

Getting On Travel



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KENWOOD INN & SPA: A BOUTIQUE INN IN THE HEART OF SONOMA WINE COUNTRY

SANDY & IRA BORNSTEIN JULY 25, 2018

HOTELS & SPAS

0 COMMENTS

When my husband and I were planning our first trip to northern California's wine country, we wanted to stay at a small, [boutique](#) property near vineyards and extraordinary restaurants. The [Kenwood Inn & Spa](#) (located in the town of Kenwood) seemed perfect.

We didn't know whether our top hotel choice had escaped the devastating fires that had recently spread across Sonoma County but were lucky to find out that while Kenwood Inn & Spa had suffered smoke damage, it had re-opened after a five-month renovation.

After the fires

Last fall, well before we planned our trip, I had watched video footage of the fires. Living in an arid climate myself, I could fully commiserate with the fears associated with wildfires.

We learned that the fires had come within a quarter mile of the Inn. In the early morning, staff awakened guests and arranged for immediate evacuation with little time for guests to gather belongings. Within no time, brisk winds and hot, dry weather caused intense smoke to envelop the property.

It was weeks before anyone was allowed back to the area. All of the carpets, draperies, linens, walls, ceilings, and light fixtures had to be thoroughly cleaned. The smoke-stained plaster was replaced, walls were painted, and the gardens were invigorated with new plants. The lobby was redecorated with new Mediterranean-style furnishings.

When I called the property to find out whether Kenwood was accepting reservations, Sharon Rooney, the Inn's public relations representative, responded:

"We feel blessed that this beloved and iconic property survived and is once again welcoming visitors from all over the world. We're also so thankful for the first responders who risked their lives protecting all of us during the fires, and thankful that the region is rebounding so well. This spring the wildflowers were more profuse than I can ever remember. This proves that nature is resilient and somehow finds a way to recoup from disasters."

Her words relieved my anxieties and we booked a stay that coincided with our wedding anniversary.

A warm welcome

Upon check-in, we were greeted with a glass of sparkling wine and an Italian-style tassel room key.

Kenwood Inn & Spa's Mediterranean architecture with private entrances for each guest room added another layer of elegance to our remarkable stay.



Courtyard fountain at Kenwood Inn & Spa (Credit: Kenwood Inn)

We entered our spacious room with soft music playing in the background. A romantic fireplace sat across from the featherbed and a marble bathroom with a soaking tub and oversized shower was down a short hallway. Freshly baked cookies in a cellophane bag along with a chilled bottle of Segura Viudas Brut, a Spanish sparkling wine, were a wonderful finishing touch.

A peaceful retreat



Garden view king room at Kenwood Inn & Spa (Credit: Kenwood Inn)

Sitting on 2-1/2 acres, Kenwood Inn & Spa is surrounded by mature oak trees, vineyards, and orchards. Even though the property has only 29 guest rooms and suites, its landscaped courtyards with blooming flowers and flowing fountains create a more spacious atmosphere.

The impeccably maintained gardens provide a peaceful place to read a book. Few can pass through the arched walkway covered with aromatic star jasmine flowers without leaving with a smile on their face. On one side of the property, guests can take advantage of an intimate hot tub setting with a fountain. Near the soon to be re-opened spa, the pool offers ample seating and a quiet retreat from day to day life.



An inviting pool (Credit: Kenwood Inn)

Each morning, guests can stroll to La Cucina for a complimentary breakfast buffet from 8:00 a.m. to 10 a.m. They can choose from indoor and outdoor sitting. On chilly mornings, some guests position themselves near the outdoor fireplaces in the main courtyard while others find a comfortable place near the buffet line inside. All breakfast items are made fresh each morning including two cooked dishes, homemade yogurt, and baked goods.

Between 5-6PM, guests can indulge in a local wine/artisan cheese and fruit pairing near the main pool area. This “Magic Hour” experience was a fantastic way to wind down before dinner and to meet other guests. The wine pourers representing the wines being showcased provided insight into the daily offerings.

Upon returning from dinner, I chose to end the day sipping either port or sherry. Glasses and bottles of each were in the sitting room adjacent to the main entryway.

Future plans at Kenwood Inn & Spa

The spa is projected to re-open this fall. The original facility suffered smoke damage due to its open architecture. But as part of the remodeling project, an enhanced lounge area with a fireplace is being built along with new locker rooms. Until the spa reopens, guests can request customized spa services in the privacy of their rooms. Guests who would like to work

out can use complimentary guest passes to the Parkpoint Health Club in Sonoma.

What's appealing to the over-50 luxury traveler?

- Sonoma County has three main regions—coast and sea villages, redwoods and rivers, and the valley & vineyards. Kenwood Inn & Spa is located in the valley and offers an awesome place to unwind in style.
- The Kenwood Inn & Spa concierge can provide useful information about local attractions, assist with arranging vineyard visits and make reservations at popular restaurants.
- The Inn has two ADA compliant rooms with roll-in showers, fold-down shower seats, hand-held showers, lower closet bars, lower mirrors, etc. Two regular rooms will soon have amenities for the hearing impaired—strobe alarms, flashing lights when the doorbell rings, TTY machines, etc.

Take note

- Keep in mind that many of the more than 450 wineries are about 30- 50 minutes from the Inn.
- Except for the two ADA compliant rooms, stairs lead to all of the other guest rooms.
- The surrounding area has limited food service options but the reception desk can connect guests with a taxi service that delivers meals from local restaurants for a small fee.

Disclosure: The authors paid a media rate for their stay.

IF YOU GO

- [Kenwood Inn & Spa](#)
- [Sonoma County](#)

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SANDY & IRA BORNSTEIN

Sandy and Ira split their time between skiing and trekking in the Colorado Rockies and traveling. They have visited more than 40 countries. Sandy lived as an international teacher in India and wrote an award-winning book, "May This Be the Best Year of Your Life," as a resource for people contemplating an expat lifestyle and living outside their comfort zone. Their travel stories focus on active midlife and intergenerational adventures, food, historical places, and Jewish cultural sites. Ira assists with photos and edits Sandy's stories before publication.