How to block reservations in OpenTable for weekends and special days

This guide shows you how to block reservations in OpenTable so that only the time slots you want stay open for new online bookings. You use the Special Days calendar in Availability Planning to block a whole day or a time range. You can also cancel existing reservations, set special days to open or closed, and publish your changes.

Prerequisites

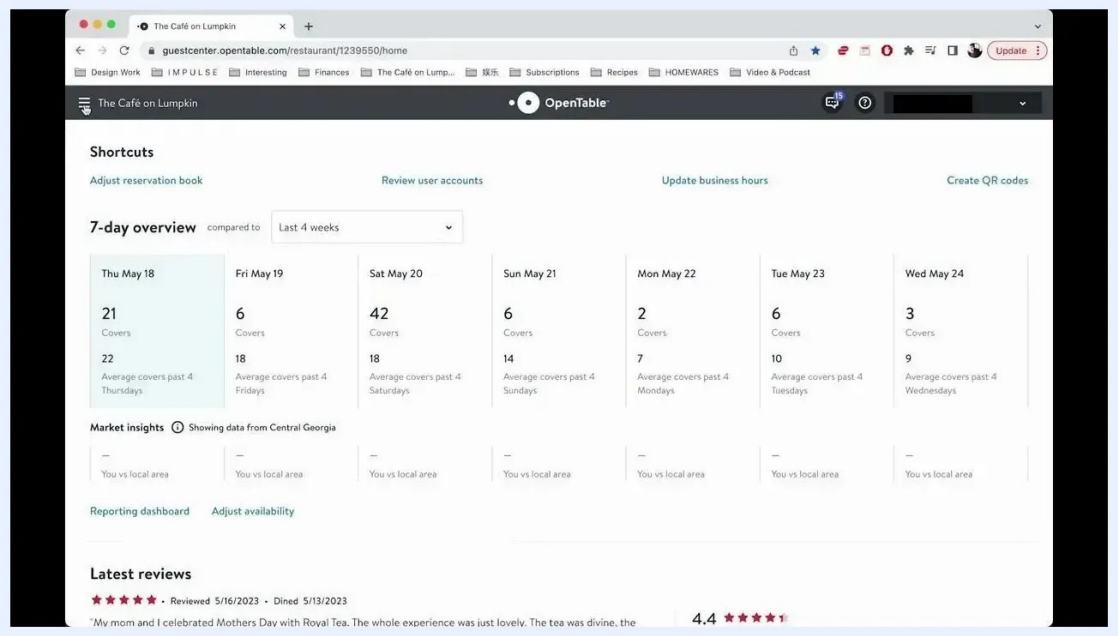
- An OpenTable account that you can log in to from a web browser.
- Access to **Availability Planning** and the **Special Days** calendar.
- The dates you want to adjust, such as a weekend, a catering day, or a holiday.

Steps

1. Log in to OpenTable and open the dashboard

Open your web browser and log in to your OpenTable account. You land on the main dashboard, which shows a 7-day overview of reservations, shortcuts, and recent reviews.

The dashboard lists covers for each day. For example, it might show "Sat May 20: 42 Covers."

