

ENTREE

AN UNCOMPROMISING
AND CONFIDENTIAL
TRAVELERS NEWSLETTER
• AN INSIDER'S LOOK AT
HOTELS, RESTAURANTS &
TRAVEL AROUND THE WORLD

Spring 2020

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Founded 1981...our 39th year

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WE RECENTLY SENT THE WELL-RESPECTED TRAVEL WRITER, *TODD Kliman*, on a country-spanning tour of *Germany* and a whirlwind, mind-expanding exploration of what marketeers in that country are calling *BauhausLand*—signal stops in the rise and fall and rise again of the architectural school that recently celebrated its 100th birthday. Here is part one of his two-part account. The second installment will appear in our Summer issue.

Founded in 1919 by the visionary architect *Walter Gropius*, Bauhaus is inarguably the most influential design aesthetic of our time, so ubiquitous its radicalism has been in some ways defanged. You can see the Bauhaus thumbprint (flat-topped roofs, gleaming white walls, an emphasis on extreme functionality) in buildings and structures around the globe, from the small settlement community of Greenbelt, Md., just outside Washington, D.C., to Tel Aviv, home to the largest concentration of Bauhaus dwellings in the world; in the continuing lure of Midcentury Modern in high-end home interiors; and even, yes, in the vision of the cheapie home goods giant Ikea.



We began our excursion in the west, in the city of *Karlsruhe*, 10 kilometers from the French border and the site of one of the early Bauhaus settlement towns. Sometimes lost in the glorification of the Bauhaus aesthetic that we see in the West was the utilitarianism-for-the-masses that was at the heart of its

mission—the vision, bold and uncompromising, of a new way of living and organizing. The *Dammerstock* settlement drives that home in a big way. The linked townhomes that are still in use are functional, airy, and affordable, with plenty of green surrounding them—everything a city-dweller could want from a place to live. Seen from a distance, however, the long, cell-block structures are suggestive, at a certain angle, of, well, prison wards. Thus, the double-sidedness that Bauhaus, at the level of the masses, represents. After spending the day imagining the architectural and social vision that might have been, had the Nazis not come to power (and by the way, the Third Reich hated Bauhaus—“architectural Bolshevism,” they sneered—a fact that ought to cheer you if you should ever tire of the stringent formalism), you’ll likely want to take your mind off Bauhaus for a while and tour the yellow-painted *Karlsruhe Palace*, wandering its garden paths and taking in its lush greenery. Karlsruhe is near the Baden-Württemberg wine region, notable for its crisp, minerally whites, and we availed ourselves of several varietals at a leisurely lunch at Erasmus, an organic-certified restaurant in the Dammerstock. The Italian regional cooking rewards with its lush but simple pastas and mastery of the not-so-little things, like a small dish of exquisite baby potatoes. Also rewarding: a trip to *Anders auf dem Turmberg*, a onetime Michelin-starred restaurant with a commanding view of the city (it’s literally at the top of a mountain, so, unless you’re primed for a hike before dinner, take the charming cable car to the top), not to mention gorgeous preparations of fish and seafood (don’t miss the bouillabaisse), beautiful simple desserts, and expert service.



From Karlsruhe we booked a short train trip east to *Erfurt*, which surprised us with its bustle and charm. Erfurt is not essential to the Bauhaus story, but the shopping is excellent (many small boutiques and gift shops), as is the museum-going. And we were keen on getting some historical context of Bauhaus, which rose to prominence around the same time as Hitler. We found it at the art museum “*Angermuseum*” in a fantastic exhibit curated by *Patrick Roessler*, a professor of media and communications at the University of Erfurt, titled “*Bildermagazin der Zeit*.” As the show made clear, in magazine covers the professor spent more than a decade collecting from private sources (including some blessed with illustrations by Man Ray and Miro), it was the avant-garde, in media and in the arts, who were alive to the malevolent threat of Germany at a time when apologists were rampant and mainstream media was slow to grasp what was happening.

