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SANTA LUCIA TRADITIONS AT MALIBU FARM • DECEMBER COOKIE EXTRAVAGANZA • SAN LUIS CREEK LODGE

EVENTS SERVICES SHOPPING DINING HOME DECOR WELLNESS TRAVEL EDUCATION ANIMAL CARE REAL ESTATE



By Elyse Glickman
Photos courtesy of San Luis Creek Lodge

The geographic midway point between Los Angeles and the Bay Area is also a cross section of Southern and Northern California's cultures and lifestyles. San Luis Creek Lodge, remodeled and reborn in late 2020, hits that sweet spot. It stands out among other lodgings with its updated wine-country influenced exteriors, and location where free-spirited beach culture, wine country sophistication, and historic significance co-exist. While it is walking distance to San Luis Obispo's eclectic downtown restaurants and boutiques, it is also an easy jaunt by car to Paso Robles wineries, beach towns like Cambria, and beautiful rugged areas just waiting to be explored.



Road trip enthusiasts who have visited the area a few years ago may remember the lodge's dark "Old English" interiors. Parent company PRG Hospitality Group, which took ownership of the property in 2015, saw more potential and tasked Los Angeles-based designer and Haus Interior founder Nina Freudenberger, author of best-selling design books *Surf Shack* and *Bibliostyle*, to retro-fit the lodge—figuratively and literally. The result is striking, as the Scandinavian-style furnishings and color scheme pushes the Mid-Century aesthetic hotel aesthetic common in hotel refurbishes over the past few years into the heart of the 1970s. The open, airy new look, however, reflects Freudenberger's talent for being in tune with the tastes of 21st-century travelers who mix their taste for luxury and gastronomy with outdoor pursuits on their road trips.

When interviewed for a hotel design trade, Freudenberger explained that her subtle yet evocative color palette and choice of furnishings was a "nod to the cultured vibe of San Luis Obispo, as well as the Central Coast's natural landscape and the nearby vineyards." Bringing California's beautiful light indoors was her primary goal for the lodge, accomplishing it not only with window placements but also elements such as cane headboards, white oak floors, and grasscloth wallpaper reflect the natural attributes of the outdoors.

The 25-room, three-building lodge residential-style property is elevated with features and amenities one would find in a luxury boutique hotel. Artwork and decorative accents around the hotel are created by California artists (including original pieces by LA-based Block Shop), while familiar brands known for their style and sustainability put the finishing touches on a stay. Rooms are appointed with Fili d'Oro linens, while the bathrooms have marble countertops, custom-tiled walk-in shower, and luxuriant Aesop bath products. Mini-bar snacks and treats are sourced from treats from California health food mini-chain Erewhon. Pastry and coffee delivered to guests' room each morning are brought in from local cafes inside a reusable tote bag that is also a souvenir of the stay on departure. On top of it all, Linus bikes are available for guest use at no charge.

While the lodge does not have restaurants, it is an easy 20-minute walk (or 10-minute bike ride or drive) to San Luis Obispo, where some of the Central Coast's best restaurants can be found. The lodge has a curated list of restaurant and winery recommendations that will truly allow guests to eat and relax like a local. Mint + Craft, Novo, and Sally Loos are among the casual lunch recommendations, while dinner picks include Granada Bistro, Ox and Anchor, and Guiseppe's, which are noted for their focus on ingredients sourced from area farms and purveyors. Whether you





prefer coffee houses or cocktail bars in between, the lodge has you covered as well.

In terms of wineries, the area has an embarrassment of riches, including a few boasting major industry awards and national recognition. Justin, Denner, Booker, and Austin Hope around Paso Robles, along with Tolosa and Talley in the Edna Valley.

Travelers who choose their lodging and activities based on sustainable practices will also be pleased to know that the San Luis Creek Lodge is part of the Travel Sustainable program. Affiliated hotels and motels have taken significant measures to maintain a more eco-friendly environment. No single-use material like plastic straws, stirrers, bottles, or cups will be found in the rooms, and guests have the option to not have daily room cleaning services and reuse towels to save on the property's water usage.

Room rates run between \$164 and \$364. For more information or to book a room, visit sanluiscreeklodge.com. 🚗

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