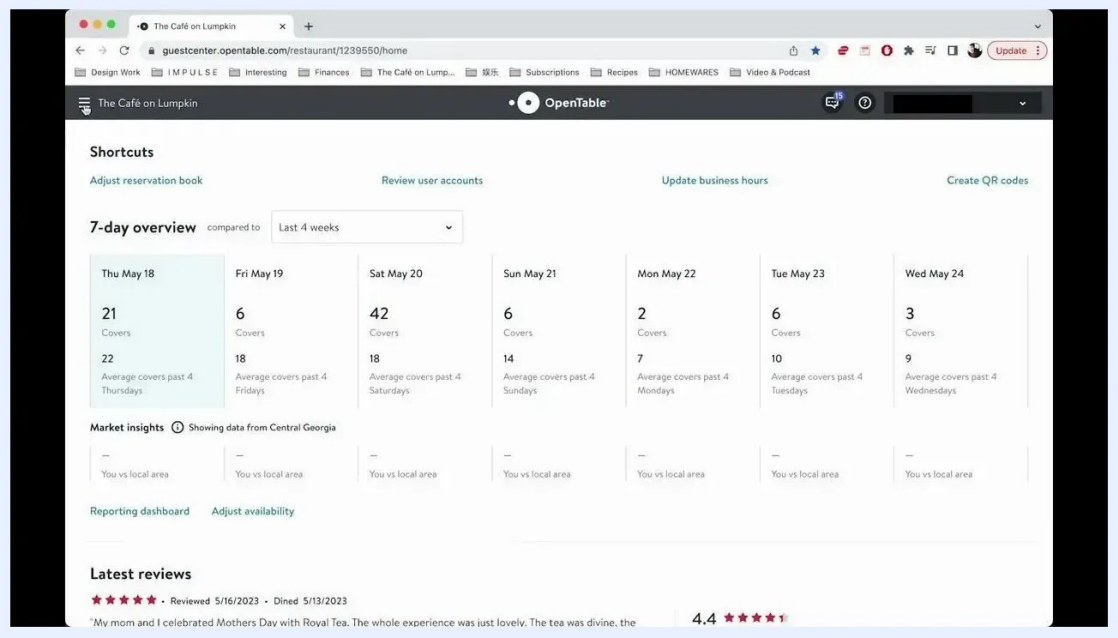


OpenTable dashboard with a 7-day overview, shortcuts, and reservation statistics

2. Open the Special Days calendar

Click **Availability Planning** (or the similar option) in the top navigation menu. Here you manage special days and adjust reservation settings.

Then click the **Special Days** tab at the top of the screen. The calendar shows every day in the current month and any special reservation rules already set. Labels such as "2:00 pm Weekend" or "8:00 am Weekday" indicate custom reservation times.

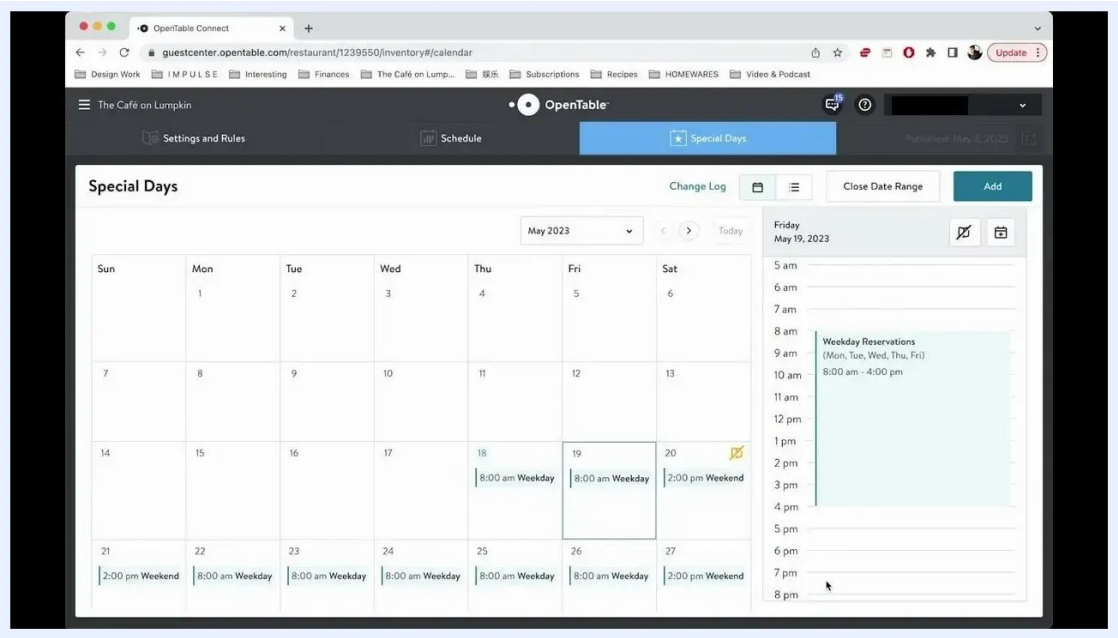


Special Days calendar with labeled days and navigation controls

3. Block new online reservations for prep time

Block new reservations until at least 10:00 or 11:00 a.m. This gives you time to prepare and avoids unexpected early guests.

