



Carmel Valley Ranch Hosts James Beard Celebrity Chef Tour Dinner

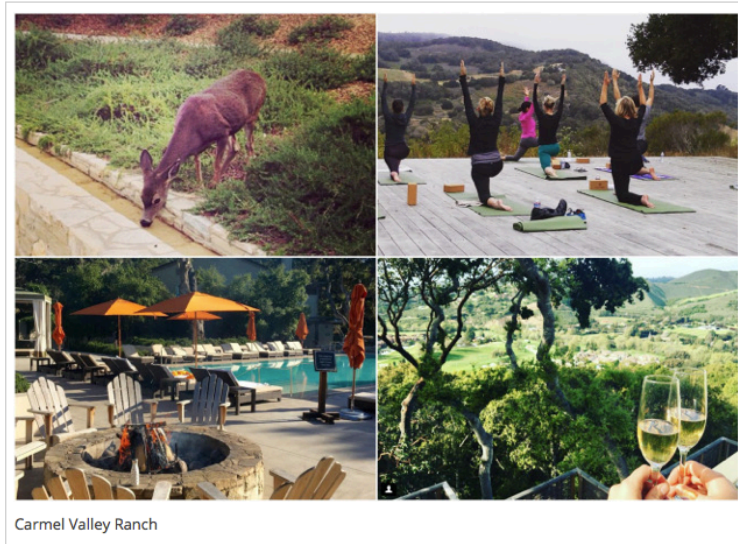
December 7, 2017
Jennifer Boden



It's one of the most picture-perfect spots in California to enjoy a glass of wine or a game of golf—Carmel Valley. Tucked back amid a gorgeous scenery of rolling hills and grapevines, Carmel Valley is one of the state's best spots for lodging, fine dining, wine, horseback riding, hiking and championship-caliber golf courses. Plus, the beautiful village of Carmel-by-the-Sea is a short drive away, with jaw-dropping scenery that accompanies you the entire way!

One of the favorite getaway spots for travelers coming to Carmel Valley is the beautiful Carmel Valley Ranch. For decades, it has sat in a beautiful location simultaneously perfect for escaping the cares of everyday life while also providing access to plenty of opportunities for fun and play.

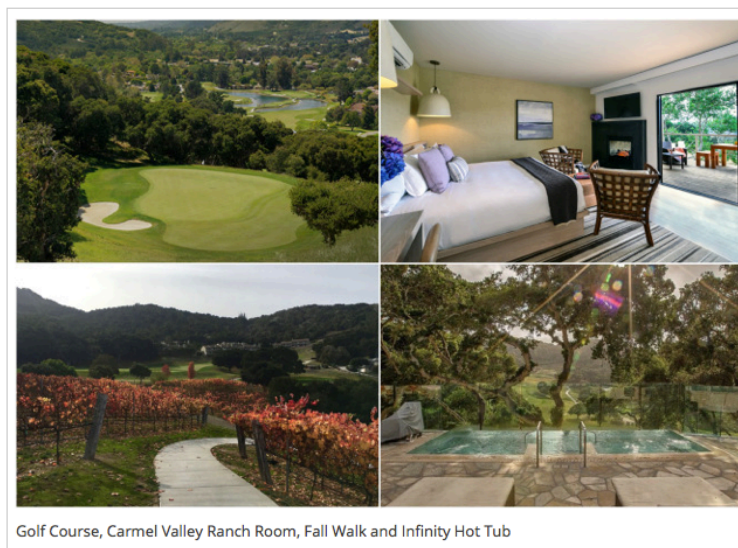
“Carmel Valley Ranch is a home away from home. From our Ranch Hands who serve from the heart to the stunning wildlife and nature, you will not find another resort like The Ranch,” said General Manager Guiseppie Lama. Their 500-acre ranch is truly a place to play for all ages whether you're rekindling your inner child again, making memories with your family, or celebrating a special occasion. “From the moment you are greeted at the gates, you will be immersed in the personal, thoughtful, and gracious culture/care of the heart,” said Lama.



Carmel Valley Ranch

The ranch offers 181 rooms, from studio suites to spacious one-to-four bedroom suites. Amenities include fireplaces, (perfect for the winter months) decks, deep baths and comfy furniture.

