

# La Playa Hotel

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## La Playa Hotel Celebrates Grand Reopening Following Historic Restoration By Acclaimed Design Firm Post Company

*The Grand Dame of Carmel-By-The Sea has been a cultural beacon for artists and innovators around the world for more than 100 years, including Steve Jobs, who presented the first working Macintosh prototype onsite*

**CARMEL-BY-THE-SEA, Calif. (Oct. 23, 2023)** – [La Playa Hotel](#), a historic 75-key hotel and former artist retreat owned and operated by [Marc & Rose Hospitality](#) (formerly Classic Hotels & Resorts), announces the completion of a \$15 million renovation by the award-winning design studio [Post Company](#). Accomplished hospitality firm Marc & Rose has overseen a re-enlivening of the hotel, which for generations has been the backdrop to literati, artists, bohemians, and innovators. The natural beauty of Carmel spoke to these groups with its dualistic nature for quiet contemplation and hedonistic expression.

“Respecting the history and heritage of a place is at the heart of what we most value at Marc & Rose; being the stewards of La Playa Hotel is an honor and a privilege that we don’t take lightly,” said John Grossman, President of Marc & Rose. “As the fifth owners in its more than 115 year history, we focused on letting the building lead us to a design that supports the stories of the past, while infusing thoughtful amenities to meet the expectations of the modern traveler. We could not have transformed this property without the keen eye of Post Company, whose integrity and respect for the history of both the building itself and the town of Carmel is beautifully embodied in the resulting design concept.”

### History

Poetically referred to as "The Grand Dame of Carmel," La Playa Hotel embodies an exquisite blend of historic allure and an inquisitive spirit. Originally crafted in 1905 by landscape painter Chris Jorgensen for his wife and pupil, chocolate heiress Angela Ghirardelli, this charming retreat once served as an artist studio for the couple, fostering inspiring celebrations and hosting creative retreats. After the tragic death of her niece at Carmel Beach, the couple sold the mansion, and it was later converted into a hotel with the addition of 20 rooms in 1922 and later expanded to almost 80 rooms in 1940. The 1960s were marked by a golden revival akin to today in which the then-new owner and Carmel local Howard E. "Bud" Allen introduced a full-time bar and famed 10-minute happy hour. He offered drinks for a dime dubbed "Dime Time," in which patrons had to pay with exact change. Later in 1983 the hotel gained

modern acclaim as the birthplace of Apple's Macintosh computer. During a company retreat, Steve Jobs unveiled the first working prototype at La Playa, and Apple employees were banned shortly after for a raucous night of celebration at the hotel (though they have since been welcomed back). Marc & Rose purchased the property shortly after its centennial in 2011, and led a renovation and reopening in 2012 prior to today's reimagined vision. Today, the hotel stands as a testament to its storied past, artfully blending high-design and historical architectural details to continue its legacy as a sanctuary for new-age intellectuals and literati.

## **Design**

The design of La Playa Hotel by Post Company bridges generations of creative minds unafraid to challenge the status quo, like Henry Miller, Ansel Adams, the "King of Bohemia" George Sterling, and poet Nora May French. The hotel naturally cultivates a familiar warmth and eccentricity that is deeply tied to the city of Carmel, famous for its community of artists and explorers. Post Company reenergized the historic structure with present-day design that continues to shape the building's ongoing evolution. The result is a stately environment where guests are welcome to celebrate and mingle as the hotel's past kindred spirits did while being able to experience every space as their own.

"Our design honors the hotel's history and vernacular, while ushering in the works and objects of contemporary artists and muses," said Jou-Yie Chou, Leigh Salem, and Ruben Caldwell, partners at Post Company. "Each space is a singular and inviting design – much like the diverse cast of patrons and local characters engrained in its extensive past – resulting in an eclecticism that is a deeper reflection of what has always been and paves the way for a new generation to gather, create, and explore."

Rinker Design, a perennial creative partner to Marc & Rose, led an overhaul to the hotel's graphic and brand design. Working closely with Post Company, and inspired by their design approach, Rinker envisioned a brand renewal that harkens to the bygone era of mysticism and intrigue, that inspired a generation of creatives who defined the culture of the Town of Carmel-by-the-Sea.

## **Lobby and Public Spaces**

The lobby and reception area of La Playa Hotel highlight the layered nature of the hotel's present incarnation, as well as its vibrant history. Each space evokes its individual personality through subtle shifts in materiality and tones. Dark and intimate ceilings and terracotta floors are framed by clean, bright walls and lush plantings that bring the outdoors in, while firm, restored wood box beams and corbels enhance the elegant, dramatic effect of old-world craftsmanship. The main lobby is anchored by a grand fireplace and seating area with an adjacent sculptural staircase that evokes the glamor of the hotel's past lives.

