

# prevue

Destination experiences for meetings + incentives

## Made for Dreaming

A look at inspiring incentive experiences

**MEETING TAKEAWAYS**  
On-site corporate gift experiences

**GAMING DESTINATIONS**  
Ramping up resort incentives

**CALIFORNIA DREAMING**  
Delivering creative group experiences

**WELLNESS, SOUTHERN STYLE**  
Southern backdrops rejuvenate groups

**SECRETS AKUMAL**  
Another successful Leadership Summit



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Above: Anaheim Marriott, Orange County

The buzz in Oakland is around the renovation and rebranding of the historic **Claremont Hotel Club & Spa**, now a Fairmont hotel. The property underwent extensive renovations to the lobby and all 279 rooms.

### SAN JOSE

A must-do experience for attendees meeting in San Jose is a visit to the **Lick Observatory**. It's here that investor Yuri Milner and physicist Stephen Hawking have offered a \$100 million prize in a highly publicized search—the biggest ever—for signs of intelligent life beyond Earth. Visitors get to enjoy the view from 4,200 ft above the valley and to check out the Great Lick Refractor, one of the largest refracting telescopes in the world.

Two developments on the hotel front are the rebranding of the historic Sainte Claire Hotel to **The Westin San Jose**, which included extensive renovations to its 171 guest rooms and the lobby and public spaces, and a new **AC Hotel** under development, which will be the first in California.

### NAPA

There are countless ways to incorporate Napa's rich winemaking heritage into group events. The latest trend is to include locally inspired spirits and locally grown garnishes. At Lucy Restaurant & Bar at **Bardessono Hotel & Spa** in Yountville, the garden-to-glass experience starts with a tour of the on-site garden and a demonstration by a Lucy "craftologist," after which groups are charged with creating—and naming—their own original cocktails

using the just-picked garnishes. To top it all off, they need to design a storyline that relates to their beverage. This 62-room property has 2,000 sf of meeting space in 10 rooms.

### CENTRAL CALIFORNIA MONTEREY

All eyes are on the \$60 million renovation of the **Monterey Conference Center**, connected to Monterey's only LEED-certified hotel, the **Portola Hotel & Spa**, which is undergoing its own guest room and lobby renovations. With 40,000 sf of meeting space, the center will be able to accommodate 2,200 attendees theater-style in its largest meeting room and have exhibit space big enough for 125 booths. A soft opening of the newly LEED-certified center is expected in the fall, with the grand opening in 2017.

The Portola Hotel & Spa offers a green meetings program for planners that includes zero-waste meetings and organic and sustainable menu options (including the **Monterey Aquarium**'s acclaimed Seafood Watch program). Groups can choose from two teambuilding activities that emphasize environmental awareness: beach cleanups of the hotel's adopted beach through the local group Save Our Shores or gleanings through Ag Against Hunger.

At the **InterContinental The Clement Monterey**, located near the famous **Monterey Bay Aquarium**, a popular group activity is a kayak expedition on the National Marine Sanctuary. Local outfitters provide dry suits and participants are provided with the basics of salt-water kayaking by an expert guide. The Sanctuary is home to dolphins, harbor seals, sea lions and sea otters in their

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**Right (l-r):** Link Observatory, photo credit: Laurie Hatch, San Jose; Garden-to-glass cocktails, Bardessono Hotel & Spa, Napa  
**Below (l-r):** InterContinental The Clement, Monterey; Teambuilding at the Chaminade Resort & Spa, Santa Cruz; Garden music at Campovida, Oakland

natural habitat, as well as an array of sea birds.

The property has 208 guest rooms, including 16 suites overlooking the water. In total, there is 15,000 sf of meeting space, with ocean views from the two ballroom meeting spaces.

## SANTA CRUZ

As the birthplace of mainland surfing in the US, Santa Cruz is the place for attendees who want to try their hand at lessons. The **Club Ed Surf School** has taught thousands of people to surf and offers private two-hour lessons for groups, including beginners. In that time, they are introduced to surfboard positioning and maneuvering, as well as proper stand-up and riding techniques.

Santa Cruz's 156-room **Chaminade Resort & Spa** will complete a \$7.9 million remodeling at the end of March that will transform all 156 guest rooms. The new Bohemian design is reflective of Santa Cruz's artisan community, while incorporating vintage touches. Select rooms include meditation alcoves.

"Practicing mindfulness and well-being when you're traveling is a trend that is here to stay," says General Manager Kevin Herbst. "The meditation alcoves allow our group guests the option to maintain their daily routine of balancing peace and tranquility."

A new Mindful Meetings package includes a guided meditation at the start and end of each day's meeting by Chaminade's resident meditation expert, yoga stretching breaks and afternoon hikes on the resort's nature trails. The chef will work with planners to add mindful selections to their menus, such as hot or iced Jasmine and chamomile teas, known for their healing properties. For outdoor wellness, groups can traverse a high ropes challenge course or any number of adventurous, innovative and creative teambuilding programs developed by Synergy Learning Systems of Santa Cruz.

In the heart of Solvang, the 122-room **Hotel Corque** has more



than 7,500 sf of indoor and outdoor meeting space and has been recently renovated by its owners, the Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians. Location is everything, with the Chumash Casino located just a 5-minute drive away, Santa Barbara Wine Country just 4 miles away and the Old Mission Santa Ines a short walk from the hotel.

Also in Solvang, the 73-suite **Alisal Guest Ranch and Golf Resort** is in the middle of a guest room remodeling, adding more than 70 sf to some rooms. Western touches and fireplaces lend the feeling of a cozy retreat. Set on a 10,000-acre working cattle ranch, Alisal is known for its horseback riding. Experienced wranglers lead small groups through canyons and past grazing cattle. In daily horsemanship lessons, they teach guests their techniques, from catching and leading to brushing and saddling.

