

# DEPARTURES

— Travel —

## This 140-Year-Old Sonoma Hotel Is Reopening With a Stunning Design Refresh



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Courtesy Madrona

An exclusive look at Sonoma's newest boutique hotel.

By Maya Kachroo-Levine on March 15, 2021

As the [luxury scene in Healdsburg, California](#) continues to expand, [The Madrona](#), an historic, 140-year-old inn is set to get a design makeover and reopen toward the end of 2021. Already home to a Michelin-starred restaurant, the 22-room hotel on eight acres in [Sonoma Valley](#) will be completely reimaged under new, local ownership. The goal is to return The Madrona to its historic design roots—with luxury amenities and [Michelin-starred dining](#). The property dates back to 1882 and was originally built during the



Courtesy Madrona

aesthetic movement. Napa designer Jay Jeffers, who is best known for his work on luxury Northern California projects like [The Ritz-Carlton, Lake Tahoe](#), is focused on restoring the property’s luxurious 19th-century design elements.

Aestheticism was a “20-year movement that was a reaction to Victorianism—it was a little more fanciful and fun, and [about] beauty for beauty’s sake,” explained

Jeffers, who is also a part owner of The Madrona.

“Oscar Wilde had a quote that said anything in your home should either be functional or beautiful or both, otherwise there’s no point in having it in your home. And so I’ve really taken that into consideration,” he added.

The main theme behind the renovation is a return to former design glory. Jeffers often refers to the property as a “grand dame overlooking [Dry Creek Valley](#)” that he wants to restore by exalting the design work of the past.

Jeffers and his team are refreshing every space on the property, starting with the main house, called The Mansion—which houses eight guest rooms, a main parlor, an idyllic front porch, and the Michelin-starred restaurant with a covered outdoor dining terrace.



Courtesy Madrona

“The restaurant itself is going to have this chic sort of quality that makes you just want to stay there all day. The terrace is huge, it looks onto all the beautiful gardens of the hotel, and we really want that to feel a little more tropical, a little bit more Palm Beach, with rattan chairs and hanging plants and things like that,” said Jeffers, who himself is partial to a “boozy lunch” on a gorgeous patio. He and his husband have been coming to Healdsburg since long before they moved to Napa, and Jeffers’ passion for the area is infectious.



*Courtesy Madrona*

Beyond the eight guest rooms in The Mansion, guests can look forward to accommodations in The Carriage House, The Paddock House, and The Bungalows. The 22 rooms will include studios, one-bedroom suites, and separate one- and two-bedroom bungalows with private entrances. And to further the romance of this historic inn, many of the rooms will have luxe touches like private balconies and fireplaces, too.

“The beautiful thing about this is it’s not a full gut renovation, it’s bringing the glory of this grand dame that once was back to where it should be,” said Jeffers. “We’re trying to take the aesthetic movement into consideration and really make this feel like a beautiful, chic, stylish place where you want to come for cocktails on the porch, or a chic dinner at night, or invite your friends for a party or get married here.”

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