

Editorial & Opinion

1 What do you think about being the first women at the managing director level of the Ojai Valley Inn & Spa?

I must claim that my inspiration and initial skills were honed at the Four Seasons in Toronto. Plainly put, these were my 'roots.' Being one of the first women to attain the managing director level here pays tribute not only to my three decades of hospitality management experience but to the many mentors, both male and female, who were my colleagues and friends along this journey. As a working mother, it is always a juggling act and lifestyle balance, but in the end the basic lesson learned in Canada provided the requisite abilities to assume a leadership position in the industry.

2 How important is the Canadian market to the resort?

The Canadian market is a tremendous opportunity. Canadians travel to California in large numbers and represent one of the largest groups of visitors to the state. The Santa Barbara area is an outstanding resort destination, with incredible weather all year-round. Our goal is to add Ojai Valley as a terrific alternative for golfers, sport lovers and all who enjoy nature, a diverse range of outdoor activities... every bit as luxurious,

with a spiritual essence that is uniquely different and is close to LAX.

3 How does the Ojai Valley stand out from other luxury hotels?

What makes us stand out is our service – our associates live and breathe Ojai. Also, our spa village is an area unlike any other. Our guests stay-

Five Questions with...

Janis Clapoff
Managing Director
Ojai Valley Inn & Spa,
Ojai, Southern
California



ing in the spa penthouse have their own private elevator with separate treatment rooms within the penthouse. They can choose to get their spa treatments privately or come down to the spa proper and mingle with other hotel guests. Our Tuscan estate on property, Casa Elar, is available for guests to enjoy as a private retreat. It has five bedroom suites, a treatment room, pastoral vistas overlooking the seventh golf fairway and outside entertainment area with a wood-burning oven, private pool and Jacuzzi, several gardens areas and a Bentley golf cart that can be used to go shopping in town.

4 What special packages are offered?

The Best of Ojai Package provides incredible flexibility for clients because they can build their own vacation experience. Guests can select one activity per night's stay from nine on the list, which includes golfing, spa treatments, fishing on Lake Casitas, kayaking, surfing, and dinner in the Oak

Grill restaurant. This package ensures that the guests enjoy the activities that appeal to them without having to structure their vacation. Rates for the package start at \$535 per night, double.

5 What else is new at the property this winter?

We'll be introducing new spa alternatives such as medical professionals who will speak on wellness, health and preservation, including a yoga and chocolate course. The Herb Garden will expand its selection of fruits, vegetables and herbs grown on property to further enhance our philosophy of serving our guests only the freshest, seasonal ingredients. For families, we have concentrated on launching in 2009 our newest Herb Garden pool where older kids will have the opportunity to enjoy massages or manicures and pedicures with their parents. We're also reintroducing our Arts and Leisure program in 2009...

Canadian TRAVEL+PRESS

Vol. 41, No. 14, Published December 22, 2008

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Subscriptions: \$30 - 1 year (Canada), \$140 - 2 year (Canada), plus 3% GST for Canadian subscribers only
\$129 US funds - 1 year (Foreign), Amer rates on request
Price per single copy \$3.00 (plus 3% GST)
GST #R123096423 Canadian Publications Mail
Product Sales Agreement No. 40062078 Return undeliverable
Canadian addresses to: Circulation Dept., 310 Dupont St.,
Toronto, Ont., M5R 1V9 email: circ@baxter.net ISSN 1494-3133
Published 47 times per year by Baxter Travel Media
Copyright 2008 Printed in Canada

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PAP Registration No. 10898
We acknowledge the financial support of
the Government of Canada, through the
Publications Assistance Program (PAP),
and the Canada Magazine Fund, toward
our printing and editorial costs.



Ask the agent

What's your New Year's resolution?

"Last year, my resolution was to stop buying so much frozen foods and that only lasted until February, so I don't intend to make one this year...I can't keep them."

Heather MacKenzie,
Freedom Tours & Travel,
Saint John, NB

"Cruise more and make more money!"

John Van Houdt,
Amazing Cruises
and Safaris,
Winnipeg

"Probably to try to stay a little healthier than I have been, as I'm suffering through a yucky cold."

Susan Waeyen,
Fish Creek Travel,
Calgary

"I never make one!"

Margaret Henry,
Henry Travel
Centre
Niagara Falls, ON