

MARKET PLACE

TALKING WITH TIMPONE



Timpones Market, new to Dripping Springs, has a deli, fresh-baked bread, outdoor organic lunches, grassfed beef and fresh seafood for dinner. Everything, in fact, but an apostrophe: Timpones, as in “a whole bunch of Timpones.” Not “Timpone’s,” as in “a guy started a store.”

Founder Patrick Timpone has his reasons. “It’s not about me,” he says. “We use lots of we’s around here rather than I’s.” Despite this emphasis, the “I” that is Patrick is hard to ignore. A long-time KLBJ talk-show host, he’s building a sound studio above the store, where he’ll weigh in on topics ranging from city water (bad, bad, bad) to ocean water (miracle substance, and he’ll tell you why). For now, he’s running the store. Not jogging—running. A recent visit found him cruising the aisles to adjust a cereal box here, plump a bunch of carrots there, sip a cup of something green and help himself to nuts. A small, muscular guy, Timpone still manages to take up a lot of space.

Edible Austin: What’s in that cup, anyway?

Timpone: That’s lunch—my green drink. I eat whatever I need to eat to assist me in reaching my goals. If that takes fasting or eating a steak, it matters not. I graze. When you have a grocery store, it’s great to graze.

EA: You seem to have a little of everything in this store. It’s organic? It’s artisanal? It’s all-natural? Or what?

Timpone: The term “natural” truly means nothing these days. Anyone can call or label something natural, and they do. Now we have USDA Organic and it does not look as if it will last long... We already are fending off the weakening of the standards promoted by big companies that want a piece of the “organic” action.

But organic is happening, big-time. It’s a trend, not a fad.

What really interests me is what I like to call “authentic food”—real food grown in the most, excuse me, *natural* ways. Food that’s been messed with as little as possible. Meat harvested from well cared for, loved and respected animals. Foods grown or produced within a 125-mile radius of right here. Our trademark is “Know the Source.” This is possible with authentic food.

EA: Can you show us some?

Timpone: We have local produce: flowers, grassfed beef, eggs, local cheeses, salsas, tortillas, salad dressings, beef jerky, honey, hummus, yogurt, kombucha, body care products, fertilizer.

EA: So, introduce me.

Timpone: Here’re some greens from Harley Clark, who farms just minutes from here. We get this romaine three times a week, and herbs and whatever else he might have. There was a time Harley brought in just six small bunches of beautiful spring onions and we bought them. He trusts us; we trust him. It’s an authentic relationship!

EA: What else?

Timpone: Sunflower greens from Groovy Greens in Blanco. They use diluted ocean water to water; it gives the greens all the minerals that we know exist. I love ocean water.

EA: What else besides produce?

Timpone: Cheeses. We know the people who make them. We even know the goats!

EA: Have you always eaten this kind of food?

Timpone: I was raised in St. Louis, pretty much with what I call real food. I was born in 1946, and back then we ate vegetables, meat, pasta, bread, cheese—kind of Italian—in my family. It was only in the 1960s that processing really took off.

EA: What influenced you to avoid all that?

Timpone: Spending time with a lifelong vegetarian in New Orleans. She was beautiful; she had the clearest eyes and most luscious skin, and she was juicy—not one of those people who dry up when they age. She showed me the connection between food and health, and I was never the same.

EA: There’s a message in this store, isn’t there?

Timpone: Yes. I have faith that Timpones is what people want. I am into doing whatever it takes to make it work—making pizzas, emptying the trash, checking-out customers—it’s all the same.

For location, hours and more, go to timponesmarket.com.