We hopped a car the next day and headed to *Weimar*, onetime home to Goethe—and n.b., if you travel to Germany, expect to hear that name invoked over and over. Which makes perfect sense if you think about it: Goethe is a link to the past that is not tainted with ties to the Third Reich. (In much the same way, the marketing push behind BauhausLand is a way to reference a past that does not include—or only somewhat includes; more on this in a moment—Nazis.) To be continued and concluded in the Summer 2020 issue.



ENTREE REMEMBERS A TIME WHEN THE *BAJA* peninsula's southern reaches were composed more of empty beaches than bustling beach resorts. But that age is over, developers having sunk their talons in, walling off pristine stretches of sand to fabricate exclusive playgrounds for lobster-toned sightseers. Which is why we are so grateful to be welcomed into *Cabo Pulmo*, a small seaside fishing town within a national park reached through a few miles of rough dirt road some 60 miles from *Cabo San Lucas*. A diver's paradise, it is notable for *Bahía Pulmo*, which at an estimated 20,000 years old is the oldest of only three coral reefs on the American continent's western coast. Steinbeck noted its terrific abundance of sea life in "The Log of the Sea of Cortez" while Jacques Cousteau labeled it "the aquarium of the world." We feel even luckier to discover *Casa Cactus*, a secluded and beyond charming arrangement of three units surrounded by wild desert beauty just a five-minute stroll from the beach. The property is owned by *Cheryl Harris*, a Big Sur local who has lived her dreams in Baja for the past 17 years. Harris has gone all out in creating a sanctuary that caters to guests while not interfering with the serenity and culture of the land that surrounds it. At Casa Cactus, a secret garden of hummingbird-favored flowers and snaking



succulents leads from a footpath dotted with Balinese sculpture to one of three rentable residences, each festooned with enchanting tile work. Here, light may filter in through the colored glass of your headboard while an open-air living room or palapa-clad patio beckon to revive you with a morning coffee or sunset cocktail. Each are stunning in their own way, with full kitchens, bathrooms, solar-powered facilities and all necessary creature comforts, but limited modern distractions (meaning there's no TV or A/C, and an internet connection can be precarious). Waking naturally as the sunlight spread through our "Secret Garden" cottage, we'd knock the sleep from eyes in beach chairs positioned just outside our front door, watching tiny

geckos scramble up the walls and birds jockey for the first nectar of the morning while the odd black-tailed jackrabbit might scamper past. Next we'd gather some beach gear Harris thoughtfully provides—snorkels and fins for the adults, sand toys for the little one—and amble down to the beach, passing the occasional wandering horse and perhaps stopping for a handmade taquito on the way. With a few miles of rough road separating us from greater society, as well as an environmentally minded populace, the beaches of Cabo Pulmo are wonderfully free of crowds and rubbish, crescents of small stones and sand dunes, with jaw-dropping views of the sky, Sea of Cortez and ragged coast in every direction. If fishing or diving are your priorities, Harris is more than happy to recommend the best dive shops or tour guides in the areas, having been in the area for so long after being introduced by a fisherman ex-boyfriend. The same goes for trails for hikers, birders and mountain bikers. Prioritizing repose, as always, we concluded our lazy beach hours with lunch at beachside La Palapa, where the ceviches, aguachiles and grilled fish were divine (we still dream of the simple, superlative sea bass) From there we'd return to the beach or our casita for a siesta or massage, ending the evening by preparing dinner at home (one must bring in their groceries) before a bout of impressive stargazing. Or we'd consider one of the town's other restaurants before deciding to return to the excellent cooking of La Palapa. Harris has three units to rent. The smallest is the *Secret Garden*, which was cozy but comfortable for two adults and a child; the biggest is the more luxurious, two-story *Courtyard Suite*. The



entire region is protected enough where doors are still left unlocked, an age that will certainly disappear should the road leading in ever be paved (and yes, there are threats of this). At the complex, which can be rented entirely by a large party, as well as individuals, we reconnected with the Baja we remember so fondly, a quiet, sheltered oasis where the desert collides with rich marine life, with the help of an experienced, kind and charismatic host. A place where neighbors know and help each other through a shared love of the pristine land. We only hope it can stay this way with the steady pressure of mega-resort developers scratching at its gates, to conserve a landscape and quiet way of seaside living that one too seldom gets to experience in our noisy new millennium. cabopulmovilla.com

