

# Marin Independent Journal

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## WINE COUNTRY

### Carneros Inn transforms barren site

By Marty Olmstead

*IJ correspondent*

**F**OR MONTHS and months, drivers along the Carneros Highway (Highway 12/121 between Sonoma and Napa), have wondered what was being built on the land once occupied by a trailer park. When they learned it was to be a resort, many couldn't believe it. On that scrappy strip? The one with no landscaping?

Their skepticism may be laid to rest this weekend, when the Carneros Inn opens for business with 96 guest cottages and a spa. Even the big trees are in, at last, adding to the greenery in the private cottage gardens and adjacent vineyards. A restaurant, the Boon Fly Café, will open next month. (Meanwhile, breakfast-in-a-basket will be delivered to overnight guests.)

Eventually, 24 resort homes will be built on the 27-acre site, arranged to capitalize on the extensive views of the surrounding countryside. The cottages, simple in appearance, are a combination of sophisticated design and such homey touches as wood-burning fireplaces in stone hearths. Other amenities include outdoor showers, gas heaters to warm up the patio, large-screen plasma televisions



Photo courtesy of Carneros Inn

**SOPHISTICATED:** This bedroom in one of the simple-looking guest cottages at the new Carneros Inn illustrates the amenities available at the resort, which opens this weekend.

and Internet access.

Anyone who has visited Seaside, the famous planned community on Florida's Panhandle, may see similarities between the two projects, both of which were designed according to the principles of Smart Growth and good environmental practices. And, like Seaside, the Carneros Inn will create a civic

space for the local community; it will include a post office and bocce ball courts.

The roadhouse-style Boon Fly Café (named for an early settler in the region) will be open to the public for breakfast, lunch and dinner, and will feature a wine list highlighting selections from around Carneros and beyond. Chef

Philip Wang, formerly of San Francisco's Jardiniere and New York's Restaurant Daniel, will oversee both the café and the resort's in-cottage dining program.

Rates at the Carneros Inn range from \$350 to \$1,000. The resort is at 4048 Highway 121, Napa; call 707-299-4900 or visit [www.thecarnerosinn.com](http://www.thecarnerosinn.com).