Among the competing restaurants in Downtown Bloomington, one dining spot has seen success due to its unique take on typical college grub: Reality Bites.

The restaurant was founded about seven years ago, according to Gary Pagano, the restaurant's owner, by a group of high school friends, one having graduated from ISU. In October 2011, Pagano took control of the restaurant.

"It has a very Chicago feel," Pagano said. "It has exposed bricks, which is complemented by the hardwood floors and tables."

Many restaurants are beginning to implement new designs and leaning toward more contemporary designing features, like using concrete floors and low-condescend sconces.

Another great feature of Reality Bites is the bar. Not only does it offer a plethora of drinks, but plenty of seating as well.

"Every other week or so, I enjoy a meal at Reality Bites," Jasmine Philips, a customer and student at ISU, said. "I really enjoy the mozzarella bruschetta because it reminds me of an Italian dish my grandmother used to make me as a child."

The menu features typical lunch, dinner, drinks and desserts. Most of the items have an Italian

flair. Pagano said the most popular item on the menu is pork tacos, which is braised pork topped with guacamole, queso fresco and hot sriracha sauce for $11.

Another hot item on the menu is the bacon wrapped dates -— a perfect combination of dates and bacon topped with a spicy maple syrup served with honey orange vinaigrette and field greens. The menu is very affordable and most can enjoy a large meal with the family and friends without breaking the bank.

What separates this restaurant aside from the others is that it is finer dining and much nicer quality, according to Phillips. But what ensures the success of the restaurant is that they have such great quality of food over the quantity counterparts produce.

Reality Bites is emerging in the new era of social media and they have a Facebook page, Twitter and Google plus account as well as an iPhone and Android app.