THIS YEAR, *RED CARNATION* CELEBRATES 100 YEARS OF HOSPITALITY. AS one of 42 family-owned and run *TTC* travel brands, Red Carnation's history began when travel legend *Stanley Tollman's* father—*Solomon Tollman*, opened a small hotel in *Paternoster* (a small fishing village

in *South Africa*) in August of 1920. Solomon treated every guest as though they were his only guest, welcoming each with the warmth and hospitality he had not found in his own travels. Working day and night, he built that hotel into a thriving business. In the process, he defined the TTC family legacy—Driven by Service. Today, President and Founder *Beatrice Tollman*, one of hospitality’s most extraordinary visionaries, ensures that each and every Red Carnation Hotel shares the same vision for service excellence and warm and generous hospitality. The collection is lovingly named after the signature flower Mrs. Tollman’s husband Stanley always wears, and today this symbol of hospitality is worn by every member of their team.



The Red Carnation Hotel collection now proudly stands at 20 exceptional hotels around the world, each unique and special, whilst sharing the founding values that define this extraordinary family-owned and run business that is so proud to be celebrating this milestone in 2020.

The guest experience is always at the heart of Red Carnation, where talented teams exceed expectations with warm and caring service, delicious cuisine and thoughtful touches. Red Carnation also connects guests with the local destination through authentic and meaningful experiences, beautiful and restorative design, and curated art collections. These hotels are truly the art of hospitality where no request is too large and no detail is too small.

You can find a Red Carnation Hotel practicing the highest art of refined hotel-keeping in *London, Ireland, Guernsey, Dorset, Geneva, Botswana, South Africa* and *Florida*. Four special Red Carnation properties have been awarded the prestigious *Forbes Travel Guide Five-Star* rating. Joining sister property *Hotel 41* in receiving the highest accolade are *London’s The Milestone Hotel* and *The Egerton House Hotel*, alongside *Ashford Castle, Virtuoso’s “Hotel of the Year,*



the only hotel in *Ireland* to achieve five-star status. The *Forbes Travel Guide* is the world's most highly regarded independent rating system for luxury hotels and is widely recognized as the industry's gold standard, with a meticulous and anonymous process assessing every single aspect of a hotel. Red Carnation Hotels is part of the TTC family of brands and works in proud partnership with its *TreadRight Foundation* to *#MakeTravelMatter. redcarnation.com.*

WINES FOR THE ROARING TWENTIES: POETIC AND LYRICAL VINO from Sicily—*Etna Rosso Erse 2016 Red Wine Nerello Mascalese*, estate bottled by *Tenuta Di Fessina*; *Laeneo Nerello Cappuccio 2017* also from Sicily; *2017 Nuddara Etna Bianco Carricante*; *Etna Bianco Erse 2017* white wine; *Etna Rosato 2017 Erse Nerello Mascalese* estate bottled; *Etna Rosso Erse 2016* red wine; *2012 Tenuta Di Fessina Etna Rosso Riserva il; Musmeci da uve Nerello Mascalese*, estate bottled. tenutadifessina.com



The *J. de Villebois* brand is a unique selection of award-winning Sauvignon Blanc wines straight from the very heart of the Loire Valley. This prestigious range of wines born in carefully-selected, premium vineyards are worthy of any cellar. Villebois is committed to creating premium wines under the prestigious appellations of *Sancerre*, *Pouilly-Fumé*, *Touraine* and *IGP Val de Loire*. We were particularly entranced with their *Pouilly-Fume 2018* a wine expressing the gentle marl and clay terroir with smoky and flint aromas and remarkable and characteristic fusil/gun powder smell and taste. But our most memorable Villebois wine is their *2018 Pinot Noir Val De Loire*, a juicy Loire rosé, with a bright light rose-peach color and a nose that reveals some fresh raspberry flavors followed by a red fruit bouquet (grenadine, blueberry, sour cherries). The palate is silky with an airy freshness. The intense black currant and red cherry aromas dominate the mid-palate while the long-lasting grapefruit flavors nicely compliment the zesty finale. vineyardbrands.com