This only blocks new reservations. Existing reservations stay in place unless you cancel them manually.

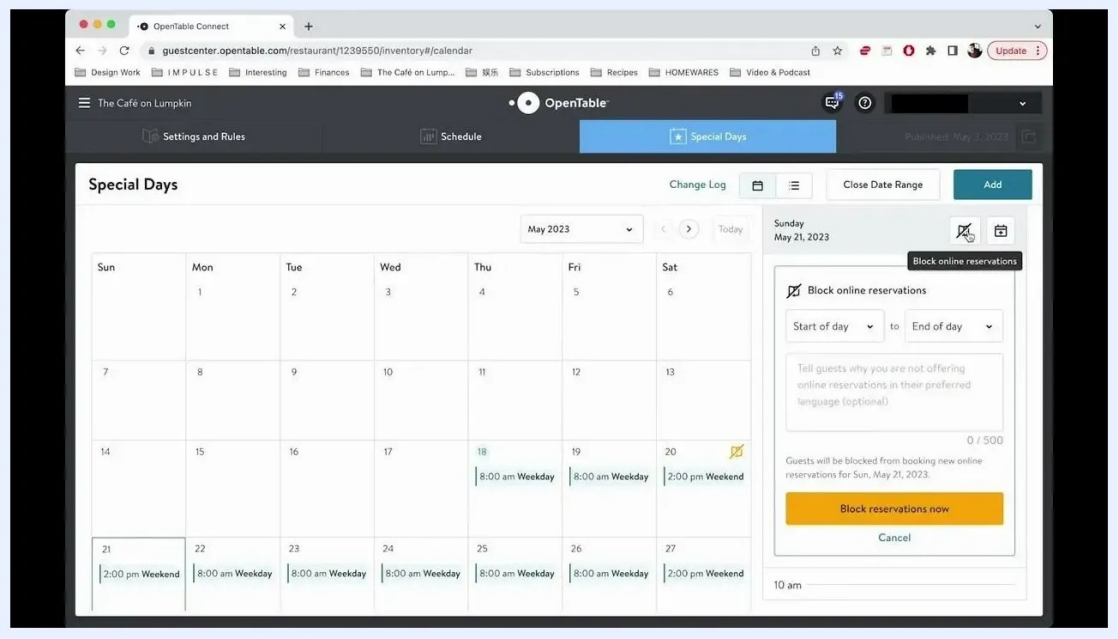


Special Days calendar showing reservation windows and a selected day for blocking new reservations

4. Quickly block online reservations for a day

For a faster way to block reservations in OpenTable, click the day you want to adjust in the Special Days calendar. Then click the **Block online reservations** icon in the right panel.

You can block the entire day by setting the range from "Start of day" to "End of day." You can also select a specific time range. For Sunday, May 21, 2023, the panel shows dropdowns for the start and end times.

