

Chateau Coralini Retreat & Spa



Architect: Carlton Bassett (Hiram Corey's nephew, c. 1889-1891)

Restoration Contractor:

Managed by Samuel and Linda Persall

Much of the work was performed by John Larsen & Sons, general contractor for restoration, with a team of 36 specialty subcontractors.

Interior Decor and Design: Linda and Samuel Persall

Landscape Architect: Renovations to landscaping designed by Persall's

Date building began and date finished: Original c. 1889-1891

Restoration: Purchased in May 2003, received Use Permits in December 2006.

Began Restoration January 2007. Received occupancy in January 2008.

General Information and History

In 2003, Samuel and Linda Persall purchased the property and restoration began. Now, as Chateau Coralini Retreat and Spa, the Persalls have lovingly returned this gracious mansion to the original intent of the home, a gracious entertaining European styled estate. Graced by European antiques, luxurious amenities, and 5-star service and accommodations Chateau Coralini Retreat & Spa now offers a gloriously remodeled historic mansion resort in one of the world's most desired destinations, California's Central Coast. The Persalls reside at the Chateau with their two sons, Michael and Noah. The complete restoration of this mansion estate involved removing all the interior floors, walls, and ceilings, and rebuilding the home from inside out. All new walls, insulation, heating and air, plumbing (installing 12 bathrooms), alarm and sprinkler systems, and more. During the process the Persalls were able to maintain and preserve the historic integrity by restoring the wood casings, originals doors, hinge and iron hardware, plaster medallions and corbels, staircase banister, fireplace tilework, and original stained glass and windows throughout. Because the house was constructed using solid redwood, very little structural repair was required. The name Chateau Coralini was lovingly created by the Persalls to honor the Coreys and Violinis who made this gracious mansion estate their family home. Now the Persall's have created contemporary usage for this magnificent jewel, insuring its protection as an important historical landmark. The gracious warmth of this manor has returned and will, once again, be known far and wide for the hospitality shown by its owners.

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places as Rancho Las Palmas, the estate is nestled within the original 8,444 acre Rancho Buena Vista. Hiram Corey originally operated the land as a stock ranch, and it was known as one of the best beef and dairy ranches in the state of California. Canadian-born Hiram Corey constructed the stunning Rancho Las Palmas for his family between 1889 and 1891, for the cost of \$4,000.00. A prominent businessman and farmer, Mr. Corey sought elegance and style for his family's home.

While traveling to Europe in 1889, Mrs. Rose Frost Corey fell in love with Chateau Versailles, and wanted her home in Salinas to be her own chateau. Hiram Corey hired a Salinas architect and relative, Carlton Bassett, to design and build this beautiful Queen Anne masterpiece. Inspired by the beauty and style of the French palace's furnishings, Mrs. Corey dressed her home with fine antiques and artwork. In 1918, two bags of gold coins exchanged hands when Joe Violini, a Swiss immigrant, bought the Rancho Las Palmas Victorian estate and the 1600 acre Las Palmas Ranch. The Violini family ran the ranch as a self-contained dairy farm where they also had hundreds of chickens, cured their own bacon and ham from the hogs they raised, milked the cows, canned the fruit, and baled the hay. Mrs. Violini would bake bread while the children crushed grapes from their family vines in their bare feet. In 1979, the family sold the property to the Las Palmas Ranch Venture which began the process to subdivide the land for future development. In 1988, title again changed hands and was acquired by the Las Palmas Property Development Company, which completed the development. During the building and sales of the Las Palmas Ranch communities, the Corey house was used as a sales office for the development company. Now, 118 years later, this beautiful Victorian estate, Chateau Coralini, proudly stands as a community landmark and graces the entrance to the River Road Wine Trail.

Entry, Gate, Gardens:

To welcome guests to the Chateau, gates displaying our company identity lead guests to an enclosed secure parking lot and provide exclusivity to the Chateau. The gardens feature rose bushes which surround the property, a beautiful 100 year old magnolia tree, and many fruit trees, oak, Asian plum and blossom trees, mature redwoods with lush grass and lounging areas. An Angelic Gazebo fountain courtyard offers guests a relaxing environment to take in the serene beauty of the gardens. Extra inviting touches include outdoor patios with a lovely grilling terrace and firepit table, and a rejuvenating day spa.

Foyer:

The oak stairway banister is original to the home, preserved and restored during the construction, while historic photos of the Corey and Violini families are found on the entry wall. The Persalls acquired many of the Corey family photos through Jan Sharp, the granddaughter of Emma Littlefield, one of the children who was raised in the home. The Violini family portrait is circa 1918, and was provided to the Persall's by Annette Violini.

The foyer also features an elevator with access to all floors, including the Penthouse level, with a private 1100 square foot suite, and the wine cellar dining room. The hall exit door features original stained glass windows. Wishing to continue the home as a gracious entertaining manor, many of the pieces selected for the Chateau were part of Persall family personal collections, or are antiques from Europe, acquired through various auctions and antique dealers.