If you're looking to get out and about, you can play 18 holes of golf at their Pete Dye championship golf course, traverse well-manicured hiking trails, take a leisurely walk through their vineyards (especially beautiful during fall) or visit any of the nearby boutique shops and restaurants. If you'd rather lie low, you can wander around the ranch's organic garden, participate in mountaintop yoga, go swimming in their heated pool or unwind in their infinity hot tub with an unforgettable view of the golf course, mountains and beautiful oak trees.



Golf Course, Carmel Valley Ranch Room, Fall Walk and Infinity Hot Tub

You can even spend some time learning about honeybees at the ranch's apiary. The Carmel Valley Ranch "Bee Experience" allows you to don a bee suit and walk right up to

the hives to learn how beekeepers are doing their best at Carmel Valley Ranch to support this critical, endangered species. The Bee Experience features honey tastings directly from the hive. Carmel Valley Ranch also uses the honey in their restaurants – hive to table. If you love cocktails, I recommend the “bees knees” with aviation gin, honey and lemon juice.



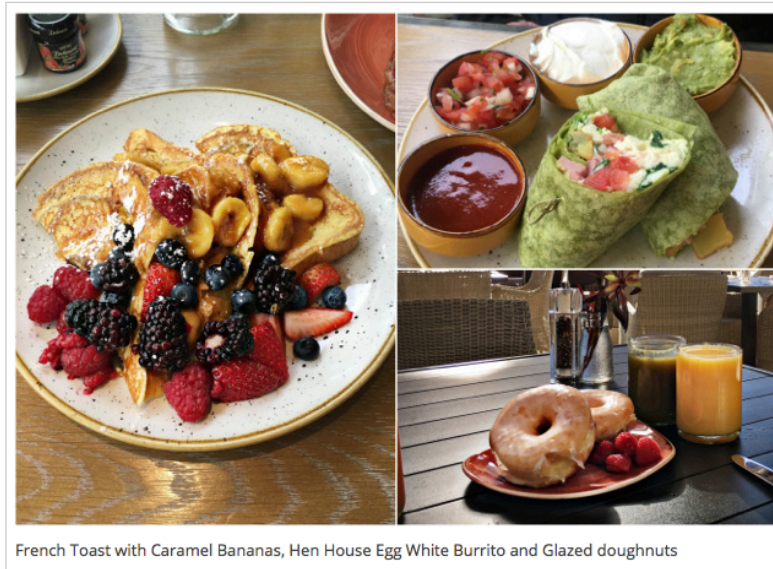
Bee Experience and “Bees Knees” Cocktail at Valley Ranch Kitchen

At their Valley Ranch Kitchen, you’ll find plenty of fare to enjoy. For something light, try their tuna poke with jalapeno & citrus olive oil and their ceviche, featuring local California Halibut, avocado, peppers, cilantro and corn tortilla chips. How bout something a bit heavier? Perhaps a yummy meat dish like their rib eye of beef with parmigiano reggiano potato gratin and Swank Farms’ brussels sprouts. I also enjoyed their stone-fired margherita pizza with roasted tomatoes, Belfiore mozzarella, basil. Wash it down with a beer or if you’re feeling fancy – a French Pear Martini.



Margherita pizza and French Pear Martini (makes eating pizza fancier) 😊

Breakfast is also really good too. I LOVED their thick cut brioche French toast with caramel bananas and fresh berries or The Ranch's hen house egg white burrito with roasted potato. For a quick breakfast bite – try their honey & cranberry scone with salt house honey butter and strawberry lavender jam. Really want to indulge? Then order the Chef's favorite Red's glazed doughnuts. If you're recovering from a night of bees knees cocktails perhaps you'll want to order one of their organic juices, like their "Reboot" with harvest beets, orchard apples, jicama, garden mint. I feel healthy just thinking about it.