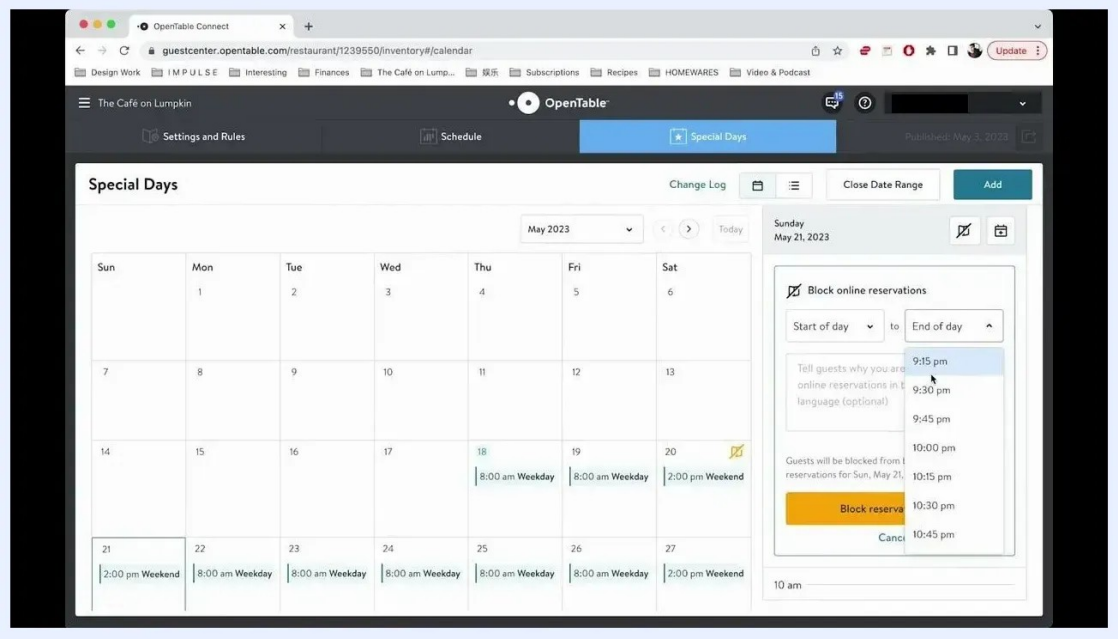


Block online reservations panel with time range options for Sunday, May 21, 2023

5. Set a specific time range for the block

Use the dropdown menus to select the exact range you want to block. For weekends, you can block reservations up to a certain time, such as 3:15 pm, so that only later bookings are allowed.

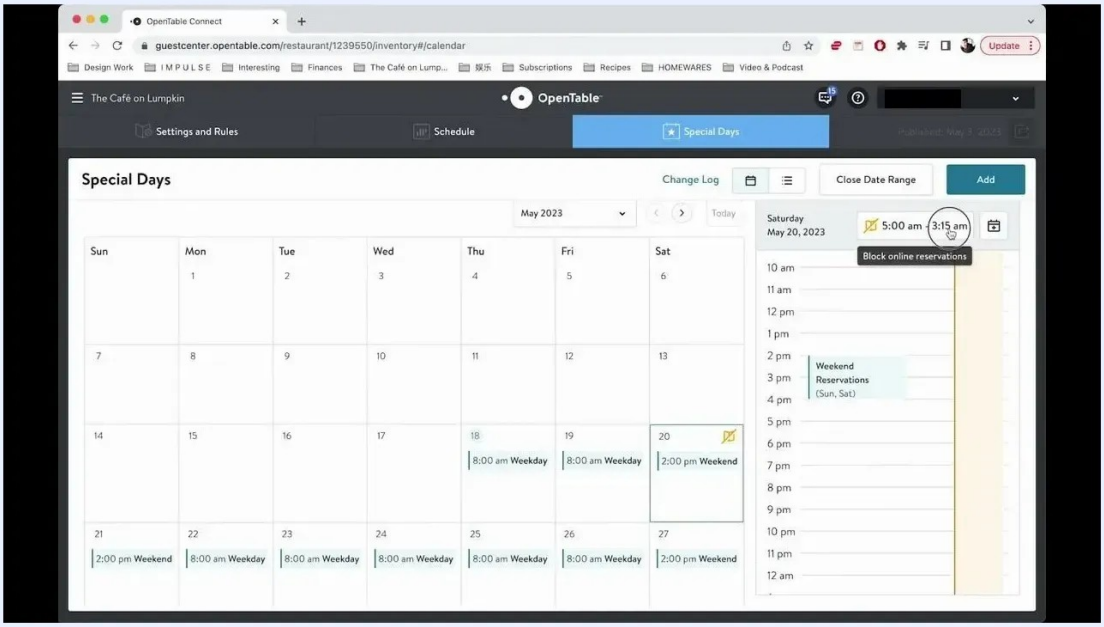
On weekends in this example, there are two main slots: 2:00 pm and 3:30 pm. Adjust the end time to match the slots you want to keep open. The dropdown offers times such as 9:15 pm and 9:30 pm.



Dropdown menu for selecting the block end time, showing evening time options

6. Confirm and apply the block

After you set the time range, click **Block reservations now**. The calendar updates to show the block for the selected day, for example "5:00 am – 3:15 pm."

