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The New Look



Auberge Resorts debuts first hotel in new Solage brand

CALISTOGA, CA— When Auberge Resorts announced the launch of the new Solage brand last year, it said the properties would be contemporary and stylish with creative dining and bar destinations. Additionally, they would offer extensive spa and fitness programs. Considerable attention would also be given to sustainability with environmentally sensitive design and green practices put into place.

All of those features are evident at the 89-room Solage Calistoga, the first property in the new brand, which is located in California's Napa Valley. The interiors of the contemporary style property were created by Dowling Kimm Studios of San Francisco. The architect of the hotel was Howard Bracken of Napa Valley.

"Since we opened in June, guest feedback has been very positive. They love the rooms, the public space, the spa and they also like the green aspect. They say it is what Napa Valley has been waiting for," said Richard Hill, general manager of the \$60-million property.

The new hotel is "something entirely different," for the Napa Valley reguib, according to Mark Harmon, CEO of Auberge Resorts. He explained that Solage Calistoga offers "an environmentally conscious, comfortably cool experience that is stylish yet welcoming." The property will also "operate sustainably without sacrificing style or luxury," he added.

When planning the cottage-style resort, Bracken took advantage of its valley location and natural heating and cooling opportunities. Features such as solar panels and exaggerated eaves help moderate temperatures on warm afternoons while tall, shaded windows and doorways offer views of the private gardens and fill spaces with filtered sunlight to keep interiors cool.

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The colors chosen for the interiors of the Solage Calistoga feature shades of green, brown and other earth tones to reflect the hotel's wine country setting.

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The furnishings of the Solage Calistoga are made from natural, sustainably farmed and recycled materials.



Solage Calistoga boasts 'green' interiors

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The "earth friendly" interiors designed by Dowling Kimm Studios have contemporary furnishings made from natural, sustainably farmed and recycled materials.

"We were approached by Auberger Resorts to design a hotel that was modern, sophisticated yet set in wine country. The concept was really urban loft meets Napa barn," said Lorissa Kimm, principal of Dowling Kimm Studios. "We liked the idea and it made sense—people living in lofts in the city have open spaces similar to barns."

The color palette chosen for the interiors was "a good fit" for wine country, Kimm noted. "The browns, greens and neutrals we used are the colors of a vineyard," she said.

The guestrooms have an open plan with the bedroom and bathroom separated by a partition. A large glass door in the bedroom leads to a deck for lounging. "There is good flow from the indoors to the outdoors," Kimm said.

The rooms have walnut and beech furniture manufactured with non-toxic varnishes and wool upholstery. Natural accents include hemp curtains and wool throws. There are two lounge chairs in chocolate brown boucle with a matching ottoman that has a tray on top to convert it to a table. "It's a flexible, double-use concept," Kimm added.

In a unique design twist, the partition separating the bedroom and the bathroom acts as a headboard for the bed and also contains the minibar and closet. Located in the middle of the room, it is painted a mossy green.

"The guest bathroom opens to the bedroom and has all natural limestone countertops, a large walk-in shower with pebble floor and dark gray walls of porcelain tile. There is a separate water closet for privacy," Kimm explained. Some rooms also have soaking tubs.

The guestroom walls are adorned with three pieces of elemental art plus an original piece by Gary Blum,

an artist commissioned "to create works with the spirit of Calistoga," Hill noted.

The deck outside the guestroom's glass doors features lounge furniture. "It's all modular and made from woven resin," Kimm said.

Public spaces and the 20,000-square-foot Spa Solage are designed with bamboo and reclaimed cedar. Interiors throughout the resort were finished with non-toxic paints to eliminate harmful gases emitted by many conventional paints.

SolBar, Solage Calistoga's 125-seat restaurant, has lofty ceilings, large sliding glass doors offering panoramic views of the Palisades Mountains, and a warm color palette inspired by the local landscape.

The restaurant features tabletops made from reclaimed Douglas fir and sustainable wool and leather upholstered lounge furniture. The restaurant and lounge flow on to an outdoor patio with a 20-foot fire pit surrounded by plush couches.

In keeping with the property's environmental focus, the restaurant uses locally sourced and organic produce while room service is delivered on specially designed bikes.

The full-service, 20,000-square-foot Spa Solage taps the geothermal springs beneath the property for radiant energy to heat the treatment rooms and soaking pools. For cooling on warm days, the spa uses natural ventilation and an "evaporative cooler" that uses water to soak up heat from the air and blow the cool air into the space.

Spa Solage includes both indoor and outdoor space and has 14 treatment rooms, a bathhouse, spa boutique and manicure and pedicure studio. Guests enter through an open courtyard with contemporary furnishings and fire pits. There is a lounge area with four heated rooms and claw-footed bathtubs filled with geothermal water and partitioned by curtains.

To maintain a healthy environment at Solage Calistoga, the resort's housekeeping staff uses only non-toxic and biodegradable cleaning products.

—Cathy Urell

