

# GREAT Business People

## 287 Café and Motels

287 is bringing a buzz back to Wairoa

After sitting closed for years, the doors at 287 are open once more — and the place is humming with life again. The reboot is thanks to Te Whare Maire o Tapuwae, which bought the site in 2023. Since then, a dedicated local team has been working to breathe new life into the local treasure.

The new hotspot blends great food, comfortable accommodation, and a warm community vibe. The site, less than 3km from town on SH2 south, has been given a refresh, with five motel units available, including a spacious family suite and a fully accessible unit alongside three well-appointed standard rooms. Whether it's visitors coming to explore the coast or locals needing a handy stayover option, 287 Motels provides comfort with a personal touch.

Right next door, the café is also taking off.

287 operational manager, Toni Whakatope, has a background in hospitality, and says it's great to be offering another venue option for the community. "Our location is perfect, we are close enough to town that it's only a few minutes' drive, and we also attract a lot of passing traffic."

Toni and her husband Chris, a Wairoa local, came home a few years ago, with Toni enjoying the challenge of putting 287 on the map again.

"Since the café opened in February, it has quickly become a favourite meeting spot. We are looking forward to summer and people sitting on the spacious deck overlooking the river – it really is the perfect outside spot."

Trained chef Juanita Waihaki from Mahia is at the helm, with the kitchen serving up a menu that balances classic Kiwi favourites with something a little different. Popular go tos are the steak sandwiches and fish and chips, with other options including a BLT sandwich, sliders, and a beef burger. Plus, there is a full breakfast menu from a classic brekky to waffles and a range of fruit smoothies.

Another drawcard is the freshly made baking, from scones to a variety of muffin flavours. On the specials board, Mexican-inspired dishes add an exciting twist, and there's always a range of daily and weekly specials inspired by seasonal availability.

Fully licensed, the café is the perfect place to soak up Wairoa's sunshine. For groups and events, 287 offers catering options that scale from intimate functions on site for up to 60 people, to off-site finger food catering for up to 200 people - with all bookings by arrangement.

With the arrival of summer, the café will provide an evening meal from 5pm on Friday and Saturday nights, depending on bookings. Smorgasbords and set menus can be tailored to suit, making it a versatile venue for celebrations, gatherings, or a romantic dinner for two.

Staff-wise, the team are enjoying the hospitality trade and working towards their qualifications. "We have a great group, they are all so keen. Plus, we are always on the lookout for casual cleaning and café staff.

Already becoming a "go-to" destination, 287 is also looking to showcase local artwork and bring even more creative flair into the space. With a committed team and a passion for innovation, 287 Café & Motels is re-establishing itself as a popular option for locals and visitors alike.



Open six days from Tuesday to Sunday  
from 8am-3pm and from 5pm on Friday and  
Saturday nights. Make your reservation now  
by phoning 06 838 6601.



If you have a great business or  
service to promote, please contact  
Wairoa District Council at:  
[ed@wairoadc.govt.nz](mailto:ed@wairoadc.govt.nz)