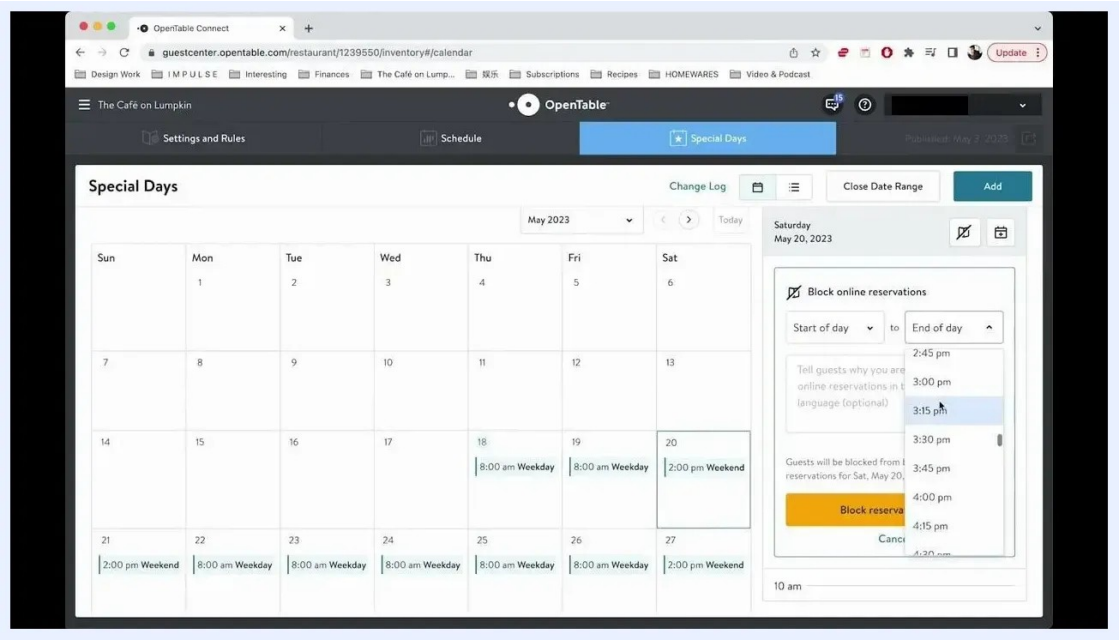


Special Days calendar with a block indicator and the time range applied

7. Verify the blocked time

Check that the blocked time appears correctly on the calendar. For example, Saturday, May 20 should show "5:00 am – 3:15 pm."

This confirms that new online reservations are only allowed after the time you specified.

