

SERENITY SUNSETS & STYLE!

HI... FROM OJAI!

I RECENTLY MADE MY WAY TO OJAI, CALIFORNIA FOR A STAY AT THE Ojai Valley Spa and Resort. I was born and raised in Southern California, but somehow had never made it to Ojai. That all changed when I finally made a visit for a quick girls weekend. I'd heard it was a destination known for its spiritual roots, amazing spa, and serious golf, but I didn't know what else to expect. Yoga perhaps? Much to my surprise, the 200 acre property was a complete and wondrous world of its own.

The grounds are spectacular, with acres of mature trees, lush gardens and oceans of eucalyptus and lavender plants. The resort's Spanish villas dot the landscape, which is surrounded by mountains. Ojai gets 360 days of sunshine a year due to its position in the valley, making vacation planning a cinch.

Ojai inspired me to be adventurous. I took my first private tennis lesson with a very patient instructor. I even took a perfume class with a certified apothecary specialist where I designed my very own fragrance experimenting with various scents, and oils.

I originally thought Ojai was solely an adult destination. Not so. The resort houses a wonderful kids camp called "Camp Oak." The facility is designed for the active inquisitive child and offers hiking, an artist cottage, campfires, and more. Being that the grounds are so vast, children are free to run through the trees and grassy hills. The only two sounds you'll hear are the breeze and their laughter in the distance.

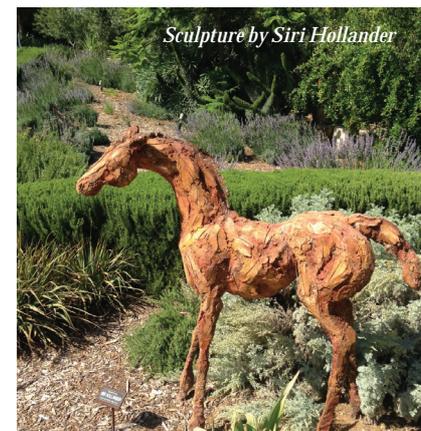
The wine selection from the resort's lengthy menu was accompanied by a seasoned sommelier. The food was always fresh, and the chefs pride themselves on using local products, some of which are grown on the property. There are also many great restaurants to choose from, plus a pub and a great juice and coffee bar for morning pick-me ups.

On this trip I opted to experience things I have never done before and veered away from my typical workout routine or lounging by the pool with cocktails. We often vacation to relax, but end up on the computer or iPhone, talking about how much fun we are having rather than being— dare I say, "present?" Well, I was totally present, and it was very enjoyable.

The vibe was peaceful and inviting, without pretention. Even the mountains seemed to be smiling at you all day. Right up until the gorgeous pink sunsets finish the day. Boy, do I miss those pink sunsets. www.ojairesort.com



Catching up in the herb garden



Sculpture by Siri Hollander



Ojai Valley Spa and Resort