Right Front Room: Hiram's Reception

Hiram's Reception, named after Hiram Corey, is a welcoming area for guests when checking in to the Chateau, or for relaxing during their stay. The fireplace in this room was originally coal burning and has been converted to a decorative electric fireplace. The cast iron/bronze grill and firebox is original to the mansion, as is the mantle and tile work with its restored glazed Victorian era ceramic tile work, depicting Renaissance man and woman profiles. The large French oak bar, with marble base, zinc bar, draining boards and porcelain clock, is circa 1880, from an inn in the south of France, acquired through Jan De Luz in Carmel. The elaborately carved plaster corbels and medallions were originally in the home. Marble flooring adds elegance to the entrance and Hiram's reception. The lighting fixtures, although new, are representative of period iron scroll, crystal chandeliers and sconces, and echo the scrollwork of the exterior fencing and gates. Sconces and chandeliers are by Thomasville, from the Savona Collection. The antique buffet in this room is a beautiful carved French Oak antique cabinet, and was a gift from Mr. Persall to Mrs. Persall on their first wedding anniversary. Draperies were custom made, with fabrics from Italy.

Left Front Room: The Versailles Parlor

The Versailles Parlor, named after Rose Corey's love of Chateau Versailles, is enhanced with French 18th century antiques and silk draperies, iron and crystal chandeliers, and antique seating ensembles. Once again, the decorative corbels and medallions are original to the home. Antiques throughout the parlor are representative of the French Louis XVI era, with painted parlor chairs, parlor marble top table, French 18th century mahogany and burl inlaid marble top sideboards with mirrors, French curio, roll top desk, and a relaxing oversized chaise lounge. The centerpiece of this parlor is the lovely antique baby grand piano, circa 1889. An angelic hand-painted George Steck masterpiece, was part of the National Exhibition awarded by the US Centennial Commission, receiving a medal of award for designs created 1776-1926. The mantle and tile work is original to the mansion, with restored ceramic tilework, circa 1880-1890, and with original iron and copper facing & grill.

The Versailles Dining Room

The dining room features a large French dining suite table, hand-painted floral motif, and gilded enhancements, originating from an estate property in Italy. The chairs are upholstered in French blue silk. The grand matching pieces to this lovely dining suite are placed in the second floor Versailles Bedroom Suite and in the upstairs hallway. The built-in oak cabinetry is original to the home, created by local artists sometime during the history of the home, and features faux wood graining throughout each panel. The Persall's wished to preserve this piece of faux artistry so tones of the wood were enriched to bring out the detail. The chandelier is an original piece of the home, featuring cut crystals, and a combination of candlelight and chandelier bulbs. Many of the chandeliers that hang in Chateau Versailles are identical to this lovely gold iron and crystal chandelier.

Kitchen : Cuisine De Coralini

A comfortable and warm social gathering area, the kitchen is a centerpiece enjoyed by the family as well as guests at the inn. French Country in design, it offers an environment that is perfect for culinary demonstrations, catering events, and breakfast service. The original kitchen was a very small portion of what is now Cuisine de Coralini. The Persall's enlarged this environment by expanding the kitchen and utilizing an existing enclosed back porch to open the area and provide a contemporary space for its new use. The kitchen now features a large social area, rustic kitchen dining table, central island with seating, multiple work spaces, separate commercial prep areas and scullery areas, multiple ovens, refrigeration and Miehle built-in cappuccino machine. The flooring is a Georgian Hickory vintage wood laminate, aged to provide a historic appeal. A local company made BFC cabinets, and they were custom glazed and antiqued. Windows in the cabinetry are vintage bubble glass. The counters are granite, and the island surface is a cherry glazed wood. The island is a glazed olive finish, matching a color that was used historically in the Chateau kitchen. The Custom copper oven hood and kitchen sinks feature hand hammered and aged patinas with grape motifs. The iron candlelit chandelier is a central focus, hanging copper pots and pans and kitchen utensils.

THE BASSETT BALLROOM:

Originally used as a family dining room, this space now offers a multi-purpose usage, for banquets, corporate meetings, seminars, wedding ceremonies, and more. A remote screen has been installed for audio-visual support, as well as for full projection and/or internet capabilities. Setting the elegance of the Chateau, the large ornate gold framed painting hangs in this ballroom, featuring a 18th century Royal Austrian wedding. A reproduction of a 1760 painting by Martin Van Mytens shows the feast given at the Hofburg Palace in Vienna before the marriage of the future Joseph II to Princess Isabelle of Parma, and it gives a wonderful sense of royal dining à la Française at the most formal level. Beautiful gilded 18th century walnut mahogany marquetry dining tables are centerpieces of this ballroom.

