

One Fine Weekend -- Ojai - Diablo Magazine - September 2010 - East Bay

Escape to a sun soaked valley southeast of Santa Barbara and discover a truly relaxing weekend.

By Peter Crooks

Images Courtesy of Ojai Valley Inn and Spa

Charming Ojai is a city in the spirit of Andy Griffith's Mayberry—that is, if Mayberry had chic clothing and jewelry boutiques, organic restaurants, and a high-end coffee roastery. Thirty miles southeast of Santa Barbara, the picturesque town is surrounded by spectacular mountain walls. A weekend in Ojai should include:

9 a.m.

Morning Time

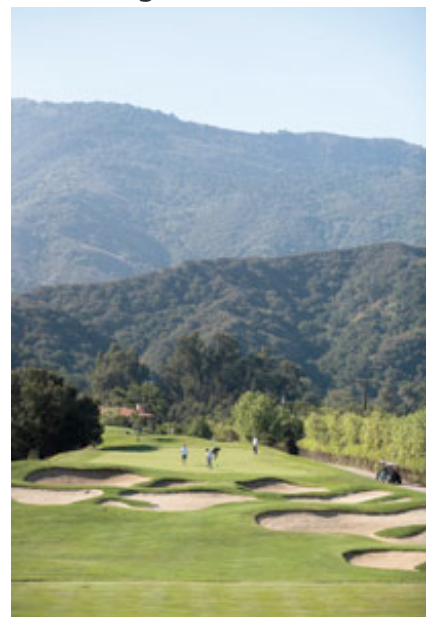
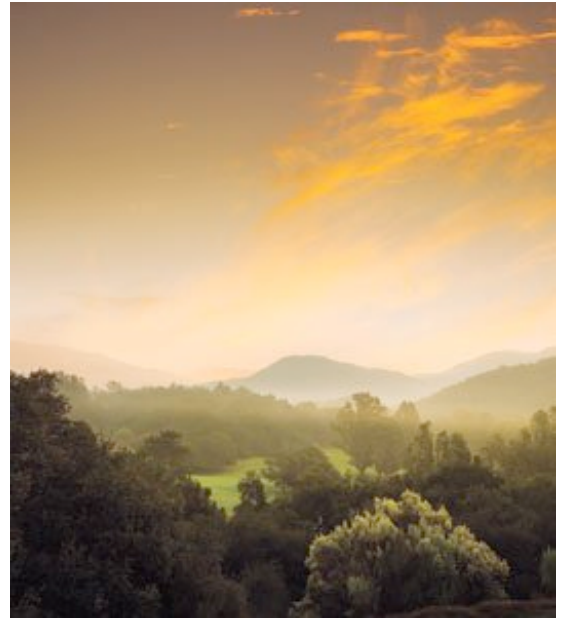
There's no better way to get your Ojai mojo flowing than a trip up Meditation Mount, a 32-acre sacred site at the east end of the valley. Filled with hiking trails, gardens, and a meditation room, the mountain offers incredible panoramic views of the valley below. meditation.com.

The Ojai Valley Inn and Spa's golf course is one of California's original classics, and has been named one of the top 100 courses in the world by The Golfer magazine. Designed by the legendary George C. Thomas Jr., the sprawling greens blend beautifully into the valley's natural landscape. Built in 1923 as a destination for Hollywood stars and producers, the resort is a tranquil, luxuriant oasis. Its Spanish-style campus offers gorgeous rooms, five excellent restaurants, and a world-class spa. ojairesort.com.

12 p.m.

Wine Tasting

You can hit the links, the spa, or the town, or you can visit one of California's great wine regions. Ojai is at the southern end of the Santa



Ynez wine country, made famous by the 2004 comedy Sideways. Taste some Pinot Noir at one of the many boutique wineries; just don't think about drinking any ****ing Merlot.

8 p.m.

Pink Moment

Definitely don't miss Ojai's "pink moment" each evening. As the sky turns dusky, the setting sun reflects off of the Pacific, and the walls of the valley are illuminated with radiant pink light. It needs to be seen to be believed, and it's at its most intense during the fall months.

Ojai also has its share of world-class cultural events: The Ojai Music Festival in June has attracted legends such as Igor Stravinsky and Aaron Copland, while Lawrence Ferlinghetti and Coleman Barks have recited their work at the Ojai Poetry Festival.

New this year, Diablo is partnering with the Ojai Valley Inn and Spa to present a series of outdoor movies. On October 30, we'll show Alfred Hitchcock's *The Birds*, with special guest Tippi Hedren. Go to diablomag.com/ojai to win a two-night getaway to the resort and two tickets to the show.

Ojai Facts:

Population: 8,150

Pretty Famous: Ojai was used in the classic 1939 film *Lost Horizon* to represent the fictional paradise Shangri-La

Distance from the Pacific Ocean: 13 miles

Why Ojai? The city's name comes from the Chumash word 'a'hwai', meaning 'moon'

