

Then and now: SLT's changing restaurants



Wampas Cat Cafe in South Lake Tahoe in the 1950s. Photo/Del Laine collection/Lake Tahoe Historical Society

The Wampas Cat Cafe of the 1950s stood where Scusa restaurant stands today, on Highway 50 at Sierra Boulevard in South Lake Tahoe.



Scusa has been one of the more successful eateries in this location. Photo/Bill Kingman

After being the Wampas Cat, there was Poor Pierre's, then Poor Pedro's, then a succession of other dining venues including Mexican, Thai, and Hoss Hogg's.

Diagonally and across the highway in the 1950s was Schmidt's Bakery. According to long-time local resident Del Laine, a locally-written poem called "The Mighty Wampas Cat" by "Wrongfellow" explains that Schmidt's Bakery stood "...catty-wampas to the Wampas Cat."

The Baumann family opened their historic Swiss Chalet Restaurant there in 1957, said to have been one of the two longest-lasting continuous family-owned businesses at Lake Tahoe – nearly 55 years – the unidentified other business apparently being on the North Shore.



Local Debbie Brown owns the
Cold Water Brewery.
Photo/Bill Kingman

After remodeling in 2013, at the Swiss Chalet Restaurant site now is the Cold Water Brewery and Grill.

– Bill Kingman