French Toast with Caramel Bananas, Hen House Egg White Burrito and Glazed doughnuts

Dinner Event at the Ranch

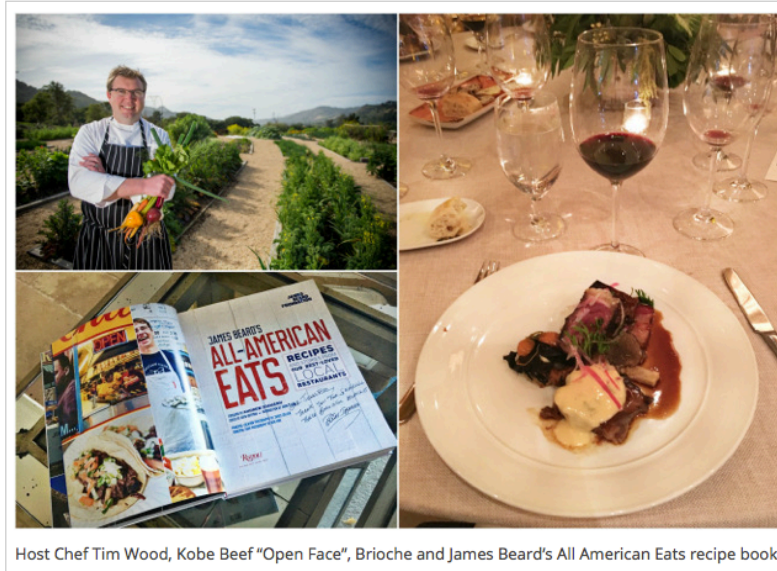
One look around Carmel Valley Ranch will show you exactly why it is also a favorite spot for events.

Last Saturday, for example, the Ranch was host to a James Beard Celebrity Chef Dinner. The host chef was Carmel Valley Ranch's Chef Tim Wood, and the event also featured culinary creations by chefs Rebecca Boice, Bernard Guillas, Bernard Ibarra, and JBF Award winners Vinny Dotolo and Jon Shook.

The dinner was a part of the JBF Celebrity Chef Tour, in which chefs travel the country creating dining experiences similar to those at the historic James Beard House. "The James Beard Foundation is important for all they do to support the rich history of American cuisine and its future by supporting and inspiring young chefs, cookbook authors and food enthusiasts," said Robert Larsen who donated his Larsen Projekt grenache rosé to the event.

The night began with an outdoor wine, Tito's vodka cocktail and passed hors d'oeuvres reception that featured bites like sweet water Florida prawn with cilantro pesto, jalapeno ginger garlic scallion sauce.

“These are some of the top chefs in the nation, and they all came together to create a delicious multi-course meal. All courses of the meal also featured wine pairings from Carmel Valley Ranch’s sommelier, Mark Buzan, and he did a great job with pairing Monterey wines from the Swing Vineyards, whose grapes are located on the Carmel Valley Ranch property, Bernardus Winery and Joyce Vineyards,” said Jeff Black, Director of the James Beard Foundation’s Celebrity Chef Tour Dinners.



Host Chef Tim Wood, Kobe Beef “Open Face”, Brioche and James Beard’s All American Eats recipe book

After the reception, we took our seats inside where chefs introduced each course. There were more than 100 guests in attendance and each one received a James Beard’s All American Eats recipe book, which chefs signed at the end of the night. (a nice and personal touch)

A couple favorite dishes included Chef Rebecca Boice’s chestnut pappardelle with black trumpet mushrooms and garden herb pesto. Another delish dish was Chef Tim Wood’s Kobe Beef “Open Face”, brioche, onion confit, winter black truffle béarnaise California kurobuta pork roast, Ranch oil confit steak fries and maple sugar glazed salt house bacon bits. For dessert – Chef Tim Wood’s warm apple upside down cake with cinnamon toast crunch, Swing Chardonnay sabayon sauce.



Top (left to right) Chef Rebecca Boice Zuni Café, San Francisco and JBF Award Winners Chef Vinny Dotolo and Chef Jon Shook, Son of a Gun restaurant, Los Angeles. Bottom (left to right) Chef Bernard Guillas Marine Room, La Jolla and Chef Bernard Ibarra Terranea Resort, Palos Verdes

Event chefs were impressed by the beautiful scenery of Carmel Valley, and it's hard to blame them—this small area tucked into the hills is a small slice of perfection – even in winter. “It’s a lot warmer and sunnier in the valleys than the coast in the winter,” said Lama.

“Who doesn’t like to take a break from the crowds and experience The Ranch on a more personal level while enjoying the full attention of our ranch hands. This is also a great time for couples who enjoy some peace and quiet to nurture their relationship”. Lama says off season is also a good time to take advantage of their winter specials. Carmel Valley is a uniquely beautiful spot that anyone can appreciate. If you are interested in gorgeous scenery or culinary tourism, be sure to fit it into your next stop in northern California.