

# Ellis

*Nature Centre*

## Ellis Café Lease Opportunity



Ellis Nature Centre is seeking a friendly, responsible operator to lease the Ellis Café for the 2025 season. The successful candidate is a self-motivated person with successful operations experience in food service management

A Letter Of Interest should be submitted by email. Interested Contractors will be invited to an information meeting to view and discuss the Café Lease opportunity. The Letter of Interest should detail your experience, qualifications, and your interest in this opportunity. Include your ideas for the café, menu and goals for the Ellis Café.

Please submit the Letter Of Interest to Carolyn Ross at [manager@ellisnaturecentre.ca](mailto:manager@ellisnaturecentre.ca)

## Ellis Café Lease Opportunity: Details

Ellis Nature Centre (ENC) is seeking a friendly, responsible operator to lease the Ellis Café for the 2025 season. Ellis Café contributes to the enjoyable and relaxing atmosphere that the Ellis Nature Centre provides to its valued visitors. Café Operator can take great pride in the reputation we have built around our excellent food and service.

The Ellis Café is located approximately 16 kms southeast of Lacombe, AB. on the farm of Charlie and Winnie Ellis, founders of the Ellis Bird Farm. The Ellis Café was opened in 1998 in their original farm house. In 2010, a sunny new commercial kitchen was added to the old house.

The Ellis Nature Centre is open from May Long Weekend to October 15<sup>th</sup> yearly Tuesdays through Sundays and holiday Mondays (Victoria Day, Civic Day, Labour Day, Thanksgiving Monday). Daily visitor numbers for 2024 is estimated at 12,00-15,000 people. The Café operates within the Nature Centre's hours of operation 8am-6pm. Additional evening hours are available in consultation with Ellis Nature Centre. Commitment to consistent hours is important to ENC for public relations and expectations.

### **2025 Lease dates:**

- |                                 |   |
|---------------------------------|---|
| April 15-May 19 <sup>th</sup>   | - move in, cleaning and preparation for the season, Café Operator can hold 2 "soft" openings prior to May 20 <sup>th</sup> .                        |
| May 19-October 15 <sup>th</sup> | - public open season  |
| October 15-Dec 15 <sup>th</sup> | - off season hours available upon agreement with Ellis Nature Centre. All facilities and food supplies must be cleaned and removed by Dec 15, 2025. |

**Information Meeting:** Interested Contractors will be invited to discuss the Café Lease opportunity, view the facility and to meet the Site Manager. A committee, consisting of the Site Manager and several Board Members, will be responsible for reviewing interested Contractors on behalf of the Board of Directors. Contractors will be evaluated using the following criteria: Experience, Reputation and Resources, and Letter of Interest.

### **Scope of Service:**

The Contractor shall provide Services that include but not limited to:

- offer excellent food service and customer satisfaction with service that is prompt, professional and friendly
- offer quality and affordable food with attention to local and homemade food

- provide meal content (ingredients and preparation methods) information to address food intolerances and allergies
- adequate and trained staff to provide full Café service during all hours of operation
- provide POS equipment to allow payment options of cash/card transactions;
- be responsible for taking reservations and Café bookings
- provide all janitorial services as required within the Café including the daily disposal of Café waste, recycling and garbage.
- The Contractor shall be responsible to maintain high standard of sanitation, routine cleaning and housekeeping in food prep and service areas.
- Contractors must be fully licensed to operate a café; and are required to meet all laws, regulations, and requirements related to food service operations.
- provide a Monthly and Year End summary report. This report is to include the number of people served, gross sales, and a short summary of the highlights and challenges faced during the month. This report will be reviewed by the Site Manager and Board of Directors.

On occasion, ENC may host meetings, conferences or special events. There may be an opportunity for the Contractor to provide catering services on an “as and when required” basis for special events, meetings, performances, and other similar functions.

The Café Lessee/Operator may use the Ellis Café and new Visitor Centre for off-hours, on-site catered events as agreed on by Ellis Nature Centre.

## **MENU**

The Contractor is to provide:

- a proposed menu for the Café, along with retail prices of proposed menu items prior to April 15<sup>th</sup> to the Board for approval
- printed and digital copy of the Menu
- a low-cost Senior’s lunch option
- a fixed price all inclusive meal package available for tour groups
- children’s meal options

All menu items are subject to approval by ENC. At a minimum, the menu must include: • Coffee drinks • Teas • Sodas • Juices • Sandwiches • Salads • Soups • Pies • Ice Cream

The Café Lessee/Operator is permitted to serve wine and beer with meals. If wine and beer are to be served, the Café Lessee/Operator shall obtain all required permits and insurance.

## **The Facility:**

The Ellis Café is operated as a stand-alone business, supported by, but separate from the main ENC operation. The operator leases the Ellis Café from ENC on a seasonal basis. The Café Lessee/Operator will have access to the Café before and after the season, for the sole purpose of cleaning, preparing for the season, and cleanup after the season, unless otherwise agreed upon.

The lease amount, to be negotiated, covers utilities and helps offset equipment and building maintenance. The lease amount shall be made in 5 installments: May 1, June 1, July 1, August 1, September 1 and October 1<sup>st</sup>. Lease amounts for May and October will be reduced due to the reduced number of public open days in those months.

The lease rental of the Ellis Café building includes specified furnishings, commercial kitchen equipment, basement storage, and cold room. The upstairs includes private space for an office or additional storage. The area available to lease is approximately 1325 ft<sup>2</sup> of inside space and 900 sq ft of outdoor patio space:

- Indoor seating (seating capacity 26)
- Outdoor patio seating (Seating capacity 35)
- Storage
- Kitchen & prep area

## Equipment

- Kitchen is equipped with:
  - Commercial oven/ 4 burner range (natural gas)
  - Commercial dishwasher - new in 2022
  - Chest freezer (2)
  - Basement walk-in cooler
  - Commercial refrigerator (new in 2023)
  - Microwave oven
  - NUVU Convection Oven/Proofer (220v)
  - Eurodib Double Panini Press (220v)
  - True Line Fridge (sandwich board)

The Contractor is responsible for

- Other appliances as required (e.g. toaster, coffee maker, kettle, etc.);
- All interior and exterior table coverings;
- Additional china, pots, serving dishes etc. if required by menu and food presentation;
- Replacement of all items broken or lost during the season at a value equal to, or greater than the original item;
- All other equipment and supplies necessary for Café operation, including dishwasher soap and bathroom supplies.