Into stronger stuff? You can do no better than *Old Pulteney Single Malt Scotch Whisky*, aged 12 years, born in the port of *Wick Caithness*, matured over fine American oak. Robust yet smooth, with a delicate hint of tangy sea air. Traditionally crafted using techniques that other distillers have long abandoned, this winner of numerous gold medals at the most prestigious international competitions is a high watermark of quality spirits. *Speyburn Arranta Casks Single Malt Scotch Whisky*, a limited release, uses first fill ex-bourbon casks in American oak for a bold flavor profile. Rich golden color, with flavors of toffee, vanilla, honey, and coconut plus walnut and almond with a long-lasting spicy finish. Arranta means bold, daring and intrepid in Gaelic and this whisky is a hell of a bargain at \$40.

THE WONDERS OF *SOUTH AMERICA* NEVER CEASE TO AMAZE. ENTER A world of natural beauty showcasing lush green tropical rainforests, impressive ancient ruins of the *Inca Empire*, the towering Andean peaks, enhanced by colonial architecture and other-worldly relics.



Treat yourself to delicious Argentinian wines, indulge in Peruvian delicacies at the popular restaurant, *Mayta* or dine at a Michelin-starred restaurants in *Rio de Janeiro* as part of your *Luxury Gold Small Group Journey* experience. A world of immersive journeys awaits you, each with VIP experiences, exceptional dining, elegant hotels and a traveling concierge who's there to tailor everything to your desires. Receive discounts for early payment on *Peru, Argentina, Brazil* and *Chile* itineraries. Contact *Natalie Rosenfeld* at *Santa Barbara Travel*, (805) 869-1100 or e-mail nrosenfeld@sbtravel.com.

TO EXPERIENCE THE PRISTINE, WILD *CALIFORNIA* COAST, LEAVE THE CITY behind and drive the famed *Highway 1* to charming *Cambria* and *San Simeon*, home of immaculate beaches, charming stops along the way, and, of course, the dazzling and regal *Hearst Castle*. The breathtaking *Highway 1 Discovery Route*, is a must-do for anyone who yearns to see California as it once was, before hyper-development changed the coastline for much of the state. Highway 1 is the most iconic roadway in California, but not all sections are created equal. The length that passes along the coast through *San Luis Obispo County* (known as SLO CAL) brims with the best of the Highway 1 experience. And as the gateway to Big Sur, this SLO CAL stretch is well within reach.



What sets this highway apart? One-hundred miles of Pacific coastline, half of which are protected. A national marine sanctuary and a national estuary. Thirteen state parks. An elephant seal rookery and Monarch butterfly preserves. A Scenic Byway designation from the U.S. Department of Transportation. Two historic lighthouses and five historic piers. The only drivable beach in California. Centuries-old forests. Hundreds of acres of coastal vineyards. Uncrowded white sand beaches. History and heritage at every turn with nine locales on the National Register. And Hearst Castle, a hilltop beauty that is a State and National Historic Landmark. This is one of the road trips of your life, one that glides past uncrowded sand beaches, crashing waves, and wine grapes ripening in the sun. And as the gateway to Big Sur, this SLO CAL stretch is well within reach.



We stopped for a delightful lunch at the landmark *Robin's Restaurant* in tranquil, historic Cambria. Housed in a restored adobe home, Robin's is a favorite with locals and visitors for its warm hospitality, cozy atmosphere and charming gardens. Robin's offers

“handcrafted global cuisine” and we dug into crispy Vietnamese spring rolls with kimchee, chili oil and plum-ginger dipping sauce followed by an unforgettable grilled chicken club with honey-smoked bacon, roasted Anaheim chile, avocado and chipotle aioli on a ciabatta bun. We then easily cruised just 5 minutes to San Simeon to our oasis by the sea: *The Cavalier Oceanfront Resort*, the only oceanfront resort in San Simeon and Cambria, just three miles from Hearst Castle, seven miles from the Elephant Seal Habitat (Rookery), and 10 miles from the Piedras Blancas Lighthouse.

