



BARDESSONO, NAPA VALLEY

The barest facts are that the Bardessono is a luxury hotel of 62 rooms, event space, restaurant and spa in the relaxed community of Yountville.

Yet that information gives very little sense of how unique this property is and how different a guest experience here will be from other luxury hotels. The story of how this project came together influences greatly how the guest experiences it.

Background: The Bardessono family has owned this property for the last eighty years. While Yountville developed around them, the Bardessono's remained in their home on six acres of vineyards in the middle of Town. When they decided they would like a hotel developed on their property they undertook an eight year negotiation with the town leaders. After receiving zoning approval they found me as the developer to lease their land and create the hotel. As they say, "it was a marriage made in heaven".

The Bardessono's and I both come from modest beginnings and have spent most of our professional lives in public service. Neither of us are part of any corporate culture. I am a one person development organization. I do one project at a time, finding investors and banks to fund a project, and throw myself fully into the project's creation. As a former city planner I value the public's interest in a property's development, which has helped me foster a positive working relationship with local officials.

When the Bardessono's and I met we immediately liked each other. We realized that we shared values and a vision for what might be created on their property. Our trust level was high and has remained so. They have made me feel a part of their family. We have retained our initial excitement throughout the three years we have worked on the project and feel grateful that we are about to achieve our dream with the opening of the Bardessono. I decided to name the hotel after the family to honor their legacy in the community.

Vision: We both wanted this hotel to be very special. The Bardessono's were immediately supportive of my intent to make this hotel a model of how to minimize a development's environmental impact. In both its construction and operation I wanted us to be passionate about taking care of the environment. The result is that the Bardessono will be one of, if not the, "greenest" hotel in America when we open.

Architecturally, the hotel is something new in Napa Valley. It is of contemporary design, low rise, with the rooms clustered around courtyards in multiple buildings. The exterior features a palette of interesting and complementary materials: Monterey Cypress siding, stone, ground face concrete, rusted steel panels, and orchard walnut and redwood doors. While modern, the use of these materials and their aging qualities keep the architecture grounded to this place. I think most people will find the overall effect very appealing.

bardessono
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But I also wanted the guests of the hotel to have experiences that would create wonderful and lasting memories of Napa Valley. Traveling I have sometimes had those experiences and I treasure their memory. I believe those experiences come from a feeling about the place you are staying—that it was created with a sense of purpose and inspiration reflected in its details and that it offers a warm, generous, and intelligent hospitality. The other crucial ingredient to a treasured travel memory is that you experience a deep and unique connection to the community or location you are in. We will offer our guests, special experiences that they will remember, of the farming, food, wine, and people of the Valley. This is something relatively few visitors to the Valley experience today.

Having Yountville residents feel that the hotel was a good member of the community and that they were welcome was important to me and the Bardessono's. Our plans have been very transparent and responsive to community concerns. We have kept the community informed of our progress and have provided support for a recent community building photo project in the Town. We have built a pedestrian bridge across the creek at the back of our property and pedestrian paths that connect with other community paths. We have also had a very favorable response to our environmental initiatives. Our operating staff at the hotel will continue to play a supportive role in the community

Rooms: The rooms are large, typically 540 square feet of indoor space, and have the usual luxury features. However these rooms have a more interesting layout, light and details than you would find in most luxury guestrooms. The bathroom/dressing room has walnut floors milled from old orchard trees. In addition, the rooms have a large, well-furnished, private walled patio or deck. Enough said, I want you to be pleasantly surprised.

Restaurant: Yountville is the culinary center of the Valley with many outstanding restaurants. Our restaurant will reflect our environmental values. We will be focused on finding the tastiest, freshest, local ingredients. We will search out the best providers with organic farm produce, fish of sustainable stocks, and animals managed in a healthy and humane way. Our chefs will emphasize bringing the amazing flavors of the ingredients through in the dishes they prepare. Our emphasis will be on the quality of the taste not the architectural presentation on the plate or science experiments in the kitchen.

Spa Services: Three things will distinguish our services from the plethora of spas in the Valley—the quality of the spa products used, the experience and skill of our staff, and the emphasis on bringing services to the guests in their rooms. All of our guestrooms have cabinets with a massage table and supporting equipment to provide treatments in our guestrooms. Given the large size of our guestrooms and privacy of outdoor spaces we will be able to provide a wide range of outstanding treatments in the privacy of the guestrooms. And you don't need to dress and leave when the treatment is completed. We also have a spa facility that will offer a full range of services but will focus on couple's treatments. The skill of the therapists providing the treatments is clearly central to the quality of the services. We have worked to bring the best talent of the Valley to this

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program. We have searched for spa products that feel good, work well, and avoid harmful ingredients. Most spa products have a surprising number of ingredients that are not healthy for you. Not so with most of our products. We believe you will want these products for your home once you try them.

Bicycles: Rather than build your typical exercise room we have created a bicycle shop. There is a full service health club two blocks from the hotel which our guests can use. But we wanted to provide something more unique and that would help guests connect with the Valley. So we have acquired outstanding bicycles-much better than what you will find in other hotels or in bike tour programs. We want your bicycling experience (if you choose to ride bikes) to be something very special.

Grounds: I think you will find the grounds interesting and beautiful. We have over half an acre planted in vineyards, a chef's garden, several 100-year-old Olive trees, extensive ornamental plantings, unusual stone fountains, a 75 ft long pool on the rooftop of the Spa building, and rammed earth landscape walls.

Are you now intrigued enough to come and take a look?

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