Perhaps the most stunning aspect of La Playa is its landscape. The grounds and gardens surrounding the hotel invite discovery and exploration with views from the Pacific Terrace of Carmel Point and Bay, offering glimpses of one of the Golden State's most famous coastlines. The hotel terraces bridge the public sphere of the grounds with the respite provided by the private rooms. These outdoor spaces share a quintessential California sun-faded palette with shaded arcades and lush plantings that offer reprieve from the hot sun. Throughout the property, there are romantic walkable paths, with basket-woven brick, lit by lanterns in the evening. La Playa Hotel is home to a number of meeting and gathering rooms, such as the Breakfast Room, a Game Room, and the larger Pacific Room. The Pacific Room is a 2,160 square-foot event space facing the ocean with exposures to the south, west, and north, which can host up to 200 wedding guests. The Breakfast Room is a sun-drenched indoor and outdoor dining area devoted to connecting guests to the outdoors while they read the paper or have their morning coffee.

## **Guest Rooms**

The guest rooms at La Playa Hotel are elegant with contemporary and custom-designed pieces adorned with intricate details that nod to the building's past as a creative residence. Design details by Post Company include a tasseled cabinet pull, a solid cast brass doorknob, and original plein-air paintings by Virginia Grossman, all conveying consideration to the smallest and most impactful touchpoints. Each room is singular and inviting in its design, much like the diverse cast of patrons and local characters ingrained in La Playa's past. Curvaceous furniture balances the cleaner architectural elements and contemporary details, such as modern sconces and original plaster shell pendants by Frances Adler Elkins. Each room boasts a curated bar for patrons to explore reinvented drink recipes by San Francisco's West Bev bar team Nora Furst, Stephanie Gonnet and Christopher Longoria. Guest bathrooms provide a subtly grand experience with touches like colorful tile by Fireclay and blackened nickel Waterworks fixtures alongside bath amenities by Le Labo. The finishings and furnishings are designed to age gracefully to add to the modern history of the buildings. In addition to the work that guests can see and touch, the renovation also included an investment in what guests can feel; a modern, high efficiency HVAC system to replace the century old steam pipe network (familiar to, and unbeloved, by repeat guests for generations).

## **Bud's Bar**

Bud's Bar is an institution at La Playa Hotel and a namesake for one of Carmel's most famous residents and the hotel's former owners. The Bud Allen era saw La Playa transform from a bygone relic to a reimagined neighborhood hangout that still thrives today. Allen hosted painters, politicians, musicians, writers, and played dilettante at the property in California's golden days. Post Company captured the history of this space with intimate attention to detail. The newly imagined bar is dark and moody, with splashes of pattern and textiles. It has a range of intimate nooks and crannies to accommodate both loud camaraderie and intimate moments. Mirrors with slight amber tones reflect the dim lighting and warm glow of the space. Natural wood tones paired with polished, unlacquered brass allow touch points to patina and show signs of a long history.

La Playa Hotel marks the first of two key historic restorations for Marc & Rose Hospitality on the Pacific Coast Highway. Several hours south, the group is redeveloping a former motel into the highly-anticipated Casa Loma Beach Hotel, opening Summer 2024. The 70-key jewel on the Pacific Coast Highway will feature design by Venice Beach based firm Electric Bowery.

La Playa Hotel's opening rates start at \$500, and the hotel is located at Camino Real at Eighth Avenue, Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921. For more information or to book a stay at La Playa Carmel, please contact 800-582-8900 or visit [laplayahotel.com](http://laplayahotel.com). Exciting news and updates are also available on Instagram [@laplayaca](https://www.instagram.com/laplayaca).

Hi-res images are [available here](#). Photo Credit Chris Mottalini

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## **About La Playa Hotel**

La Playa Hotel is a historic hotel and artist hideaway nestled in the heart of Carmel-by-Sea, California on the rugged Monterey Peninsula. Recently reimagined by award-winning design studio Post Company, the 75-key hotel pays homage to its former life as a creative enclave in one of the American West's most coveted artist communities. Owned and operated by second generation hospitality firm Marc & Rose, the hotel features timeless, world-class design with landscaped grounds, ocean views, swimming pool, indoor outdoor breakfast room, a wedding and event venue and Carmel's famed Bud's Bar. For more information visit [laplayahotel.com](http://laplayahotel.com).

### **About Marc & Rose**

From desert oases guarded by ancient Saguaros, to vistas of snow capped mountains bathed in starlight, to rugged coastal cliffs overlooking sea-smoothed sands, the Marc & Rose Collection offers familiar luxuries, world-class design, sense of discovery, and a heartfelt welcome amidst some of the nation's most dramatic landscapes and quaint communities. Inspired by unconventional founders, the hotel collection is a tribute to travel and exploration in all its forms. For more information visit [marcandrosehospitality.com](http://marcandrosehospitality.com).

### **About Post Company**

Post Company believes that design lives at the intersection of beauty, elegance, and utility. Post Company is an award-winning, multidisciplinary design firm that works across hospitality, retail and residential typologies. Founded in 2012, and led by partners Ruben Caldwell, Jou- Yie Chou, and Leigh Salem, Post Company crafts environments that are simultaneously comprehensive in their approach and exacting in their detail. With a team comprised of architects, interior designers, carpenters, art directors, and graphic designers, the firm is an amalgam of disciplines which combine to make spaces that reflect an expansive and unified holistic expression. For more information, visit: [postcompany.co](http://postcompany.co).