With 90 beachside rooms, the Cavalier provides panoramic oceanfront rooms (some are just 20 feet from the Pacific) and comfortable ocean view accommodations, plus very friendly, welcoming service all around. Our room had a wood-burning fireplace, private patio and a deep soaking tub. While it’s ideal for families, we’d say it’s also great for romance.

Along with that, the Cavalier’s in-house *Cavalier Coastal Kitchen* is led by Chef *Samuel Cots*, a graduate of one of Spain’s foremost culinary institutions, Hofmann Culinary Arts School. A native of Barcelona, Chef Cots brings a passion for fresh ingredients and refined flavors to the Cavalier. For dinner, we exulted in a perfectly prepared filet mignon with carrot purée, grilled asparagus and mushroom butter. All with stunning views of the Pacific. And all elegantly and efficiently served by the gracious and professional *Tuyet*, a 15-year member of the lovely Cavalier staff. The Cavalier’s breakfasts and lunches were also great and generously plated which helped provide fuel for sightseeing and walking and taking in the gorgeous local scenery of San Simeon.

The Cavalier provides thoughtful touches in the room, such as binoculars to view the many seals, dolphins and whales swimming just offshore. This easy-on-the-pocketbook property is a short walk to enchanting nearby beaches and parks, some with fire pits, and the famous, not-to-be-missed elephant seal rookery is nearby. The Cavalier offers free high speed WiFi and room service. And, as mentioned, over-the-top Hearst Castle is minutes away, as are adjacent full-service spa services provided by Diva Spa. If you feel energetic, there is a spiffy fitness center, two beachside swimming pools and a bubbling hot tub.



There are many magnificent sights to see along the Highway 1 Discovery Route. If you need a respite from the madness, go there to get in a true California state of mind. The Cavalier is magic—we slept with ocean waves soothing our ears and even saw a whale spouting. For more information and reservations, visit: cavalierresort.com and highway1discoveryroute.com.

LIFE OCCASIONALLY PRESENTS US WITH VERY UNEXPECTED REWARDING discoveries. For example, we found artist *Noah Verrier* on Instagram, of all places. Normally, we'd expect to encounter an artist of his caliber in a museum or top gallery. Noah paints the everyday objects and things that usually go unnoticed by most of us. Lemons, peonies, bananas, milk and cookies, even a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. But make no mistake—his work is masterful and painterly, reminiscent of still life greats like Chardin, Sargent and Manet, three of his inspirations, yet with his own talented perspective. These must spring from a fertile mind and the result of his studies with such acclaimed art professors as the acclaimed Cuban-American painter *Lilian Garcia-Roig* and the idiosyncratic and imaginative *Mark Messersmith*.



Noah Verrier holds an MFA from Florida State University and was an art professor there. Over his 30-year career he has carried on the traditions of the master realists while imbuing his work with his own curious insights. Sometimes playful, sometimes joyful, sometimes just downright natural and beautiful, they display all the skill and lucidity of a master. You will be amazed at the way Verrier captures reflections on silver goblets, the transparency of glass vases, the softness of petals and the juiciness of fruits.



A little history: in 2008 Noah was inspired by the A Painting A Day movement and decided to start his own blog. His daily paintings are painted in one session, wet on wet or “alla prima” usually in just a few short hours. For Noah, each daily painting is a prayer to God, a small intimate moment where he gets to be still and contemplate, analyze, and interpret the light, colors, and shapes before him. In 2014 Noah was chosen as one of the nation’s top 40 painters by “New American Paintings” Magazine. His paintings reside in private and public collections around the world, including the President’s house (FSU), and the Florida State Capitol. We urge you to see for yourself his work at #noahverrier on Instagram, noahverrier.blogspot.com or write noahverrier@gmail.com. Buy this artist now before his prices skyrocket.

