

THE MAGAZINE OF THE NAPA VALLEY

# NAPA VALLEY

PEOPLE + STYLE + FOOD + SCENE + HOME

*Life*

## ROMANCE IN THE NAPA VALLEY

PLUS MUSTARD FESTIVAL,  
BARDESSONO RESORT &  
THE OLD ADOBE



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### CONTRIBUTING WRITERS

Kari Ruel

Paul Franson

Joe Peatman

Tim Hanni

Wendy Ward

Autumn Millhouse

### ON THE COVER:

Sean & Cynthia O'Toole

Photo by Art & Clarity

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**W**hat a stark contrast from last year at this time. I remember finally taking my photo with an umbrella because we couldn't find a dry day. This year, we were teased with an early spring. Maybe we needed the sunshine to lift our doom and gloom spirits. Though parts of the rest of the country would beg to differ with chilly temperatures, but that's why we love the Napa Valley. I, for one, am excited about February. It's Mustard Season and one of the most beautiful times of the Valley. Taking the photo of Sean and Cynthia O'Toole was a rejuvenating experience. First, they are both genuinely uplifting and second, they represent new birth. In this down economy, they are part of an award-winning team opening Bardessono, the "Greenest" resort in the country. How cool is that? I had a chance to preview our newest destination and was impressed with its simplicity yet attention to detail.

I'm also excited because I'm starting to hear encouraging dialog that good things are on the horizon. Not everyone is hurting. Those who seem not to be faltering are those with optimism in their hearts and eyes wide open to possibilities. Positive attitudes are contagious. Negativity can blind us to what's in front of us. That's why Napa Valley Life Magazine will continue to share the good things this Valley has to offer. I invite you to open your eyes and share in the goodness all around us and be appreciative of what we have. Support local businesses so they can continue to thrive and get to know your neighbor. I lost my next door neighbor suddenly just before Christmas. Howard was a wonderful man and a huge Oakland Raider fan. His bellowing laugh and juicy red tomatoes will be missed.

Napa Valley Life Magazine introduces Autumn Millhouse, a self proclaimed romantic who shares hot spots in the Valley for love this spring. We also welcome Wendy Ward's dynamic portrayal of Napa's Old Adobe, the oldest continuous operating Adobe in Northern California.

The country welcomed in a new president and many Napa Valley residents were on hand to partake in the historic celebration. See our latest "Scene Around the Valley."

Enjoy!!!!

Your Publisher,

Kari Ruel

THE PUBLISHER'S PAGE

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# DISCOVER THE bardessono

## AMERICA'S GREENEST LUXURY HOTEL & SPA A DELICIOUSLY RESTORATIVE RETREAT

Now Open in Yountville

The entry itself is a quiet celebration of the earth. Guests arriving at the Bardessono see a softly lit sign framed by rammed earth walls and artfully gnarled olive trees – century-old soldiers retired from a nearby working olive grove. You wind your way along the “upcycled” stone driveway and through a porte coché supported by towering pillars where a hostess awaits with a warm welcome.

Her digital tablet in hand, she is waiting specifically for you. As the valet parks your car, she greets you by name and deftly guides you through hand-milled recycled redwood doors into, not a lobby, but an oasis.

Vertical gardens created by Flora Grubb delight the eye as you take in a reception room filled with history. And there isn't a reservation desk in sight. You notice a sitting room with a fireplace clad in locally quarried Tufa stone that once cellared wine and produce in the Bardessono family home. It all feels sumptuous, like you are the intimate guest of a longtime friend.

A member of the Bardessono hospitality team takes your bags while your host guides you across a bricked pathway. You pass a slow-moving brook filled with sand and slate-colored stones from the Yuba River, cross a courtyard of olive trees flanking an impressive cascading fountain crafted from olive grinding wheels and suddenly you are standing at the door of your suite.



SEATTLE ARTIST RICHARD HESTEKIND USES ELEMENTAL MATERIALS IN HIS POETIC SCULPTURE. PHOTO BY ASHLEY TEPLIN

Once inside, your host hands you a digital tablet filled with your reservation information while someone tucks your bags in a floor-to-ceiling closet. A quick signature, the reservation process is finished, and you're left standing in your suite, awed. And that's just the beginning. General Manager Roger Young has seen to every detail.

When second-generation Napa Valley farmer Steve Bardessono approached eco-developer Phil Sherburne

with his family's legacy project, the pair shared a vision: to create a luxurious hotel that preserved the integrity of the Bardessono family's historic homestead and simultaneously opened it up to a flourishing tribe of travelers as enthusiastic about environmental preservation as they were.

