

Food & Wine

A LA CARTE



Pat Kuleto

TOMALES BAY

Historic Nick's Cove to reopen in late May

After a long wait, Nick's Cove and Cottages on Tomales Bay is expected to reopen in late May after more than eight years of planning and restoration.

The project, a partnership between restaurant designer Pat Kuleto and chef Mark Franz, revives the historic, Highway 1 cabins and restaurant that have been closed since 1999.

"Both Mark and I are Marin locals and avid fishermen, and we have loved Tomales Bay since we were youngsters," said Kuleto, whose restaurants include the Martini House in St. Helena and Boulevard, Farallon and Jardiniere in San Francisco. "We decided not to give up until we could make this dream come true."

Nick's Cove restaurant, located at

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CARTE: Nick's expects fresh fish to come in on its own dock

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the foot of a 400-foot pier overlooking Hog Island, will serve burgers, barbecued oysters and clam chowder, alongside cold beers and local wines chosen by wine director Peter Palmer.

The 130-seat, indoor-outdoor restaurant features the original stone fireplace, a restored marble oyster bar and glassed-in deck. The main dining room boasts copper light fixtures and a 1920s upright piano.

Franz, who is the chef of Farallon, plans to create a menu around local products, including produce, dairy, poultry, meats, seafood and fish.

"As they used to do years ago, fishermen will dock at our pier, bring in their catch, and it will be on the menu as fast as we can prepare it," Franz said.

A fully restored, 30-foot bar and classic open kitchen round out the restaurant, which will be open seven days a week under the direction of Luc Chamberland.

The cottages, located on or

over the water, boast pot-bellied stoves, fireplaces, kitchens and antique furnishings, along with modern touches like hidden flat-panel TVs, private Jacuzzis and iPod docking stations.

"Our goal was to create a warm, rustic seaside retreat, retaining all the charm and ambiance of a fishing village, but with the full measure of comforts and amenities of a luxury resort," said Kuleto.

For a history of Nick's Cove, go to www.kuleto.com/nick-spape.