WE STOLE OFF FOR A TWO-NIGHT ADVENTURE IN LAS VEGAS AND were wowed by the following: *Bazaar Meat by José Andrés* in the *Sahara Hotel*. A vibrant mix of sophisticated cuisine, artful service, and playful theatrics, Bazaar Meat is where dining transcends into fête extraordinaire. Bazaar Meat offers its own unique flair, all



with the promise of an experience of a lifetime. Serving “traditional meets modern” Spanish cuisine, this is a carnivorous celebration unlike any other. The Bazaar showcases the unbridled creativity and rich talents of José and his ThinkFoodGroup team. A groundbreaking culinary experience, Bazaar Meat by José Andrés is the James Beard award-winning chef’s wild and wonderful celebration of art of preparing steaks, chops, tartares, carpaccios, and more: there’s acorn-fed pig, mouth-watering Waygu, 8-10 year old Holstein and precious Charolais. Avoiding meat? They will serve you uni, caviar and lobster. Enjoy nuanced, spirited cuisine and cocktails for which The Bazaar by José Andrés has become known on both coasts, in a strikingly seductive setting. Be sure you try the cotton candy foie gras and crispy amaranth Ferran Adrià olives. bazaarmeat@saharalasevegas.com

Mott 32 in *The Palazzo*. The name pays homage to 32 Mott Street in New York, where the city’s first Chinese convenience store opened in 1891. The store served as the nucleus for what is now a vibrant Chinatown in one of the most dynamic cities in the world—with the best food. This is the best Chinese food in all Las Vegas: a contemporary restaurant located at The Palazzo’s casino floor in The Venetian Resort on the Las Vegas strip, a true celebration of Hong Kong culture. The restaurant represents both culinary tradition and a very modern Chinese city. The provenance of ingredients here is of paramount importance to Mott 32 as they embrace unique global flavors. They practice ethical sourcing by using organic and sustainable ingredients wherever possible, while working closely with farms to ensure uncompromising quality of the food. Chefs utilize the latest in modern and innovative cooking techniques from around the world to create tantalizing dishes, with a focus on Cantonese with Beijing and Szechuan influences. We were deliriously happy with their Peking Duck. Here the aim is to bring the best of time-honored recipes passed down through generations to a new audience. This particular level of modernity combined with a respect for tradition makes Mott 32 so spectacularly unique.



GIADA inside *The Cromwell* where Emmy Award-winning celebrity chef *Giada De Laurentiis* shares her delicious Italian cuisine. This charming Las Vegas restaurant welcomes diners with warm colors, comfortable furniture and natural lighting thanks to the restaurant’s huge retractable windows. Guests can

eat in the dining room or lounge boasting breathtaking views of the Bellagio fountains and Caesars Palace. The menu consists of Italian cuisine with refreshing, Californian influences and a wine selection that has earned Wine Spectator's 2019 Best of Award of Excellence. Menu items include lemon spaghetti, chicken cacciatore, marsala herb chicken meatballs, rosemary focaccia and lemon flatbread and vegetable Bolognese rigatoni. GIADA adds a lighter touch to her dishes, all while staying true to classic Italian recipes. There are also family-style options, along with vegan and gluten-free choices. Desserts, like the lemon ricotta cookies and sorbets, serve as the perfect ending. Guests can watch chefs prepare fresh pasta, bread and desserts from the open kitchen. The delightful scents of freshly baked meals are sure to entice the senses. GIADA also features an antipasto station, a first for Italian eateries on the Las Vegas Strip. caesars.com

We now admit it: we did go see a racy topless show: *X Burlesque Las Vegas* in *The Flamingo* promises “provocative, daring and scintillating action” and says it will deliver “adult fantasies to the stage.” Well, you be the judge. We can't say for sure these are our fantasies but it's a bubbly production show led by a troupe of gorgeous dancers.