THE TAPESTRY PARLOR:

A lovely sitting parlor located adjacent to the Versailles dining room and Bassett Ballroom, this charming parlor features European tapestries depicting garden and bay settings, antique sideboard circa 1800, and a gilded Victorian lounging sofa.

SECOND FLOOR/ BEDROOM SUITES

Upstairs, the hallways are wide, offering comfortable and open areas for guest passage, as they connect the bedroom suite wings. The hallway lighting chandeliers are draped in lavish cut-glass pendulums, crafted wrought iron with rich carved details and acanthus leaf embellishments highlighted by a gilded antique silver leaf. Bedroom suites feature similar relaxing environments, each with a different personality to please all personal tastes.

The Turret Suite 206

Offering views of the gardens through the curved Turret alcove, this lovely suite features a beautiful historic carved mantle, housing a historic decorative iron and bronze grill and fireplace surround. During construction a photograph was taken of the glazed ceramic tile, carefully removed, then restored, perfectly, as if it was never touched. The fireplace features floral carvings, matching that of the Victorian Biedermeier armoire and accent pieces in this lovely suite.

The Versailles Bedroom Suite

This elegant space was the original master bedroom suite for Hiram and Rose Corey. The Persall's have incorporated their love for Versailles/Louis XVI period furnishings and have graced this suite with grand accent handpainted antique pieces, and circa 1800 porcelain chandeliers and lamps. A beautiful bridal suite or for a special occasion to escape to another world and time. The adjoining bathroom was the original bathroom in the home when the mansion was built, offering a master bathroom for the lady of the house, not common during those years. Although bathrooms were not part of the original historic design of the bedroom suites, the Persall's were able to take the large closet spaces built in each suite and convert to the now 12 bathroom suites featured in the Inn.

Hilltown Penthouse

Overlooking the countryside and the original vistas of the Salinas River and this exceptional suite offers an exclusive elevator accessed opportunity for special celebrations. Featuring cascading draperies and European elegance, a separate living room with sofa and loveseat, a formal dining room (seats 6-8), 42 inch flat screen television, marble fireplace, executive writing desk, wine bar and refrigeration. Through the French doors, the King bedroom suite is revealed, featuring our Presidential Euro pillow top mattress, lavish linens with silken agricultural designs, plush comforter, & 37 inch flat screen TV. The ensuite marble bathroom invites guests to enjoy a sanctuary with a double pedestal air-masseur tub, separate large marble rain shower with body sprays, double marble vanity, television, luxurious Egyptian towels, & L'Occitane aromatic amenities. Lighting fixtures designed by Minka-Lavery/Aston Court reveals a depth of neo-classical influence merged with the glamour of high fashion. A traditional proportion combined with unique Avorio Mezzo glass and exquisite beaded details.

CHATEAU CORALINI CELLARS

The cellar originally was accessible via a trap door in the old porch located off the kitchen. Restoration of this area involved a full excavation of 1300 square feet of space to create Chateau Coralini Cellars. Historically, entering into the basement from the trap door, led one to an underground dirt storage/crawl space, housing the old boiler system. On one of the walls existed a hidden wooden bookcase that was covered with burlap. This swung open to reveal a speakeasy door, that then revealed a corner space filled with old wine barrels (some still holding wine), food and wine crates, and a variety of bottles and artifacts from the days gone by. Historically this cellar was a place for wine making and storage and thus, it has now been returned to its original intent. Now, as Coralini Cellars, rustic speakeasy doors lead the way to a warm and inviting reception and dining area, complete with stone accented floors and walls, iron sconces, stone fireplace, and a hidden wine cellar alcove with historic wine barrels and Italian wine crates from the early 1900's. Perfect for intimate wine country dinners, wine tasting events, and receptions celebrating the historic past of this beautiful estate. A large copper wall hanging is the centerpiece for this dining room. This piece was found during the excavation, buried in the dirt back by the old boiler system. It is thought that perhaps this was acquired on the world tour enjoyed by the Corey family while collecting arts and antiques for their new estate home. Originating from Morocco, and signed by an African artist, this stately hand hammered copper display depicts a variety of wine urns and bottles, and now is back to where it is meant to be, Coralini Cellars.

SPA CORALINI

A soothing Day Spa sanctuary, using the finest in European beauty essentials and organic ingredients, introducing a simple philosophy of a natural skin care solution that will cleanse, protect, and infuse your skin with the nourishment that you need and deserve. Guests may indulge in our luxurious spa packages, massage therapy, exquisite body wraps and scrubs, custom organic facial treatments, manicures, pedicures, hair salon services, waxing, and more! We look forward to sharing the knowledge of old world traditions and international beauty secrets with our cherished guests of Chateau Coralini Retreat & Spa.

CHATEAU CORALINI DOLLHOUSE

Built by the Las Palmas Development Company for the Salinas Valley Memorial Hospital Benefit Auction, the Persall's purchased this mini-chateau and brought it back to its home to be restored and enjoyed by Chateau guests.

Enjoy!