

# Inside Tennis



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NORTHERN CALIFORNIA EDITION

COOL MIAMI  
HOT RACKETS



130/00

## Carmel Valley Ranch: Refresh the Psyche, Renew the Spirit

The hawks soar. Geese squawk, deer graze. As the sun falls behind green slopes, a woman sighs, "I love this place. I haven't left here for five days." And why not? In a state blessed by many a haven – high mountains, silent deserts, sea retreats – Carmel Valley Ranch is easily one of the best.

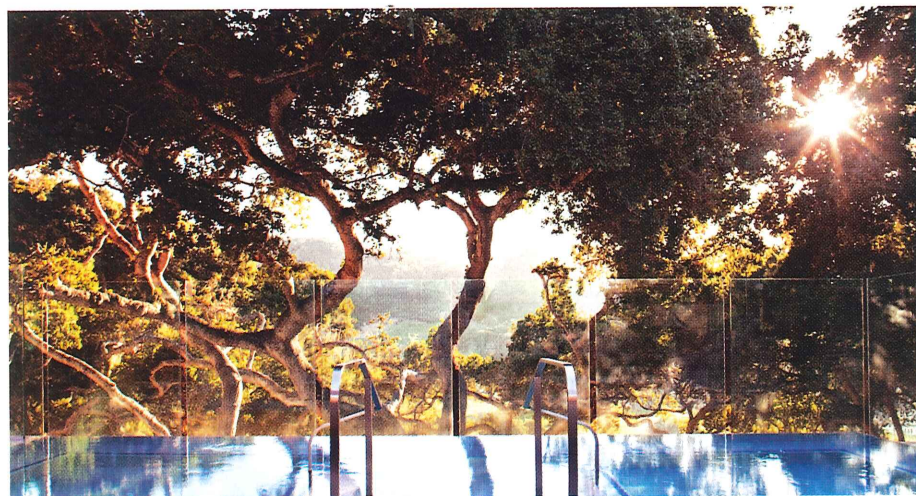
Of course, the Monterey region itself is known for its getaways. The Gardiner Tennis Ranch pioneered the whole idea of a tennis resort. Pebble Beach is one of golf's great destinations, and artsy, post-bohemian Carmel-by-the-Sea has many an appealing inn – so quaint.

Still, Carmel Valley Ranch is special. Built into the sculpted hills above one of California's great valleys (and just 45 minutes from Big Sur) it combines inspired beauty, understated luxury, family friendly details and, lest we forget, fabulous tennis. And it's just a short car ride from much of

Northern California.

In an often-conservative community (where it takes five years to get an approval for a second bathroom) CVR recently upgraded its entire facility. Now there is an integrated feel, a mosaic of amenities. The past is honored. Beauty is celebrated. At its core, this is a quiet cele-

bration of a certain 21st century serenity. Here the stressed traveler, overwhelmed by one too many quarterly reports, will want to let her mind stretch in an infinity pool or indulge in the delights of a world-class spa that soothes. (You might choose the Coastal Calm and Cleanse Facial, our fave is the Arnica Therapeutic massage.)



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### Wise Stringing: Like Dylan Going Electric

If you're a tennis shop owner, you know that for years racket stringing has been a "made by hand" custom process not unlike baking. Put in the right ingredients and out come cookies (or better yet a strung racket). Years ago electronic stringing was a no-no, like Bob Dylan going electric. Traditionalists would not stand for it. But then came big stringing machines that incorporated every convenient stringing feature. But the price, often thousands of dollars, was hefty.

But now tennis shops have an alternative. Most of the features of the big machines can be found in the 2086 Professional Tension Head by Wise. All the features you want are there – pre-stretch, kilos/pounds, memory banks, constant pull/lockout and easy recalibrating are available. The 2086 is simple to use, consistent and reasonably priced, and customers will see and feel the difference. For info see [www.tennishead.com](http://www.tennishead.com).

Here there is a great sense of escape, yet the place is family friendly. Swings drop from many an oak, dogs are more than welcome – kids frolic – a happy kids camp, a wet-splash zone. And arrive here with both an open mind and a hefty appetite. CVR will show you the ins and outs of beekeeping with an apiary tour (with a buzz), or you can take off on a serene guided hike up the slopes to a hilltop yoga platform or tour CVR's organic farm, play golf on a Pat Dye 18-hole ("river to rise") course or just eat and chill. CVR's fire-place dining, with its well-blended California cuisine and fresh-off-the-vine ingredients, is relaxed and memorable. And yes, the tennis here is superb. Overseen by the celebrated Peter Burwash International group, and run by the personable vet Clark Cory and his assistant Rick Manning (who for years was at Gardiner's Ranch) the tennis complex where Arthur Ashe and Jose Higuera once played, has seven hard courts and two clay and delivers a spacious and secluded feel. Here an on-court tune-up will help your game, just as a journey to this Ranch promises to refresh the psyche and renew the soul. For info visit [www.carmelvalleyranch.com](http://www.carmelvalleyranch.com)