



“This is going to sound corny, but I think success is when you can financially sustain your passion” Alie Mills explained. Her own passions shifted gears 40 years ago when she decided to quit her government job and instead, work her way through the food service industry. Originally from the U.K, Alie moved to Ontario with her biology degree in hand to pursue a more traditional career. Instead, she discovered her love for the service industry, and as a result, bartended, waitressed, then

went into management, and finally pursued cooking after completing a 3-year culinary program. After meeting her islander husband in Ontario, the couple decided to move to PEI where she began waitressing at the Red Rooster under the previous owners, the Miller’s.

The Red Rooster was originally established in 1952, but was purchased by the Miller’s in 1973 who ran the restaurant for 45 years. It was and continues to be one of the few island restaurants that caters towards both locals and tourists, given its ideal location off Highway 1 in the close knit and supportive community of Crapaud. Alie knew that she wanted to start her own food business after evidently gaining lots of experience in all areas of the industry. Which is why she spent two years working at the Red Rooster with a goal of eventually taking it on as her very own. The trial run as a waitress gave her the perfect chance to understand the inner workings of the establishment before diving in. In 2018, she purchased the Red Rooster and began this venture with customer service at the forefront of her mind. “Its so important to me. You know I could have the best food in front of me but if I’m not happy with the service its not a good experience”, she explained. Today, this is evident as she makes a point of greeting every customer personally. “The Red Rooster and Alie are synonymous, expect to see me here. No one loves anything more than going to a restaurant and having the owner talk to them, it makes people feel good. So, I talk to every single table”, she added. Being able to arrive at this stage in her entrepreneurial journey took a lot of hard work and funds to update the facilities.



Alie received a General Business Loan through the CBDC to assist in covering those costs. This helped her to purchase some of the necessary furnishings and fixtures. Additionally, it was used to make a large and somewhat expensive grocery order which she herself, described as crucial. “It was a great experience, and I wouldn’t hesitate to go to them again”, she exclaimed. Now with the restaurant coming into its third year under Alie’s guidance, she has a dream of transforming it into more of a destination, much like Fred’s in New Brunswick or Mass Town Market in Nova Scotia for instance. This would include setting up a craft market and BBQ pit on the property, making it “the” place to stop when entering the island. Safe to say, Alie is living out her version of success by “financially sustaining her passion” and doing a fantastic job at that.