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By *Rahim B. Kanani* on 7:39 pm

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The Perfect Hideaway to Explore Carmel-by-the-Sea in California

“We offer a very expansive hot breakfast in the mornings including pastries and granola, and all the items are made in-house, including our afternoon fresh-baked cookies,” explained Hilary Newsom, President of [PlumpJack Group](#) and owner of [The Hideaway](#) in Carmel. In an interview, we discussed recent renovations and the re-launch of the hotel, coupled with the best way to experience the town in terms of neighborhoods to

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explore, delicious places to wine and dine, and unique places to shop.

The President of PlumpJack Group since 2009, Hilary Newsom joined the company as Director of Marketing in 1996 after an early career working in fashion merchandising. These days she collaborates with department heads and oversees operations and marketing of the individual businesses. Passionate about philanthropy since childhood, she is a committed fundraiser and serves on the boards of several charitable organizations.



Almost exactly a year ago, The PlumpJack Group announced its acquisition of The Cobblestone Inn, renamed it to The Hideaway, and began a series of updates to the property. What kinds of renovations were made, and how did you balance the history of the property with the design vision you had moving forward?

The renovations to The Hideaway were pretty significant without changing the layout and structure of the building. The guestroom updates included new bathrooms, fireplaces, all new soft goods and furniture, plus window treatments. We revitalized the courtyard to include more communal areas, such as the fire pit with comfortable couches and nice bistro-style tables for guests to enjoy breakfast, snacks and wine hour outdoors. The lobby and lounge area was opened up and includes lots of space for indoor dining and lounging, where guests can relax and socialize during breakfast, wine hour or anytime in between – we have games and coffee table books to keep people occupied during their stay.

The décor is very much aligned with beachy feel of Carmel, which is very charming and quaint. We definitely maintained the cottage feel of the Inn, but elevated the design to be more clean and modern. Our design firm, ShopWorks, used simple, elegant

materials and darker wood tones to give the space a warm and romantic feel.



Now open, what makes this property particularly unique for Carmel-by-the-Sea?

I would say the Inn's modern feel is probably the most unique as many of the Inns and B&Bs offer a more traditional feel. We offer a very expansive hot breakfast in the mornings including pastries and granola, and all the items are made in-house, including our afternoon fresh-baked cookies. We also offer a great wine hour with cheese offerings from the local Cheese Shop in Carmel Plaza and wines that are made by our wine buyer for PlumpJack Wine & Spirits in San Francisco. We also offer PlumpJack branded wines for sale, along with local craft beer. The Inn has complimentary cruiser bikes for its guests to take out and our outdoor courtyard is very inviting and comfortable for guests to relax and socialize.

For those planning a trip for the first time to the area, what would be your top five things to do, see and experience?

- First and foremost, experiencing Carmel Beach is a must. It's so close to the property and is a stunning beach that is well-kept by volunteers who take great pride in their community.
- Exploring the town of Carmel-by-the-Sea and venturing beyond the shops of downtown and going into the neighborhoods to look at all of the amazing homes – from wonderful beach front properties to charming little cottages that look like they are plucked from the pages of a fairy tale. The town of Carmel is really unlike any other – it's magical.

Visiting all of the amazing art galleries – one of our favorites is the Weston Gallery that is one of the oldest galleries of vintage and contemporary photography.

- Get your fix of old-school candies at the Cottage of Sweets where you can get a bag of saltwater taffy along with other fun treats. I never leave Carmel without getting my dad a bag of a mixed saltwater taffy.
- The Sunset Center which is within a block of The Hideaway has a great calendar of performances, from musical theater to the symphony and rock n' roll icons.



In terms of dining, what kinds of restaurants and wine bars might you recommend to get a true flavor of the richness and diversity of the town?

- La Bicyclette and Casanova are both popular restaurants in town that offer great food and good energy. If you're looking for something a little more intimate and upscale, La Balena is a wonderful little Italian restaurant serving rustic dishes.
- Cocktails at Vesuvio's Starlight Rooftop Lounge is a fun way to end a long day of exploring the town with a cocktail by one of their fire pits and Grasings is a great local spot that serves excellent cocktails in a cozy setting.
- There are lots of great restaurants in Carmel, but if you want to experience Pebble Beach without actually playing golf, The Bench at the Lodge at Pebble Beach has great food and an unbelievable view of the course and the ocean.
- Galante Vineyards Tasting Room in Carmel has great wine and fun atmosphere – very approachable and welcoming

- Vino Napoli is a great little wine bar – if you’re feeling peckish, but it’s too early for dinner and too late for lunch, they have great snacks to go along with your wine. They are also open a little later for those who are interested in having one last glass before retiring to bed.

For some retail therapy, what are some of your favorite shops, art houses or otherwise to peruse?

- Jan de Luz Linens – Beautiful French linens
- Carmel Bay Company – this is a great little gift shop, perfect for picking up something small to pack in your suitcase, like European soaps, little dishes, leather wallets, etc.
- Adamson Antiques & Interior – I love this little shop and their French Provencal treasures
- Burns Cowboy Shop – this is a fun shop to peruse and is actually the oldest family-owned western apparel retail shop in the US – hard to believe, but that’s what they say.
- Thinker Toys – a great children’s toy store and they are open later than most of the shops in town.

 Bio

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