

Penny's Place

Pelly

Started: 1997

Contact: Sandy Trerice

Located half way between Whitehorse and Dawson, Penny's Place is a take-out restaurant and a gift shop called "Neat Stuff". In addition to the owner, the popular stop employs two full-time and two part-time staff from May to September. Penny's is named after the owner's dog.



Getting started: Sandy recognized that the land she owned on the edge of Pelly could become a popular stop for highway travellers. Using her business experience, she spent a lot of time planning how to set up the new business. She used her own savings and kept start-up costs low by renovating an old building for the take-out and making her own signs for the road. Her partner used his equipment to make the

entrance and parking area. Sandy also found deals on kitchen equipment and other items.

Key to success: Good food, good service and the unique atmosphere successfully draws people in and keeps many coming back. Extra touches like flower pots, funky toilets, and recycled ornaments all help create a magical ambiance that is rare in roadside stops. Listening to her customers is also important so, after a season of complaints that there was no espresso machine, Sandy invested in one.

Lessons learned: Sandy knows her first loyalty must be to her business so she looks for staff from Pelly and elsewhere who will provide good, consistent service. She feels that learning more about pricing and serving sizes before opening would have made things run smoother.

Future of business: Sandy sees many opportunities for expansion but it is too early to outline what these next steps will be.