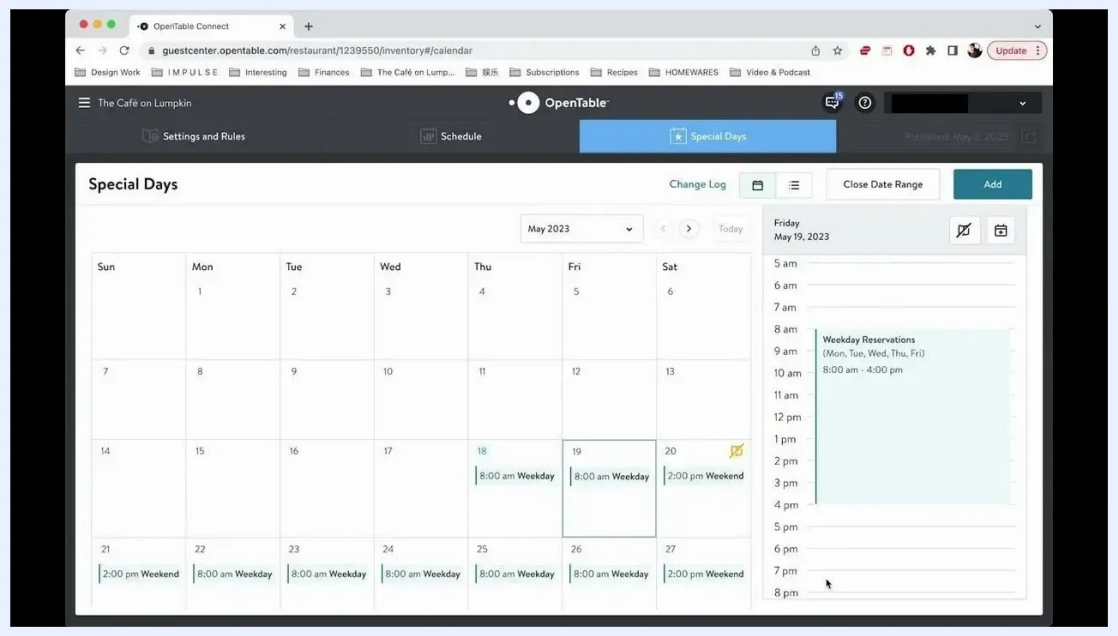


Special Days calendar with the block set to 3:15 pm for a weekend day

8. Block reservations on other days

Repeat the steps above for any other day that needs a special reservation block. For example, if you have a large catering order on a Friday, you might block reservations for that day.

Select the day, such as Friday, May 19, 2023, and adjust the reservation window as needed.

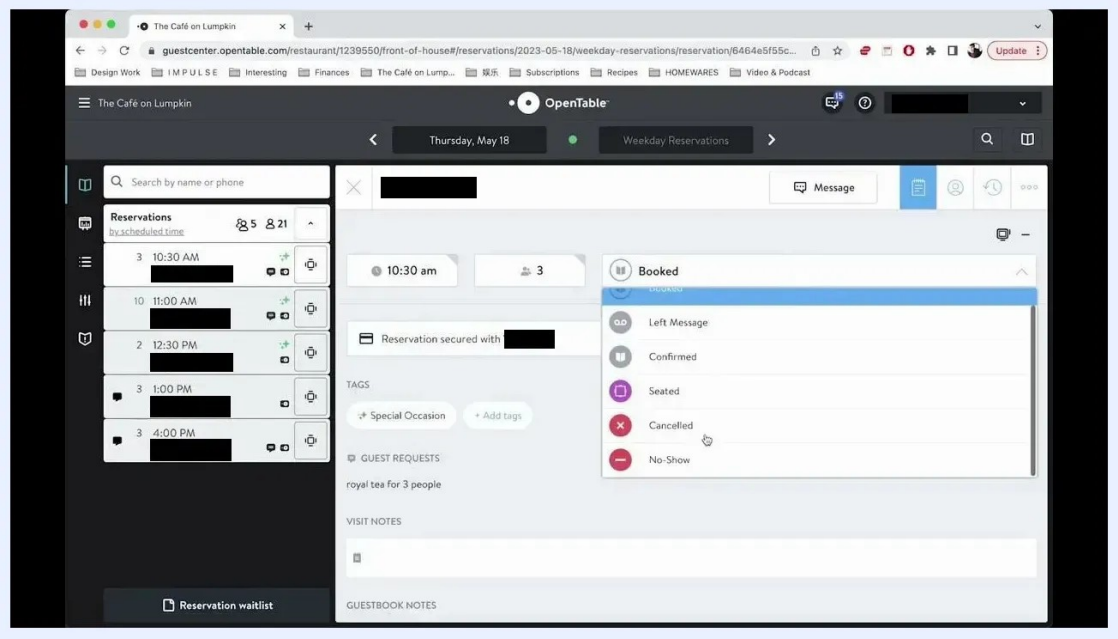


Special Days calendar showing the weekday reservation window for Friday, May 19, 2023

9. Cancel existing reservations individually

Blocking only stops new bookings, so you need to cancel any existing reservations yourself. Go to the **Front of House** screen and find the reservation in the reservations list. Click it to open its details.

Change the status from **Booked** to **Cancelled** using the dropdown menu. Always call and confirm with the customer before you cancel their reservation.

