

Restaurateurs excited about return of outdoor dining



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By Chris Drost & Kristena Schutt-Moore

The recent announcement made by Premier Doug Ford that restaurants in many regions, including North Hastings, could open on June 12 for outdoor dining, set local restaurateurs into motion.

Natasha and Val Alves from For the Halibut fish and chip restaurant in Bancroft are developing plans to add seating in part of their parking area and along the river. "We think our customers are going to enjoy the view and eating outdoors," says Natasha. The plan is to set things up so people will still be able to maintain the physical distancing rule. Customers will still need to order and pick-up at the counter but can then go and eat outside. "It will be a 'food truckish' set up," says Natasha.

"We are in this together. It is a new world and we have been lucky to have an understanding customer base. We are diving into something new. Everyone is anxious to get outside. I am sure we will have challenges but we will deal with it," explains Natasha.

For the Halibut will be open Tuesday through Sundays and hours will be posted on their Facebook page.

The Eagles Nest Restaurant will have picnic tables available for customers starting on June 12 and are excited about it. Patrons will have to come in and place an order and then it will be served to the tables outside.

The Granite has been closed for the past few months but excitement is building for a reopening for outdoor dining on their large deck starting on June 12 as well as take-out. They will be open Tuesday through Sundays from noon until 8 p.m. and are looking forward to seeing everyone.

At the Wattle and Daub Café plans are in place for a special new menu starting the week of June 15. "It is unfortunate that our built-in seating on the porch is not spaced appropriately to maintain the physical distancing rule. New food options will be coming that make for little or no wait at the take-out window but ordering ahead is still the best option," says manager Tracy McGibbon.

afe BC has been open for the past four weeks working on a take-out basis. As of June 12, they have created an outdoor dining space out front of their building. The new dining area is capable of seating up to 16 people while maintaining the required distancing.

Customers are asked to call in their order at 613-332-5315 before arriving. To minimize contact there will be no table service so customers will pick up their order by number at the cashier desk and take it to their table. During this time, they are also holding feature meals Wednesday through Friday. More information can be found on their Facebook page.

Owner of Cafe BC Bonnie Kukhta welcomes everyone back saying, "I am so relieved and so happy to be back open again, to have the staff coming back and to see customers again!?"

Memories Tea Room in Maynooth will not be opening for indoor or outdoor dining. Owner Chris Hass says that she just doesn't have enough room to work with the restrictions so it is not feasible to open the building yet. However she will continue to cook for the community with her take out Pizza Fridays, making meals for the Meals on Wheels program and will soon be starting her Wednesday Community Dinners through take-out orders.

The Classics Diner is a new family restaurant in the area that opened shortly before COVID-19 restrictions were put into place. They quickly developed a take-out service for their entire menu. Customers can connect with them on their Facebook page or calling 613-332-2815.

According to the Facebook page for Dave's Place Restaurant in Bancroft, plans are in full swing for outdoor dining starting on June 12 with regular hours starting with all day breakfast at 8 a.m. In Coe Hill, the Hideaway Primitive Grill has been working with Public Health to make plans for outdoor dining and will post the details on their Facebook page once they get the go ahead.