

FOOD

WHAT'S NEW



DEANNE FITZMAURICE / The Chronicle

A server mans the wine area at the new restaurant Spruce on Sacramento Street.

OPENING: Spruce in Presidio Heights

Spruce, the long-awaited restaurant — i.e., more than two years after the original planned debut — from Woodside's Village Pub team, finally opened last week in San Francisco's Presidio Heights neighborhood.

Delays were due to a variety of reasons, but the time seems to have been well used to meticulously plan every aspect.

The cuisine: Contemporary American with classic French roots. That translates into starters such as charcuterie made in-house; a salad of arugula, watermelon and sardines; and sweetbreads and poached spot prawns. Main courses include pork tenderloin with fresh shelling beans; monkfish and mussels Provencal; and grilled bavette steak with duck-fat fries. Beignets and semolina cake with blackberry sauce

are two of the desserts. There's an ambitious selection of cheese, coffees and teas. A bar menu with items such as a Niman Ranch burger is available in the dining room.

Ingredients are mostly local, with most produce coming from the restaurant's partner farm, SMIP Ranch in Woodside, part of the Djerassi land holdings. To complete the circle, the farm's delivery truck is fueled by biodiesel made from the restaurant's recycled cooking oil.

The nearly 1,000-selection wine list, and the additional spirits list, both have extensive choices from around the world, and 70 wines by the glass.

The team: Spruce joins the Village Pub and Pizza Antica as restaurants from the Bacchus Management Group, in this project

with Tim Stannard, owner; Mark Sullivan, chef-partner; and Andrew Green, wine and spirits director-partner.

The vibe: The space, designed by Stephen Brady for Williams-Sonoma Home, features a takeout cafe on one side of the entrance, a library and bar on the other side. The bar-lounge area and 70-seat dining room are awash in blacks and browns, with mohair banquettes, saddle-leather chairs, and contemporary artwork on the mohair-cushioned walls.

Spruce, 3640 Sacramento St. (near Spruce), San Francisco; (415) 931-5100. Dinner nightly, with weekday lunch to start next month. Full bar. Reservations and credit cards accepted. Starters, \$9-\$18; entrees, \$12-\$36; desserts, \$9.

— Miriam Morgan