



OJAI VALLEY INN & SPA

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OJAI VALLEY INN & SPA'S CELEBRATED HISTORY

Location

The Ojai Valley Inn & Spa is located on 220 acres in the oak-covered Ojai Valley. Ojai (pronounced "oh hi") is an Indian name generally accepted as meaning "the nest," although some experts also interpret it as "the moon." The valley was home to the Chumash Indians who found sanctuary in its canyons and mountains.

During the late 1700s Ojai was settled by the Spanish and Mission societies, followed by Don Fernando Tico who established Rancho Ojai in 1837 with a Mexican land grant. In 1874, the valley's first settlement was named Nordhoff in honor of an east coast journalist who had publicized this special area. Not until 1917 did this little town become known as "Ojai."

Today, Ojai is an inspiring retreat with a surprising blend of cosmopolitan style and small-town charm. Home to an eclectic mix of writers, artists and philosophers as well as agricultural growers, the town also hosts a nationally acclaimed tennis tournament ("The Ojai"), and a music festival of international renown.

The town, located in one of the last unspoiled areas in Southern California, is just 90 minutes northwest of Los Angeles, and 45 minutes southeast of Santa Barbara.

History and Character

The history of the Ojai Valley Inn began in 1923 when wealthy Ohio glass manufacturer Edward Drummond Libbey commissioned architect Wallace Neff to build a clubhouse for his private golf course. This became his personal winter retreat in Ojai. Today, the original clubhouse, known as the Neff Lounge, is still the welcoming focal point of the Inn.

Libbey was also responsible for building the downtown post office, arcade business district, and the park that bears his name.

Since its beginning in 1923, the Inn has welcomed generations of discriminating travelers to relax in an atmosphere of casual elegance. Many notable guests, from heads of state to movie stars, have

CELEBRATED HISTORY/PAGE 2

sought the peace and quiet of the Ojai Valley Inn & Spa. The lure of Ojai Valley's beauty was so compelling that Frank Capra used the valley to depict Shangri-La in his classic film, "Lost Horizon."

A different kind of glory distinguished the Inn in 1942 when it was transformed into Camp Oak to be used as a military training center for a battalion of 1,000 army troops. In 1944, the Army turned the base over to the Navy for a rest and recuperation facility.

After World War II, the Inn was returned to private ownership and reopened in 1947.

After several changes of ownership, the Inn underwent a major renovation and expansion in 1986. New rooms were added, the golf course was completely redesigned, a second swimming pool and fitness center were added, and eight new tennis courts opened. At the same time, a 4,800 square foot conference center was built and the dining rooms were modernized.

A 35,000-square foot luxury spa in the classic Spanish Colonial style opened in December 1997. Bill Mahan, who is based out of Santa Barbara, designed the "spa village." He is also the architect for the most recent expansion project.

Recently

Exciting enhancements were recently completed at the Ojai Valley Inn & Spa, a AAA Five Diamond property. After years of careful planning and preparation, the Ojai Valley Inn & Spa underwent a major renovation of the eighty-year-old landmark resort. During the renovation project, all areas of the property were upgraded and the infrastructure was greatly improved, while enhancing the Inn's unique sense of place by continuing the charming style of the resort's original Spanish Colonial architecture.

Upon the project's completion in late 2005, the Inn debuted 308 rooms and suites, new restaurants and lounges, a new ballroom and conference center, renovated golf clubhouse, redesigned pool and an improved entrance and lobby. Meeting and function space has almost tripled, high-speed internet access is now available in all rooms and wireless internet access is located throughout the property.

The Inn's original design by noted California architect Wallace Neff has been carefully preserved by ensuring that all new construction during the 2003-05 renovation project continued his original style. Today, the expanded resort still resembles a private estate with the residential feel and warmth of Old California.

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