We made the right choice in selecting *The Palazzo* for our Las Vegas hotel. The Palazzo's draw is suites nearly double the size of your average Las Vegas hotel room. Their standard suite has everything you need and more. We'd call them divine, elegant, spacious and perfectly designed, offering the epitome of indulgence and luxury. We got a jumbo suite with a living room and a very plush king bed. The Palazzo is a retreat of ultimate relaxation, complete with top tier bedding and spacious Italian marble bathrooms. Housekeeping is perfection. They pay attention to the smallest details here, providing the ultimate comfort and style. We slept like babies and awoke rested and refreshed. Opt for the newer rooms in *The Tower*, they are well worth it. venetian.com/towers/the-palazzo

GREAT SPRING READS: WE WANT ALL WHO LOVE TRAVEL to read, give and receive THE RED BANDANNA TRAVEL BOOK, *The Medicine of Traveling*. The author, noted luxury travel advisor *Joanne Socha*, shares the methods she uses with her treasured clients to inspire and guide those with wanderlust to reach the most fulfilling ends. Joanne believes travel starts with our dreams, our yearnings and sometimes our



inhibitions. She sees travel as a healing medicine for heart and mind and she's right: with her book you will build restorative surprises into every journey you take. Her philosophy and mission are exhilarating and have the power to generate unforgettable experiences. A lot that surrounds our travel dreams has to do with imagination. With Joanne Socha's book your adventures will soar, your insights will evolve, and happy memories will last forever. This is an artful workbook to savor for all ages. Published by *Amabelle Publishing*, joannesocha.com

THE LAND GARDENERS: CUT FLOWERS, *Thames & Hudson*, by *Bridget Elworthy* and *Henrietta Courtland* tells the story of how the authors revived the cutting gardens at *Wardington Manor* in *Oxfordshire, England*. The gardens of this Jacobean manor house had lain dormant for more than 30 years but Elworthy and Courtland worked their magic to bring the manor and its glorious floral mosaic back to life. This book blends gorgeous visuals with detailed and practical knowledge, valuable planting and growing advice, a must-have for flower lovers.

GREAT GARDENS OF LONDON, 30 masterpieces from private plots to palaces, *White Lion* publishers. Author *Victoria Summerly* gives us a private view of the most exciting gardens in and around London. With exquisite photography by *Marianne Majerus* and *Hugo Rittson Thomas*. London's gardeners are twice blessed: not only do they live in one of the world's most vibrant capitals, it is also one of the most verdant. Gardens of every imaginable style, shape and size abound on rooftops, within palaces, surrounding churches, behind walls—on every piece of dry land—even if it is floating on or lapped by the river Thames. In *Great Gardens of London*, the author has unearthed the most fascinating stories of plants and gardeners inside London's most exciting plots. Some of the gardens are strictly private, while others are regularly open to visitors, but all can now be savored and enjoyed along with those who know them best.

AN ESSENTIAL NEW FIND IN *SANTA BARBARA: PEARL Social*, a jewel OF A new intimate cocktail and music lounge in Santa Barbara's *Funk Zone*...try the Porn Star Martini perfectly paired with the food menu: Smoked Trout Dip served with malt vinegar Kennebec potato chips, dill pickled fennel, trout roe, and celery. *Gavin Koehn* runs the cocktail program at the Pearl Social and his drink list splits into such categories as Timeless, Rule Breakers, Come Back Kids, and Susan B. Anthony—the latter being non-alcoholic delights even a temperance leader



could love. Those cocktails, along with a small but expertly curated menu of food from The Lark's Chef *Jason Paluska*, make Pearl Social the latest fetching Funk Zone creation from *Acme Hospitality*, who brought us *The Lark*, *Loquita*, and *Tyger Tyger*, all very worthy spots. The menu of small plates hits exactly the right notes: five-spice roasted cashews and peanuts, caramelized cauliflower, cheese plate, truffled grilled cheese on sourdough, dry aged ribeye, short rib and brisket burger and warm Fiji apple pie. Pearl—named after Santa Barbara conservationista *Pearl Chase*, aims to please: comfy leather sofas, sexy lighting and jazz plus a gracious young staff eager to please, a very sophisticated and enjoyable place. *131 Anacapa Street, (805) 284-0380, pearlsocialsb.com*

