

BEST INSTALLATION: ILLUME BY PAUL FERRANTE

Nestled within a valley surrounded by the Topa Topa mountains a mere 15 miles from the Pacific, the town of Ojai has been a respite from L.A.'s hustle and bustle for many decades. But very early on—approximately 13,000 years ago—the ancient Chumash Indians saw something special in the land: a sacred energy, or vortex, that visitors and residents have felt ever since. Whether or not you subscribe to this idea, one thing that's undeniable is Ojai's enigmatic pull, a force made stronger by the area's crown jewel, the historic Ojai Valley Inn & Spa. Now, adding to the luxurious Spanish Revival-style resort's allure is a new installation: Illume by Paul Ferrante. Hung from the branches of a 200-year-old tree are 28 handcrafted wrought-iron and glass lanterns by L.A.-based Paul Ferrante artisans, an attraction that truly shines when the sun goes down. On Friday nights starting in April and going on through the summer months, the resort will offer complimentary flutes of Champagne underneath the tree, setting a sparkling alfresco scene for guests before they head off to dinner across the way at the Inn's Italian restaurant, Olivella, or for drinks at the historic Wallace Neff Heritage Bar. With a setting so beautiful, it's a perfectly natural fit. From \$400 per night, 905 Country Club Road, Ojai, 855.696.8780, ojairesort.com

Best Hotel Upgrade: Rancho Valencia

If you thought one of the most-talked-about hotels in San Diego couldn't get any better, think again. This past summer, **Rancho**

Valencia Resort and Spa unveiled myriad fresh amenities and exclusive programs for both locals and visitors alike. First up, the auberge's highly anticipated adult-only spa pool and bar opened for business, boasting a serene setting complemented by handcrafted cocktails and healthy dishes like chino carrots and hummus (\$15), ahi sashimi "poke style" (\$22), and a toasted quinoa and vegetable salad (\$16). If it's a spa treatment you're after, make sure to book the recently introduced Vitality Ritual (90 minutes for \$275), a

nourishing body wrap, head massage and meditation session that will leave you feeling rejuvenated. Of course, Rancho Valencia couldn't leave the little ones out. ... Tennis Director Robin White just launched a fivestar junior tennis program (from \$75) on the property to coach the fundamentals of the sport. The pièce de résistance? The renovated villas (from \$1,992)—a private residence club that offers 96 fractional interests in 12 of the luxe villas found on the grounds of the prestigious resort. Talk about new beginnings! 5921 Valencia Circle, Rancho Santa Fe, 858.756.1123, ranchovalencia.com