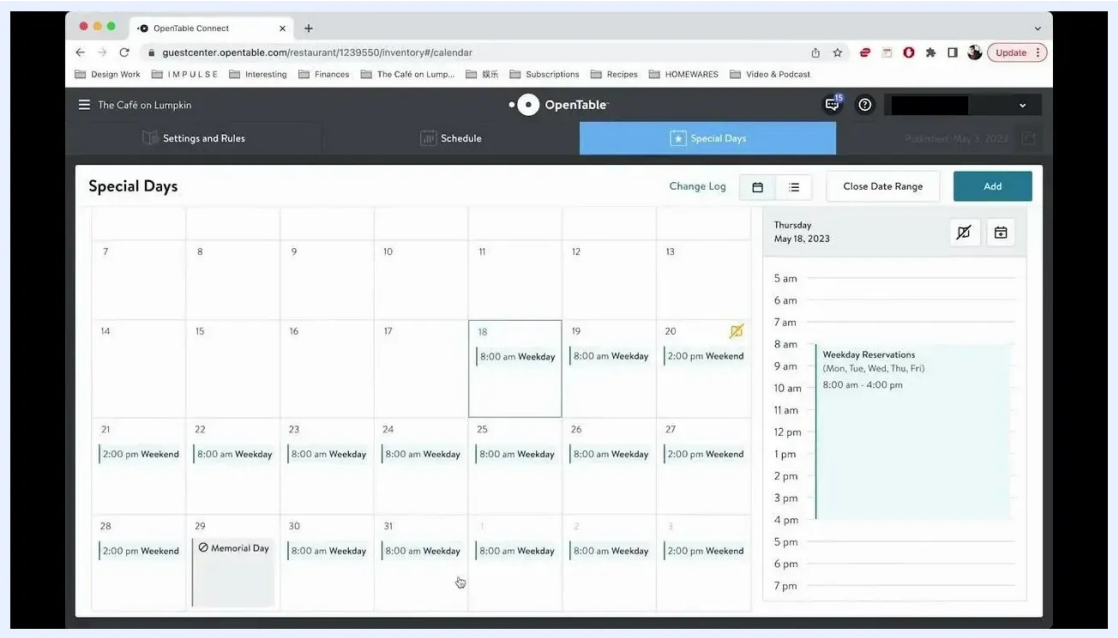


Reservation details screen with the status dropdown showing options including Cancelled

10. Set open or closed status for special days

For a special day such as Memorial Day, click the date in the calendar. If the day is marked "Blocked" or "Closed" but you are open, change the status to **Open**.

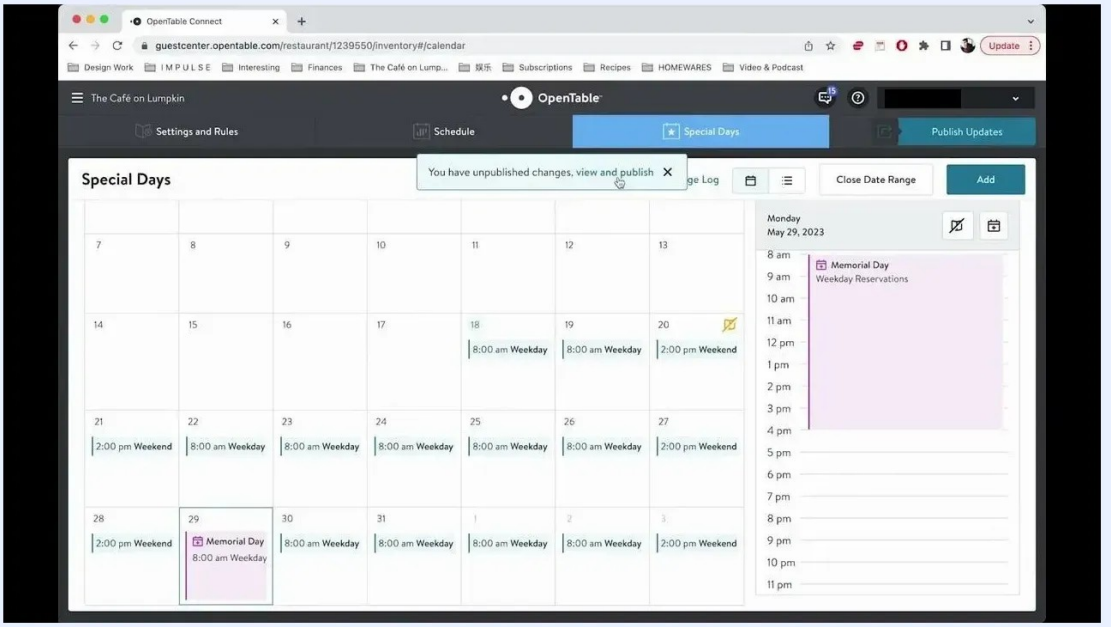
Set the reservation window as needed, for example 8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Then click **Save** to apply the changes.



