Matthew Gaudet is clear-headed about making his return to the Cambridge dining scene with Freepoint Kitchen & Cocktails, set to open in April inside the new Freepoint Hotel. It’s not fine dining. There’s no gas for cooking. There’s no ventilation hood. But the former West Bridge chef is not viewing those realities as limitations.

“It’s kind of a greatest hits of snacks,” Gaudet says. “There’s no aggressive high-heat cooking. But at the end of the day, it’s got a little more finesse to it.”

Instead of a traditional dinner menu, Freepoint Kitchen will offer small plates that can be paired with pre-dinner or post-dinner drinks. “We look at it as more of an intermittent-type thing. We’ll see a lot more people between 4 and 6 pm or 9 and 11 pm rather than for a sit-down dinner,” Gaudet explains. “But if you sat down and got three of those dishes for yourself, that’s a meal.”

The menu will include snacky items like pistachio popcorn, a charcuterie plate, chicken wings, whipped herb ricotta and a soft pretzel with cheese as well as heartier dishes such as whiskey-cured salmon and green harissa braised chicken. Freepoint will also serve breakfast dishes such as shakshuka, a raspberry vanilla buttermilk dutch baby and a miso green veggie breakfast bowl.

“The handful of breakfast dishes we’re going to do are hearty, delicious, craveable things that are well worth the money and getting up in the morning. Because the other alternative is why not just go to Starbucks if you want a muffin or a scone,” Gaudet says. “But if you want French-press coffee and a shakshuka and a side of bacon, you’re going to be styling for the day.”

The space includes a 13-seat bar, a lounge area with a pool table and a more formal dining space with 43 seats. Gaudet’s brought in Alex Howell (Menton), who worked him at West Bridge, to consult on the beverage program, and the cocktails will include classics like an aviation as well as eight types of Manhattans. Howell has also been working part time at Gaudet’s Superfine restaurant in Manchester-by-the-Sea, which he opened after shuttering his acclaimed restaurant in Kendall Square. Superfine will expand into Marblehead this year, and Gaudet hopes more locations of the casual spot will eventually follow. But for now he’s resisting his wife’s urging to open another fine dining spot in the city, instead focusing on Superfine and Freepoint Kitchen.

“Fresh Pond isn’t known as a culinary mecca,” Gaudet says. “Hopefully we’re bringing a little something to that area.”

Teaming up with Petit Robert Bistro’s Loïc Le Garrec in January, Paris transplant Sandrine Rossi opened Frenchie, the type of bistro she’s been homesick for since moving to Boston three years ago. The South End spot’s menu highlights twists on classic French fare, like the Maine mussels, executive chef Alex Falconer’s take on moules marinières that adds seared chorizo and herbed garlic butter to the traditional leek and white wine broth. “We put the mussels in once all the flavor comes out of the chorizo and leeks,” says Falconer, who serves the result with slices of toast smeared with peppery aioli rouille that are perfect for sopping up every last drop. / Meghan Kavanaugh

Mussels, $14 at Frenchie, 560 Tremont St., Boston (617-233-5941) frenchieboston.com