WE FELL HEAD OVER HEELS FOR *THE Francis House* in *Calistoga*. Built in 1886, it is the only stone building with authentic French Second Empire architecture in all *Napa* County. Sitting proudly in a wooded suburb of single-story homes, the house dramatically towers over the neighborhood, looking just like a regal French chateau has been time-warped through space and time in a corner of this enchanting country town. Its rebirth may have been much more dramatic, actually. A private manor built for a prominent local merchant, the property was used as a hospital in the 20th century until completely closing in 1964. For 52 years, it wallowed in disrepair, no doubt a spooky sight for neighborhood kids to gossip about as their parents shook their heads while passing the vacant eyesore. In 2015, *Dina* and *Richard Dwyer* made the risky move of taking it over, meticulously restoring the house to its initial luster. We can't imagine it ever looking newer or this beautiful. A solid construction of local limestone bricks under a glorious mansard roof bearing peaked dormer windows, the mansion is a sight to behold and not soon to be forgotten, starting with the stone fountain of water-spitting frogs that greets you just past its wrought-iron gates. Indeed, when ENTREE strolled the town in search of vintage bric-a-brac and wine tastings, we met more than one local shopkeeper who praised the Dwyers for restoring the landmark to its new glory.



The good news: not only can you admire Francis House, you can stay in it. The Dwyers have opened their part-time home as a five-bedroom hotel. Each room is quite different, sterling in its embrace of Parisian charm and clever in accoutrements. While the manor is stately, the occasional exposed steel beam makes for smart design, attractively woven into its antique aesthetic, and giving

one a sense of the complex construction that took more than three years to complete. Rooms are simple but beautiful, with contemporary touches such as heated marble floors, Diptyque bath products and heated Toto “smart” toilets in the bathrooms among the stylish marble sinks and brass fixtures. We were delighted with a large bed that highlighted French linens, much as the curtains looking over a pool, fragrant herb garden and sauna and salt room did. We also appreciated the hidden-but-abundant electrical outlets, fresh tulips by our bedside and the absolute absence of any blinking lights in the bedroom nor any other touch we typically deem obtrusive or worse, unattractive. Charm seeps through every pore of the residence. While the beauty of the house, both inside and out, is unparalleled, making for the most memorable stay for miles, there are still reminders, for better or worse, that you are staying in someone’s house.



Breakfast was a delicious and indulgent meal of smoked salmon with scrambled eggs and freshly squeezed orange juice that Dina prepared herself. Dina and Richard cheerfully do most everything themselves with a small staff. This gives the sensation that you’re staying with close friends at their country estate and we enjoyed the personal touch this intimacy offers as well as the company of the Dwyers, who are both fun, smart people we instantly formed an admiration for. Their love and passion for the house is infectious, making it a stay guaranteed to be like nothing you’d find at one of the big places that charge similar rates (they start at around \$400 a night mid-week, higher on the weekends). And in the end, it’s nice to feel like you have a home full of warmth in Calistoga, and not just another hotel room. *1403 Myrtle St.; (707) 341-3536; thefrancishouse.com*. This is an ideal headquarters for doing wine country. Massages are available on call. We did expect to see the ghost of Napoleon III floating around, but no such luck. Guests are the emperors here, no doubt about it. Check out *CABBI.com*; it is a fine resource for finding top drawer boutique hotels like The Francis House.

THERE HAS BEEN A DRAMATIC SURGE IN PRIVATE JET travel as a result of the Coronavirus and we have exactly the company you should turn to. *Apollo Jets* is hands down the preeminent provider of private jet charter services in the industry. In our opinion, Apollo provides the safest and most reliable solution in the charter market today.





Albert Braha is a wizard who is able to recommend the best positioned aircraft on each and every mission for his clients who make up a Who's Who of industry, society, sports royalty, entertainment stars and top drawer music talent. Albert's reputation is a man of total integrity who takes great pride in providing the best value to his clients using the most modern technology to locate the right aircraft from a vast accredited worldwide network. He is also known for charm, discretion and service. Happy clients say he never sleeps and can be reached 24-7 to respond with speed to emergencies and last minute requests. Let's face it, commercial air travel today is a nightmare: we need more than simple solutions to solve the problems that the TSA is creating at airports around the country. Airline elite and mileage programs have eroded to the point where we find them useless. Strikes, surly flight attendants, long waits, slashed routes, add-on charges, shrinking seats all combine to create hell in the skies. If you value your time and money, contact Albert Braha and Apollo, Abraha@apollojets.com. And remember, he never sleeps.

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