Special day details panel for Memorial Day with options to add a shift, copy, or delete, and the day set to Open

11. Publish your changes

After you make adjustments, a notification tells you that you have unpublished changes. Click **view and publish** or **Publish Updates** to make your changes live.



Special Days calendar with the unpublished changes notification and the Publish Updates button

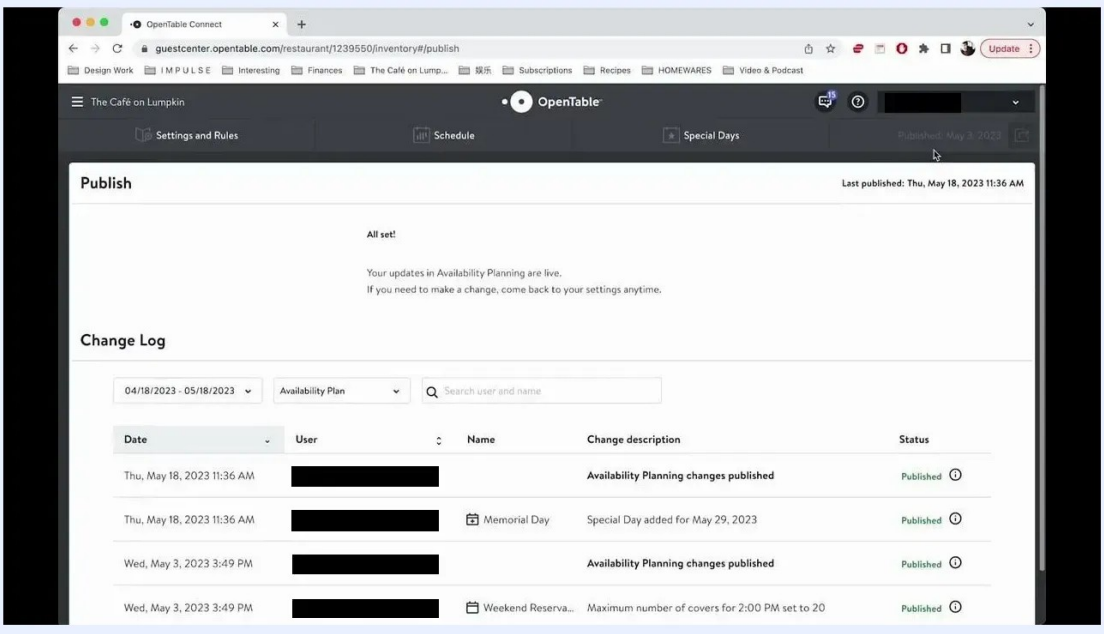
12. Review the publish confirmation and change log

Open the OpenTable Connect dashboard in your web browser and go to the **Publish** section. Confirm that this message appears: "All set! Your updates in Availability Planning are live. If you need to make a change, come back to your settings anytime."

The **Change Log** section lists recent changes. Each entry includes:

- The date and time of the change.
- The user who made the change, such as luke@thecafeonlumpkin.com.
- The name of the change, such as Memorial Day or Weekend Reservation.
- A description, such as "Special Day added for May 29, 2023" or "Maximum number of covers for 2:00 PM set to 20."
- The status, such as Published.

Use the filters above the log to select a date range (for example, 04/18/2023 – 05/18/2023) and a change type (for example, Availability Plan). You can also use the search bar to find a specific user or change name.



OpenTable dashboard showing the Publish confirmation and Change Log with recent updates and filters

Summary

You now know how to block reservations in OpenTable for a full day or a specific time range using the Special Days calendar. You also know how to cancel existing reservations, set special days to open or closed, and publish your updates. Check the Change Log to confirm that your changes are live and that your availability matches your operational needs and special events.