

Nicky's on the Bay IT'S WHERE YOU WANT TO BE

by Stephanie Racanelli



Many of us are familiar with Nicky's On the Bay as a summer destination restaurant and a local favorite. Now the new reconstructed Nicky's on the Bay is opened and it is even more fantastic! This once seasonal restaurant will now be open most of the year for us to enjoy, closing only for two months in January and February.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY VICKI JAURON

Every restaurant has a person at the helm, a leader of the crew, who began a journey to realize a personal dream. The humble "Captain" of Nicky's On the Bay is Nick Parini.

Nick's journey began twenty-five years ago when he took over the small clam bar in Bay Shore by the Fire Island ferry dock; this small "seafood shack" is Nicky's Clam bar. Eleven years ago, his bid was accepted on his present site and Nicky's On the Bay was born. It started as an "island-dining" type eatery with outdoor tables under awnings and a small adjoining restaurant infrastructure, surrounded by the most beautiful



water views. The original place was great, but you could imagine being where the Watchogue Creek meets the Great South Bay, enjoying an ice cold beer and a seafood dinner, and suddenly the winds and dark clouds envelope you. Locals know the scenario well, but no one likes having to run from a delicious meal to get to safety indoors!

Nicky knew he had a fantastic place for people to enjoy a drink, a meal, and the amazing view. It was a place for him to realize his dream: To provide people with beautiful scenery, great food and excellent service." He was well aware that outdoor dining is limited to the warmest months-typically from the end of April to Columbus Day - and business suffers during inclement weather.

Realizing his dreams, he made dining with the best view on the south shore even better!

As a solution, the restaurant was reconstructed and expanded to allow him to stay open from March till the end of December and accommodate more people. Special structures were installed to provide protection from the elements while diners sit on the waterfront, no matter what the weatherman predicts!

THE LIST: Tell us about the recent changes to the restaurant?

NICK: "We were under construction for the most part of the winter. We now have expanded indoor and outdoor dining, with a retractable

roof and doors. They are the first of their kind on Long Island and the largest also. They work like the retractable ceilings in the large stadiums. If it's a beautiful day, we can open up the roof and doors or close them to keep out rain and winds. As an example, it may be a beautiful day but the winds may be blowing a little hard out of the west. Now, I can close off one side of the restaurant to accommodate this unexpected change in weather. If it rains, I can close the ceiling! Our patrons are now able to dine indoors while enjoying a sunset, a moonrise, or a lightning storm. "

We have extended our downstairs bar and also added an upper deck with a 360 degree panoramic view of the Great South Bay. There simply is no bad view in the entire place!

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During this interview, I gave in to the inherent urge that happens whenever I walk into Nicky's - I had to have a bowl of steamers. Nicky's On the Bay is the place for the strange looking clam we Long-Islanders love to eat. The generous portions of steaming clams and the ubiquitous bowls of hot broth and melted butter call to me when I take in the amazing view that Nicky's has to offer.

Other very popular items are the parmesan encrusted halibut and the seafood tower. The halibut is moist and juicy with just the right seasoning to enhance the flavor of the fish and the seafood tower allows one to enjoy a variety of fresh fish choices all at once. Although Nicky's makes a great steak or burger, the fresh fish and home-made soups are always satisfying choices.

THE LIST: Tell us about your seafood; what sets you apart from the rest?

NICK: "We have our own "digger" who provides me with the freshest clams, steamers and oysters. He dives for our oysters from the deep waters of the north shore of Long Island and digs our steamers and clams, delivering them from the bay right to the refrigerators in the restaurant. If he cannot meet the demand, he will buy from the other private "diggers" on the beach to avoid having to go to market for our shellfish. That way, the freshness is ensured. If you buy from a market, you run the risk of the product being a few days old. I don't want to sell that to my customers. Our shrimp are also popular and are jumbo in size. We only sell U10 size shrimp, meaning less than 10 shrimp make up a pound. Their size and freshness make the fried shrimp a very satisfying and popular choice on our menu. They are authentically "jumbo"



shrimp, not U21-25's like many restaurants use.

THE LIST: Now that you are open from March through December, What are some of your plans for Nicky's on the Bay?

NICK: We plan on adding special nights at the bar that coincide with the particular sport of the season, or possibly Karaoke night, or acoustic music. We now are catering for private parties on our premises, accommodating

from 30 to 100 people. I'm also very excited to install a floating dock this coming spring 2016. It will have 10 slips and will be able to accommodate boats up to 50 feet in length.

The new Nicky's on the Bay, located inside the Bay Shore Marina is open 7 days a week. Whether you come for cocktails, dinner or entertainment, or host your special occasion it's a perfect place to enjoy great food, service and atmosphere in all seasons.

631-206-3311 | 150 S. Clinton Avenue, Bay Shore - at the Bay Shore Marina