



# Bohème

NORTH BAY 2019

Food  
Drink  
Music

**BOHEMIAN** | PacificSun



# Shawn HYER

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## VINTAGE MOTORCYCLE RESTORATION

St. Helena's Harvest Inn is a peaceful place to work. Surrounded by lush greenery and set in quaint quarters, the inn offers refuge and relaxation, so much so that it's hard to imagine any of its employees engaging with anything other than relaxing.

Shawn Hyer, Harvest Inn's director of food & beverage, has a different idea. When he's not running all the food operations here, he buys and restores vintage motorcycles. "I've always liked working with my hands," he says. "It's a nice change of pace from what I do every day."

Hyer discovered motorcycles in his late teens, riding into his early 20s and quitting for a while. But he couldn't give up on two-wheeled pursuits. He became a professional bike racer all the while tinkering with some kind of machinery. Eventually, his love of tinkering and his old affection for motorbikes united in a new hobby. For the past 12 years, as he's built a career in hospitality and moved across the country from Park City, Utah. Hyer buys and restores motorcycles from the 1960s and the 1970s, finding them at garage sales, on the street, wherever. The hobby, he says, is the antithesis to his day job.

"There's controlled chaos in restaurants, unexpected dilemmas and challenges, and

you can prepare as much as you want but something always comes up last minute," he says. "On the weekend, it's just you and the machine. It's a different type of problem solving, a great checks and balances."

He restores the bikes on his own, sometimes with friends, giving them away or selling them once done. Hyer manages to find parallels between his passion for motorcycles and the inn's kitchen. "It's the same ideology, treating the ingredients with respect, without going too crazy, getting something beautiful out of it," he says. "I like the simple things, and the simple things are beautiful."

—Flora Tsapovsky