradually outgrew the old Lyle House that framed its unique and eclectic charm.

"I love to see people sitting drinking coffee – but we just didn't have enough room," Fabienne regretted.

Clearly, expansion and change were

needed, but – as the master baker knew – the rising dough can't be rushed. "I go at a 'feeling pace,'" she explains.

Searching around town for locations with more space, she just couldn't get past the feeling that she loved the old house and didn't want to see it "bulldozed into a strip center."

"I write the owner a letter 'cause he don't understand me well," explains the native Belgian in her well-loved accent.

This past January she was able to purchase the house and property and in June broke ground on the long-awaited expansion. By early October renovations were complete.

With the help of architect and nephew Ryan Bollom of Austin, just two walls of the original 1904-era house were removed. The original central room still

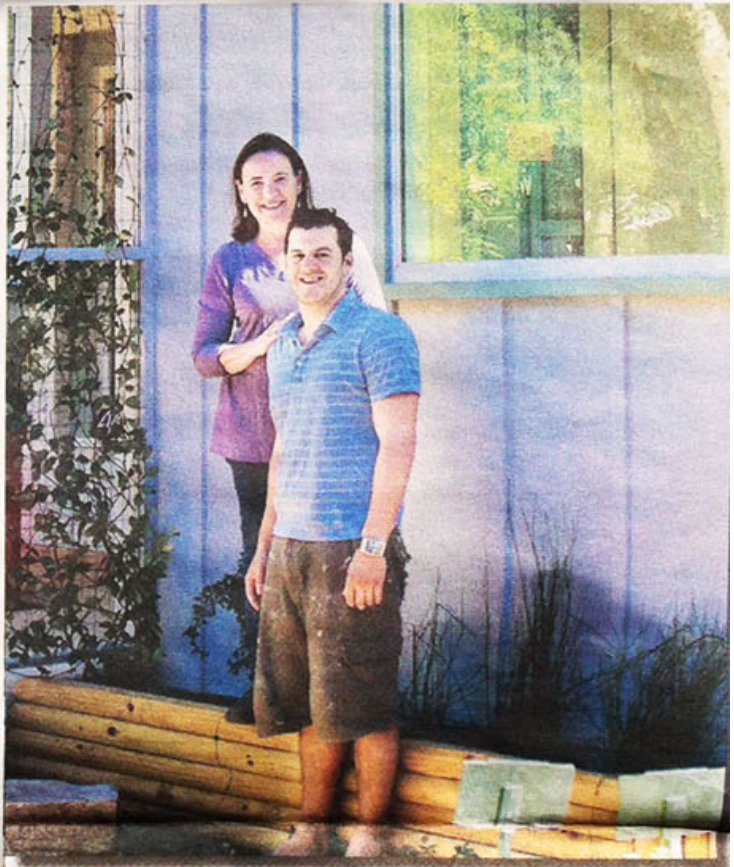
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Guests enjoy the newly expanded Thyme and Dough. Here, the interior of the delightful eatery's new Bistro Room. Photo courtesy Thyme and Dough.

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Thyme and Dough owner, Fabienne Bollom, and architect (and Fabienne's nephew), Ryan Bollom, in front of the new building. The expansion includes a new Bistro Room, a WiFi room, a large deck and added kitchen quarters. Photo courtesy Thyme and Dough.

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stands with its order counter and attached small kitchen – designated as the "sweet kitchen" where all of Thyme and Dough's renowned pastries are

now prepared.

What was the front porch of the old house has been enclosed and turned into
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Elizabeth Becker, owner of Bloom Nursery, the lovely gardens that fill the front acre of the Thyme and Dough grounds with color and greenery.
Photo courtesy Thyme and Dough.

the main entrance and "WiFi Room" fulfilling Fabienne's dream of a place to "sit and sip coffee" around a roomy community table or at a computer bar with access to plug-ins.

The original (small) dining room remains, but now opens onto the large new Bistro Room with ample tables for dining.

A wall of floor-to-ceiling windows looks out over an expansive new deck that wraps the buildings and serves as entry way into the colorful gardens of Elizabeth Becker's Bloom Nursery that fill the front acre of grounds with color and greenery.

A clever double sliding door/bistro chalkboard separates the new Savory Kitchen, where lunch and dinner food is prepared, from the Bistro Room.

Fabienne came up with the idea of the sliding wall in order to open the kitchen onto the large new dining room for her monthly cooking classes, which will resume soon in the new location.

A large stacked timber-wall separates the Bistro Room from new restrooms and demonstrates the magic and wisdom in Fabienne's "feeling pace" of growth.

"We had a wall in the original plans," she explains. "But when we got to that point, I said 'we out of money. Use what we have.'"

Wood left over from the room construction was combined with timbers that had been stacked for some time at the back of the property—and the effect, as many attest—is better than could have been planned.

"The space is built," Fabienne says. "Now I will fill it slowly so I can figure out what's right." She points to art hanging on the wall of the WiFi Room. Each piece arrived with the right person at

the right time to find its right place, she explains. "I wait to feel the need and ask what the customers want. I listen to the demand until it feels right," she says. The dough can't be rushed.

FYI • Rolling in Thyme and Dough is located at 333 Hwy 290 West in Dripping Springs. Hours are Monday through Friday from 6:30 am to 3 pm, and Saturdays from 8 am to 4 pm (Closed Sundays and holidays). Thursdays' special Bistro Night Dinners are served from 6 pm to 9 pm. For more information, call 512-894-0001 or visit the web site at thymeanddough.com.

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