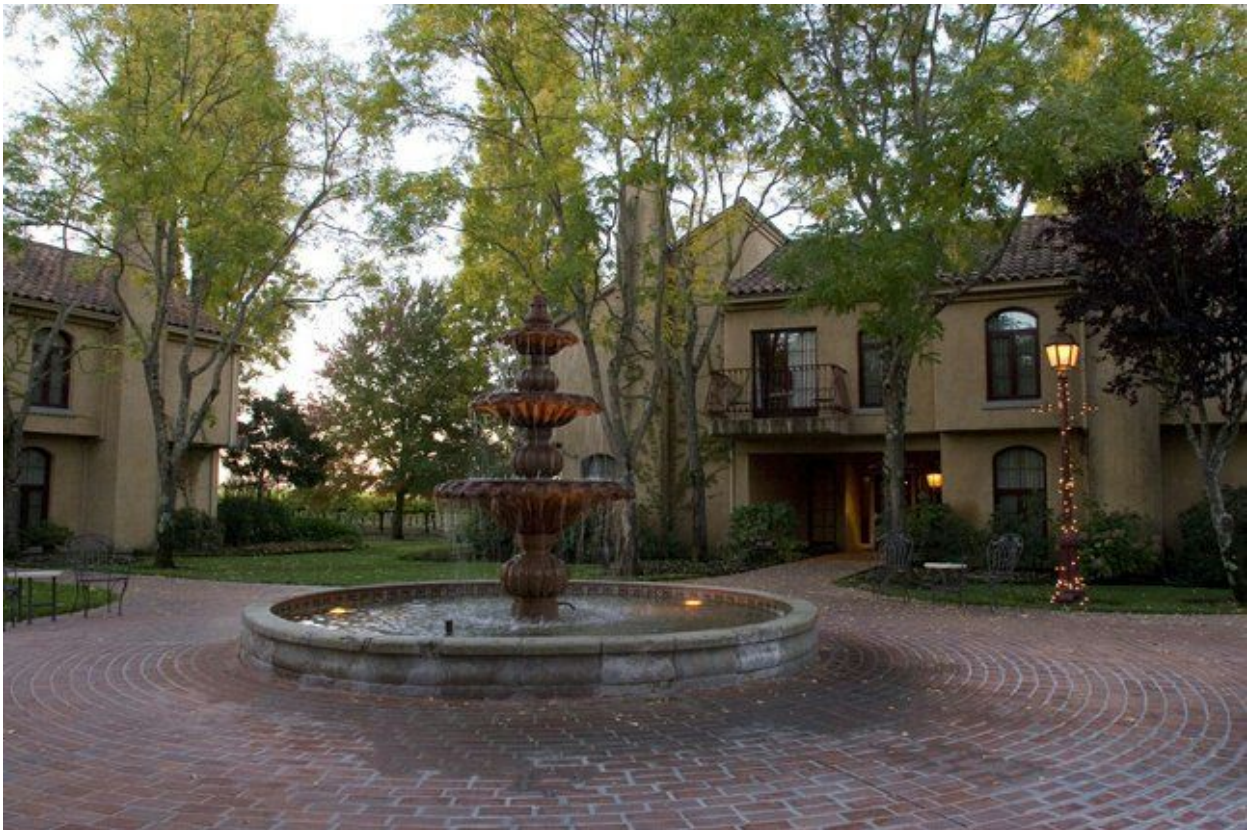


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LIFESTYLES

Inn-escapable: Sonoma wine country lodging at the Vintners Inn

By Martha Ross



Many rooms at the Vintners Inn look out over a garden, bubbling fountain and brick central patio. (Vintners Inn)

Zip off Highway 101 in Santa Rosa and this boutique 44-room hotel will make you feel like you've wandered into a remote Wine Country village, surrounded by acres of vineyards. With its gardens, bubbling fountain and brick patio, this self-styled Wine Country "oasis" makes a convenient and elegant base for exploring the towns, farms and wineries in the Russian River Valley and west Sonoma County.

Earlier this year, the hotel unveiled a \$1 million renovation that gave the lobby and rooms in its three "villas" an Italian aesthetic and added green features, such as energy-efficient lights and electric fireplaces.

If you don't feel like leaving the property for the evening, you can enjoy cocktails and casual fare at the Pat Kuleto-designed Front Room Bar and Lounge. The Front Room is part of John Ash & Co., the venerable fine-dining restaurant known for its romantic ambience, extensive wine list and devotion to fresh, local ingredients.

Rooms: These spacious rooms have French doors that open onto a private balcony or patio. Our second-floor room boasted vaulted ceilings, a sitting area and a fireplace with a mantel decorated with grape and leaf scrollwork. Dark-wood furniture, mixed with earth-tone furnishings and paintings of local landscapes, gave the room a cozy, homelike feel.

Zzzz's: Freshly baked cookies come with the nightly turndown service. Sleep sweetly in a plump king-size bed, topped by luxury linens and a down comforter.

Extras: The 92-acre property includes a bocce court, hot tub and 2-mile walking and jogging path through vineyards belonging to owners Don and Rhonda Carano of Ferrari-Carano Vineyards and Winery.

Details: \$275-\$650, weekend rates start at \$425. 4350 Barnes Road, Santa Rosa; www.vintnersinn.com

-- Martha Ross, Staff



Slideshow Images:



Guest rooms at the Vintners Inn in Santa Rosa feature private balconies or patios and king-size beds topped with plumped comforters and luxury linens. (Vintners Inn)



The Vintners Inn and John Ash & Co., the venerable fine-dining restaurant, are set on a 92-acre property planted with vineyards. (Vintners Inn)



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