

VENTURE TO A TOWN TRAPPED IN TIME



Though most Orange County residents have made the drive north of Los Angeles County on the 101 — passing through the likes of Ventura, Thousand Oaks and Camarillo to see friends and relatives, or en route to Santa Barbara — the city of Ojai remains relatively uncharted territory.

The Ojai Valley, nestled 15 miles from the ocean in Ventura County between the Topa Topa Mountains and the Coastal Range, offers a charming escape from the fast pace of OC. Known for decades of artistic innovation in all forms, Ojai boasts breathtaking views, expansive hiking trails, an array of nearby outdoor activities and a downtown village brimming with boutiques, restaurants and bars.

Perfect for an extended getaway or a romantic weekend, the Ojai Valley is a mere 125 miles from central Orange County — just over two hours away in decent traffic.

The Emerald Iguana Inn — located just blocks from the main village — offers a peaceful oasis with amenities that evoke pure relaxation — wood-burning stove fireplaces, claw-foot bathtubs, complimentary poolside continental breakfasts and seasonal wine and cheese gatherings.

With single rooms, suites and private cottages available, the mini-compound is surrounded by lush vegetation and showcases a particularly authentic brand of intricate architectural and artistic details throughout. The Emerald Iguana Inn, as well as its sister property, the Blue Iguana Inn, were designed and furnished by award-winning local architect Marc Whitman and his wife Julia Whitman.

Building upon the focal point of a river rock house dating back to 1906 and surrounded by the other stone and wood structures, Marc went for a Gaudi-inspired, Craftsman-meets-Art-Nouveau style of architecture, resulting in organic shapes and flowing lines that emote instant tranquility.

For the interiors, Julia scoured the world for handmade European and Asian furniture pieces, and accentuated each room with luxurious, comfortable décor, along with artwork by notable locals.

In the end, a getaway to often-mispronounced Ojai is definitely worth the drive for a few days in a town where things are still slow, simple and focused on the arts.

108 Pauline Street, Ojai | 805.646.5277
emeraldiguana.com



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