

ISLAND

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WAIHEKE MARKETPLACE - PROMOTING LOCAL BUSINESS

# Oysters on the deck

**W**ith all the activity in Oneroa lately

you won't be surprised to find there's also a lot of action happening above April Arcade. This stately Ocean View Road building is morphing into an upmarket accommodation, oyster bar, venue and restaurant as is evidenced by the large number of workers currently on site.

This recent renovation is the project of Andrew Glenn and Jonathan Rutherford Best fresh from the madding crowds of London and ready to settle into Kiwi life after many years abroad. Jonathan grew up in Taranaki on his parent's sheep farm and spent a "wonderful holiday" at the Heritage Hotel in Onetangi just before his dad died. Though Jonathan visited Waiheke only once, his father had a long history with the island delivering sheep to Waiheke back in the 1920s.

With respective backgrounds in hospitality and fashion, both Jonathan and Andrew are well equipped to take on a new venture and what a venture it is. After years of use as restaurants, bars and a weekly rag, every last centimetre of the upper level is being utilised to its full extent. To the right of the



*Turning a shell into an oyster: owners Jonathan and Andrew*

entrance the rabbit warren of rooms has been stripped bare and cleverly turned into three luxury suites, an office and a private function room suitable for smaller weddings. The open pitch roofline is reminiscent of a boathouse and Andrew confirms the accommodation will be simple and relaxed with a largely beach theme to include super king size beds and beautiful Wallace Cotton linen produced by Jonathan's cousin Bill Wallace.

In turn, Jonathan stipulates the restaurant will not be fine dining and not a café; "Somewhere that sits in the middle and we don't mind sandy feet!" The restaurant will be open for breakfast, lunch and dinner from 8am-1am with another

Kiwi expat taking the kitchen helm. Cristian Hossack was introduced to Waiheke one wet March day and despite the dreadful weather is returning as head chef at The Oyster Inn after six years at Peter Gordon's Providore in Marylebone, London. Joining him will be Mark McAllister, a bonafide oyster expert from Ireland who will source both local and national oysters and fresh seafood. Andrew's half Chinese ancestry will imbue an Asian influence into the kitchen too.

Taking over the lease at the end of 2011 Andrew and Jonathan knew it would be a year in the making. Not ones to do anything by halves, the couple have spent the last eight months putting

some love back into the building after 30 years of tenancy. Enhancing the fire building code was just one of the requirements needed to forward the project. Jonathan says: "The council has been amazing, really supportive and helpful." Though he concedes they have done everything by the book.

By the end of November the restaurant, bar and accommodation will be ready for service. Primarily The Oyster Inn will be a local eatery but will be linking into a previously untapped market across the Tasman.

Watch this space for further information or alternatively visit The Oyster Inn website [www.theoysterinn.com](http://www.theoysterinn.com) or find them on Facebook.

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