Located on a historic five-acre property in the geographic center of Yountville, CA, the Bardessono hotel, restaurant and spa looks and feels like a rural

retreat. Winding paths, organic sculpture and beautiful common spaces connect a series of 62 guest suites and make those five acres seem wondrously, languorously sprawling. Magnolia trees frame a private northern courtyard, tributaries pass beneath bridges and sapling fruit trees dot the property's southern edge.

Natural beauty abounds in this contemporary design of stone, steel and cypress, redwood, orchard walnut and California bay woods. Marin County sawyer Evan Shively reclaimed the wood from within a 100-mile radius of the Napa Valley, making it an extension of the California landscape.

Beneath a small vineyard, 82 geothermal wells naturally heat and cool the entire resort. It is the largest geothermal system of any hotel in the world, according to Sherburne, and it is only one of a series of mind-blowing environmental initiatives that make Bardessono the most sophisticated green resort in the wine country.

And yet, this hotel is not just about keeping up eco-appearances. It's about nurturing each guest who passes through its courtyards. “Our hotel is dedicated to satisfying guests and their expectations,” Seattle architect and one of the Bardessono's chief designers Ron Mitchell says, “while at the same time delighting them again and again, whether that's through sitting under a tree while reading a book in a private courtyard, lunching with fellow guests at the common table in the dining room, swimming towards surrounding mountains in the rooftop pool, showering under the stars, or discovering natural tranquility within the town of Yountville.”

That's the magic of Bardessono. It reveals itself in layers. You cannot help, but notice how this sanctuary so quietly tucked into one of Napa Valley's most charming villages, allows guests the luxury of choosing to retreat from or engage in the traditions, foods and personalities



RAMMED EARTH WORKS COLLABORATED WITH CONTRACTORS CELLO & MAUDRU TO COMPRESS NATIVE AGGREGATES FROM NUN'S CANYON QUARRY INTO SIX STUNNING WALL PIECES SURROUNDING THE PROPERTY. PHOTO BY ASHLEY TEPLIN

the surrounding community has to offer. You cannot help but feel warmed by the personal touches your host has added to your room, or the wine country adventure Guest Experience Director Cristina Salas-Porras has custom-designed for you.

When the lounge staff engages you in a dialogue regarding a single barrel brandy from California distiller Germain-Robin, you realize the Bardessono team took every detail into account: the hand-loomed Coyuchi linens and cult skincare products from In Fiore, green technology, steam showers and exterior Venetian blinds. Sherburne knew couples looking for an intimate getaway would delight in steam showers, 120-gallon bubble tubs for two, spaciouly situated his-and-hers vanities and basins. He knew sport enthusiasts and active families would take real delight in using the complimentary ultra-lightweight precision Orbea sport bikes to explore

the valley's abundant offerings. Or choose children's and town bikes for meandering about Yountville and along the old stage route at the north end of town.

Sherburne allied himself with MTM Luxury Lodging and over a dozen Pacific Northwest and California artists, artisans, craftsmen and super talents to handcraft these details. Every one of them shared his belief that hospitality would be the heart of the hotel and that the environmental initiatives were, simply, the right thing to do.

Together, they filled The Bardessono with those million subtle distinctions that give guests a truly authentic and restorative experience. The result is a Platinum-LEED aspiring hotel perfect for a 30th wedding anniversary celebration, a late afternoon lunch, or a quick espresso in the lounge. It's a 62 suite boutique where each room doubles as a spa and an unprecedented spa butler program brings an entire menu of services directly to its guests. It's a restaurant and lounge that honors Napa Valley's longstanding culinary traditions and produce whether Chef Sean O'Toole's is preparing Pacific Bay shellfish and local greens or mixologist Thad Vogler is whipping up cocktails of Chachaca and Prosecco mixed with fresh ginger and mint plucked from the hotel's organic gardens.

The result is the Bardessono, an unfolding oasis in the heart of the Napa Valley. 🍷 NVL

*To make a reservation at Bardessono, Napa Valley's newest luxury hotel, spa and restaurant, please call 707.204.6000 or 877.932.5333. You can also reserve a room online at [www.Bardessono.com](http://www.Bardessono.com).*

(BELOW) ENVIRONMENTALIST DEVELOPER PHIL SHERBURNE. PHOTO BY COLIN FINLAY

