

Iconic Texas Chef and Luxury Motel Design Devotees Team Up In Stephenville — Interstate Inn & The Seeker Restaurant Are Coming

The New Mod Motels Will Be Something Unique, Bringing Mid-Century Modern Style to Unexpected Cities

[Courtney Dabney](#)

Legendary chef Stephan Pyles continues spreading his signature modern Texas food far and wide. Pyles has now forged a new partnership with luxury motel developers (and siblings) Lisa Lennox and Kirk and Cathy Bonner, who have big plans for Stephenville's historic Caravan Inn.

Their debut lodging group dubbed Mod Motels (headquartered in Dallas) will transform its first acquisition "into a fully reimagined boutique, luxury, mid-century modern, 33-room motel now with the addition of a full-service restaurant collaboration — [The Seeker](#)," according to a release.

The plan is for Mod Motels to be an experience that is worth the drive, where modern architecture will mix with historic charm. And Chef Pyles gets the appeal of a small town like Stephenville.

"Its destinations are right on trend in a market where Americans are moving beyond the big cities and enjoying small-town life again as locals, vacation homeowners, nature lovers, or travelers preferring the open road," Pyles says in a statement. "My own hometown of Big Spring as well as Fredericksburg, Wimberly, [Round Top](#), Marfa, Marathon, Georgetown and Alpine are increasingly more popular destinations now for travel and cultural pursuits.

"And many more towns like them are reemerging every day in Texas."

That's where the well-known [Chef Pyles](#) comes in. He has entered a licensing agreement with Mod Motels to create a signature restaurant dubbed The Seeker. The restaurant will be located within Mod Motel's debut luxury motel called [Interstate Inn](#) in Stephenville. The transformed inn and restaurant are scheduled to open in the summer of 2024.

"We are thrilled to introduce The Seeker with Chef Stephan Pyles to the growing community of Stephenville," Lennox says of her new vision. "Our goal is to share the love of food and create an experience where guests can savor the

ambiance of the motel while enjoying innovative and delectable dishes that showcase the best of Modern Texan Cuisine."

Mod Motel Design Details

Mod Motels is working with an all Dallas-based design team. [Shelton Architecture](#) is the lead architect with interior design from [Neal Stewart Designs](#). In addition, [The Guest Group](#) will be designing The Seeker restaurant.

The roof of the lobby is shaped to resemble an Interstate highway sign, according to Mod Motel's spokesperson Jennifer Kirk. "We are renovating the buildings and roof and will add an artistic element to the large roof that will be eye-catching," Kirk adds.

The motel will maintain its original mid-century architecture and will be redesigned using elements from that era — such as cinder block partition walls giving the motel room's glass windows a bit more privacy from the rest of the grounds. And, of course, mid-century design will be carried throughout the restaurant as well.

Just like you'd expect from a Mod Motel.

"The interior design will feature bold patterns and colors, with contrasting materials and unique art pieces. Each of the

33 rooms is a unique experience — no two rooms will be alike," Kirk says.

Two additional redesign projects by Mod Motels are also in the works. [The Mimi on Main](#) will take up residence in Fredricksburg, and [Iron Springs Lodge](#) is set for Whitney. Both are scheduled to come after Stephenville's new Interstate Inn gets the first-ever Mod makeover.

Chef Pyles — Not Resting On His Laurels

[PaperCity Fort Worth caught up with Pyles](#) in November of 2022 as he was opening Alma as the premier restaurant in an upscale senior living development called Hacienda at Georgetown. Good food, it seems, knows no bounds. Pyles signature dishes and coveted recipes will be just as sought after in a mid-century motel setting as they were at his fine dining restaurants in Dallas over the span of decades.

Along with many licensing agreements, Pyles regularly takes culinary tours — jet-setting around the globe. He is far from a relaxed retiree. When he closed his last remaining restaurant Flora Street Cafe in 2020, many thought that was his plan. But Pyles tells *PaperCity* that he is merely repositioning his brand.

Ending his ownership of independent restaurants has freed Pyles up to pursue his passions more fully. He's still

passionate about great dining experiences, wherever they may be. Especially at the upcoming Interstate Inn, and his new The Seeker restaurant.

Soon Stephenville, which is just over an hour drive from Fort Worth, will have unprecedented access to the food of one of Texas' true culinary pioneers — one decorated with AAA Five Diamond Awards as well as two James Beard Awards (and another 12 nominations). Stephan Pyles has created 23 restaurants in seven cities over the past three decades.

"Working with Mod Motels and Lisa Lennox's family perfectly intertwines my past with the present," Pyles says in a statement.

Expect local ingredients to blend with diverse cultures on The Seeker's upcoming menu. There will be plenty of Texas on every plate, and a craft cocktail bar to relax in. The Seeker will have both indoor dining and outdoor patio seating. It will also showcase flexible private event accommodations — hosting cooking classes and demonstrations as well as special occasions and milestone celebrations.

The Interstate Inn and The Seeker will be located at 809 East Road in Stephenville, Texas.

Get the best of PaperCityMag.com in your inbox.

Texas' top restaurant, real estate, society, fashion, art news
and more, five times a week.