



LILLIE COIT'S

1707 POWELL STREET · SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94133 · LILLIECOITS.COM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT Nick Floulis
nick@lilliecoits.com

Lillie Coit's Presents the 4th Annual Oyster Day

Powell Street closes August 23 as the North Beach restaurant opens its oyster bar, uses the neighborhood's new entertainment zone for the first time, and marks Lillie Hitchcock Coit's 183rd birthday.

SAN FRANCISCO, Calif., August 17, 2026 — Lillie Coit's will close the 1700 block of Powell Street on Sunday, August 23 for the fourth annual Oyster Day, and expects to serve 5,000 oysters between noon and 1am.

National Oyster Day was August 5. The restaurant is marking it eighteen days late, on the 183rd anniversary of the birth of Lillie Hitchcock Coit — the cigar-smoking gambler and honorary member of Knickerbocker Engine Company No. 5 whose bequest built Coit Tower, and for whom the restaurant is named.

The restaurant will also open at noon, which it has never done. Its standing hours are 4pm to 1am, advertised on a sandwich board reading NEVER EARLY, SOMETIMES LATER.

The oyster bar

Lillie Coit's opens its oyster bar the same day — a shucking station built into the dining room at the Powell Street window, immediately left of the entrance. Until now it has happened out of sight. Seating is not yet installed.

“We’ve been staring at an empty box in that room for what feels like years, because it has been,” said Nick Floulis, who owns and operates the restaurant. “On the 23rd there’s somebody standing in it.”

The block

Powell Street will be closed to traffic between Columbus Avenue and Union Street from noon until 10pm, with tables set down the middle of the street and roughly one hundred seats. At 10pm the street program ends and service moves indoors, running until 1am or until the oysters are gone.

The block sits inside the North Beach Entertainment Zone, established this summer under Ordinance 107-26, carried by District 3 Supervisor Danny Sauter, which permits open containers on the street during a permitted event. This is the restaurant's first time using it.

The oysters

Point Reyes Oyster Company is supplying the oysters — the Strain family's farm on Tomales Bay, 92 acres across three parts of the bay. Lindsey Strain will attend and present a Point Reyes-only sampler at the table. At least four varieties will be served, among them Skookum from Puget Sound, Miyagi, and Olympia, the West Coast's only native oyster.

Oyster Jubilee, the restaurant's standing offer of six oysters free with six purchased, will run as usual.

California's appetite built the West Coast oyster trade. Washington's Olympia fishery ran from the mid-1800s until about 1915 largely to supply it, until pollution and overharvesting collapsed the beds. Eastern oysters came west by rail to fill the gap, which is how Tomales Bay became an oyster region at all. The Strain family began farming the valley above it in the 1850s, and Martin Strain put the oyster farm in the water in 1985 — downstream of the land his ancestors worked.

The shells

A portion of every oyster sold goes to the Wild Oyster Project, the San Francisco nonprofit restoring native oysters to the Bay, where roughly one percent of the historic population remains. Representatives will be on site.

Every shell opened that day is recycled through the organization's program — cured, cleaned of invasive species, and returned to the Bay as the surface baby oysters need to settle on. The restaurant handed over 27 buckets of shell after last year's event and plans to double that this year.

At a glance

WHAT — 4th Annual Oyster Day

WHEN — Sunday, August 23, 2026. Street program noon–10pm; restaurant noon–1am.

WHERE — 1700 block of Powell Street, closed between Columbus and Union. Lillie Coit's, 1707 Powell Street, San Francisco.

RSVP — Free at luma.com/lilliecoits

OYSTERS — Point Reyes Oyster Company, Tomales Bay

BENEFITING — Wild Oyster Project

For media

Press are welcome. Photography is permitted on the street and inside the restaurant. Nick Floulis is available for interview before and on the day. Images on request.

About Lillie Coit's. Lillie Coit's is a late-night French brasserie at 1707 Powell Street in North Beach, in the room that operated as the Washington Square Bar & Grill — the Washbag, in Herb Caen's shorthand — from 1973 until it closed in 2010. The kitchen and bar are open every night until 1am. Oyster Jubilee runs from 10pm: buy six, get six.

The restaurant is named for Lillie Hitchcock Coit, who arrived in San Francisco at eight years old. At fifteen she helped haul Knickerbocker Engine Company No. 5's engine up Telegraph Hill and was adopted as the company's mascot; she was elected an honorary member at twenty. She smoked cigars and wore trousers before women were allowed to do either, dressed as a man to enter the men-only gambling rooms of North Beach, and left a third of her estate to the city — money that built Coit Tower and the volunteer firefighters' memorial in Washington Square.

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