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Under the Sun

Old world ambiance and a warm, welcoming environment.

By Heike Hellwig



Considered a local artistic treasure, the Blue Iguana Inn is truly a unique Southern California destination. Ideally located—just minutes from historic downtown Ojai and the Pacific Ocean—this distinctive villa inn is suited for every type of getaway. Innkeepers Marc and Julia Whitman purchased the property in 1997 and transformed the broken-down motel from a fifties-era apartment building into a charming artist inn. Designed and built by local artists, it features Southwest/vintage Hacienda-style architecture and décor. The renovation was such a success that it attracted the attention of major magazines. Called “hip and stylish” by *Sunset* and “like staying in the home of a well-traveled friend with an artistic bent” by the *San Francisco Chronicle*, the Blue Iguana is now one of Ojai’s most popular and beloved places to relax and enjoy the creative

IF YOU GO

THE BLUE IGUANA INN

Designed and built by renowned Ojai architect Marc Whitman, the inn offers traditional guest rooms, suites and bungalows. A complimentary breakfast is served daily. Room rate range: \$119–\$299; \$20 per night pet fee. Ojai, CA; (805) 646-5277; www.blueiguanainn.com.



Relax poolside and enjoy a nature lovers paradise.

ambiance of this central coast town.

Inviting lawns and meadows dot the property and lush gardens surround the pool. The Blue Iguana offers a charming variety of guest rooms, spacious suites and secluded bungalows, all enhanced by lush gardens and picturesque courtyards. Whether you are looking for a place to spend one night or settle in for an extended stay, the vibrant artistic flavors of Ojai await you in this most charming villa inn.

We enjoyed a delightful Easter weekend at the Blue Iguana in bungalow #4 with our dog Jazz. Our accommodations came with a cute front porch, a spacious living room, kitchen, bed and bathroom and even a cozy landscaped and enclosed patio. The welcome was warm and friendly, with a note from the staff and treats for Jazz. She quickly made friends with a chocolate Lab, Logan, who was frolicking on the expansive greens of the inn.

The weather was great and allowed us to get a hike in and take advantage of the many trails available for every level of outdoor enthusiast. Ojai is a nature lover’s paradise, offering bike paths, equestrian trails, golfing, boating, fishing, kayaking, hiking and rock climbing all within close proximity to the hotel.

This Fido-friendly inn observes most of the standard dog policies, such as keeping Fido on a leash, not leaving your dog unattended and obviously cleaning up after him. A \$20/night pet fee applies as well as a \$100 refundable deposit. Well-mannered dogs are welcome.

We enjoyed the inn’s complimentary breakfast, which is served daily, and we also frequented a couple of the dog-friendly restaurants in Ojai. Another trip surely awaits, as there is more to explore of Ojai and more to enjoy at the Blue Iguana Inn. 