

MONOCLE



Thatcher Hotel library

The Thatcher Hotel

HOPLAND, CALIFORNIA

Pacific Coast Highway 101, a ribbon along the coastline of northern California, is one of the world's most storied strips of road. In the small town of Hopland, which borders California wine country, stands The Thatcher Hotel, a newly restored inn and café that was seen as the area's grandest hotel when it first opened its doors in 1890.

“Let's say that you're travelling from Portland to San Francisco along the 101,” says Mark Rogero, the hotel's co-owner, who bought the Victorian, wood-slatted building in 2019 after it had stood in a state of decay for several years. “If you were to plot your course and if you were to find this place, it would appear like an oasis because there's nothing like it around here, in either direction, for – who knows? – 50 or 100 miles.”



Mark Rogero of Concrete Works and co-owner of Thatcher Hotel



Ian Read (on left) and Gretchen Krebs, founders of architectural interiors firm Medium Plenty

The notion of the hotel as an outpost, a solitary but welcoming silhouette surrounded by the wineries, farms and open countryside of southern Mendocino county, was central to the hotel's redesign. "The idea was to restore, repair and reimagine," says Rogero, who is sitting near the grand, teal-hued marble fireplace among the bookshelves of the hotel's mahogany-lined library. As a building with several chapters to its history (it is rumoured to have been a bordello and, less credibly, a spot for ghost-sightings), there were several layers of history to show. "It started to reveal itself as this amazing retreat from the Bay Area, which is just 90 minutes away, and for those on the road, taking excursions up and down the California coast," says Rogero.

The number of rooms was reduced to 18 to restore the intimacy of an inn and the reception area has been combined with the bar near an imposing wooden staircase in the centre of the lobby. Every room is furnished with new designs and quality finds from vintage and flea markets in and around San Francisco. "Neither of us are period designers by any means," says Ian Reed, co-founder with his partner Gretchen Krebs of the Medium Plenty design studio, which redesigned the space. "We both have a passion for comfort and for approachability. We did not want the rooms to feel stark but to have some flavour and character.



Custom oak shelving stocked with artisan goods



Medium Plenty revived the outdated guest rooms



Mixing it at the bar



Open seating lounge

That character is dotted through the communal spaces too. The food is produced in collaboration with farms and producers in the region and is served on crockery by San Francisco's Heath Ceramics. The tabletops in the new café and the terrazzo tiles were made specifically for the space by Rogero's own architectural concrete company, Concrete Works. "It comes down to the transition between the old and the new," says Krebs. "We've blended the two. The city feels far away when you're here. That helps to make that feeling of the place shine as well."

When restrictions are finally lifted, Rogero adds, The Thatcher will also host artists' residencies, the works from which will be displayed in the hotel. "We wanted to bring a special experience that you don't get in corporate hospitality," says Rogero, referring to the glitzier members' clubs and hospitality offerings in the Napa Valley. "We wanted to appeal to those people who are looking for a destination for the weekend that's off the beaten path."

thatcherhotel.com



The Thatcher Hotel

Wineries near The Thatcher

TERRA SAVIA

Located in picturesque Sanel valley, this organic winery and olive oil producer was established in 2004. A portion of all proceeds go to wildlife conservation organisations based nearby.

SARACINA

Spread across 16 hectares, Saracina is known for its limited runs of bottles including malbec and petite syrah, as well as for its vegetable gardens, beehives and the wildlife that populates its landscape.

CAMPOVIDA

A small family-run farm and winery, overseen by Mark Rogero's business partner, Campovida is a great venue for wine tastings and outdoor gatherings, including performances by musicians from the region.

PHOTOGRAPHER: Brian Flaherty