

North Bay Business Journal

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Top Real Estate Projects of 2011: Recognition of remarkable projects important in difficult economy

'Represent the pioneering spirit of those willing to take risks
and to invest in the future of the North Bay'

By Brad Bollinger

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Welcome to the Business Journal's sixth annual Top Projects competition recognizing 11 exceptional contributions to the North Bay's built environment.

With the simple criteria that they be new projects available for occupancy in 2011, nominations were solicited from architects, contractors, commercial real estate and other professionals from around the North Bay.



2011 Top Project Winners

Click on a project name to learn more about what makes it remarkable in 2011.

- APARTMENTS: [Amorosa Village](#)
- K-12 EDUCATION: [Ross School](#)
- HIGHER EDUCATION: [Santa Rosa Junior College Culinary Arts Facility](#)
- GREEN: [Santa Rosa Utilities Field Office](#)
- HISTORIC RESTORATION: [DeTurk Round Barn](#)
- HOSPITALITY: [Tyler Florence Rotisserie & Wine and **Morimoto Restaurant**](#)
- LANDSCAPE: [Ramekins Culinary School, Events & Inn](#)
- MEDICAL: [Petaluma Health Center](#)
- RETAIL: [Stony Point Plaza](#)
- SOLAR: [BoDean Co. Mark West Quarry](#)
- WINERY: [Trinchero Napa Valley](#)

Morimoto Napa: Sixth signature restaurant with Wine Country touches

Seating for 199 on Riverfront includes sushi bar

By Gary Quackenbush, Special to the Business Journal

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NAPA — When “Iron Chef” Masaharu Morimoto opened his sixth signature restaurant at 610 Main St. in Napa’s Riverfront complex, he was greeted by a long list of fans with advance reservations.

Construction of his first West Coast establishment was under the direction of general contractor Ledcor Construction Inc.

The open kitchen surrounded by a generous amount of indoor and outdoor seating was designed with the idea that each table should feel like the chef’s table.

With capacity for 199 patrons (80 in the main dining room, a private area for parties of 70, patio dining for 40 and a sushi bar seating nine), there is plenty of space for guests and special events.

Everything about this 7,500-square-foot Asian influence culinary destination is unique. The warm interior ambiance shines with appointments specially created for this location alone.

The decor is a blend where contemporary Japanese styles and cuisine are mixed with European and North American ingredients.

High ceilings, a concrete main bar, a separate sushi bar with its walnut live edge countertop, a large glass display case and stacks of reclaimed timber accentuate the flamboyant design.

The setting offers familiar Wine Country references mingled with large panel photo works of art provided by Schoos Design. One picture features an oversized box of Red Snappers. Another is a close up view of a collage of Octopi.

This scene is accented by raw structures including wood-textured concrete and rustic wrought iron lighting fixtures.



Project: Morimoto Napa
Restaurant and retail store

Description: A 7,500-square-foot seafood restaurant and shop on the promenade level of the Napa Riverfront complex

Address: 610 Main St., Napa

Owner: Chef Masaharu Morimoto and MM Napa, LLC

Architect, Interior Design and
Photo Art: Schoos Design Inc.

General Contractor: Ledcor
Construction Inc.

Mechanical Engineer: The
Engineering Partnership

Electrical Engineer: JRA with
McClure Electric

HVAC: Reid Sheet Metal

Plumbing: Trimyc Mechanical

Casework/Millwork: Trinity
Engineering

Three chandeliers in the front and four in back of the restaurant offer a 1960s-'70s retro feel. They are fastened together with rods that produce a soft wind chime effect.

A key focal point is a wall sculpture over the bar with a Napa Valley theme featuring old zinfandel vines under glass. Custom-made white oak shelving and a large cabernet display case present visual anchors at the sides of the room.

The main dining tables, crafted from huge slabs of Argentine Rosewood and Acacia Wood from Thailand, complement the natural design theme. The hostess stand was also made from a single, large ancient Acacia root.

"We wanted to make Morimoto's Napa Riverfront venue warm, cozy and inviting," said noted hotel and restaurant designer Thomas Schoos, principal of Schoos Design of West Hollywood.

"The color scheme includes a mixture of gray, putty, and yellow hues to create a rich buttery feel. This palate is repeated in lemon yellow upholstered lounge chairs and a sofa along with a cluster of grey leather chairs that create clean and elegant seating arrangements that are formal, yet inviting."

The sculpture behind the full bar is an arrangement of 100-year-old grape vines that had been buried in a field. Bark was peeled and surfaces sand blasted to a smooth finish. This piece is so popular among visitors that similar items are sold in Morimoto's attached retail store.

"Old barn siding was used to create wall partitions between the private dining room and the sushi bar. Gaps between the boards allow guests to catch a glimpse of the other side. A yellow glass wall divider adds a golden glaze making everyone look good," Mr. Schoos said.

Shortly after Mr. Morimoto opened his Napa Riverfront restaurant he debuted his seventh culinary venture overlooking the Waikiki yacht harbor in Oahu, Hawaii, adding to his growing list of restaurants in New York, Philadelphia, Boca Raton, Mumbai and New Delhi.