



# HOLLYWOOD BY THE SEA

*At Carmel's Cypress Inn* **By K.C. Hamblin**

**I**t's a paradise swathed in sea foam. A bucket-list destination delivering equal parts refinement and rugged coastline.

Set along California's pounding Pacific, Carmel-by-the-Sea is a statement to artistry, architecture, and the occasional 8-iron par. The gateway to Pebble Beach's iconic 17-Mile Drive, this sanctuary also boasts world-class wine tasting, the annual Carmel International Art & Film Festival, and a spirited



lineup of restaurants. It's also home to one of the West Coast's top gems, the Cypress Inn.

Pack the fedora and a sense of adventure, as this retro hideaway exudes Hollywood-by-the-Sea elegance and soulful seaside charm. Co-owned by legendary Hollywood actor and animal rights activist Doris Day, the circa-1929 landmark exemplifies Hollywood Regency glam. I venture through the massive yet ornate Mediterranean-style entry and spy a set of poodles perched by 20-somethings sipping Cosmos. Suddenly, my afternoon power walk to Carmel Beach takes a backseat to more leisurely pursuits: afternoon tea in the Living Room and handcrafted cocktails in the lounge.

***Retro Rendezvous***

Of the 44 guest rooms, a corner pocket on the second floor becomes my new nest, affording panoramic views of Carmel Village and the Pacific. The decor is decidedly contemporary with clean crisp lines, muted tones, vaulted ceilings, and a fireplace. In addition to all the requisite high-tech toys, special perks such as lavish linens, fresh flowers, and filtered water add a luxe touch.

But it's hard to stay indoors with so many beautiful courtyards to choose from — and one cool

alfresco lounge. Sunset lures guests around its cozy fireplace, surrounded by a heady mix of personalities — locals and visitors — with pooches in tow. Settling in, I trace tomorrow's adventures: a tour of nearby Tor House (home of the famous poet Robinson Jeffers), a gallery hop (Carmel boasts more than 80 galleries within one square mile), a hike at Point Lobos State Reserve, and a romp through 14 new wine-tasting venues. Carmel seems re-invented, reinvigorated, and most of all — ready!

***Shaken or Stirred***

As the sun slides into the Pacific, the Inn cuts loose with a daily celebration: Yappy Hour at Terry's Restaurant + Lounge. Ornate wood and rich leather set the tone, alongside classic cocktails and an eclectic bar menu featuring briny oysters, crispy Monterey Bay calamari, and grilled pita with a trio of sauces. Even Fido

***Clockwise from far left: a 1929 historic landmark, the living room, guest room, afternoon stroll, and fresh gelato***



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CYPRESS INN; FAR RIGHT BY KERRICK JAMES



PACK THE FEDORA AND A SENSE OF ADVENTURE, AS THIS RETRO HIDEAWAY EXUDES HOLLYWOOD-BY-THE-SEA ELEGANCE AND SOULFUL SEASIDE CHARM.

won't be disappointed: A new canine menu serves steak tartare and Muttinis.

Curated by lead mixologist Drago (who bartended for Sinatra, Bishop, and Davis Jr.), the 1920s- to 1940s-era drink list reflects a wealth of research into Day's costars' tastes in cocktails. Based on the 1957 film *Kiss Them for Me*, Cary Grant's minty Stinger debuts on the carte, as does a Brandy Milk Punch and Widow's Kiss, blending the aromatic firepower of two herbal liqueurs. I select an Orange Blossom, a favorite of President Reagan, thus the side of jelly beans.

Then I take a table at the adjacent 65-seat Terry's Restaurant, the first participant in Carmel's Seafood Watch Program focusing on sustainable practices. Signature dishes such as lamb lollipops are tempting, but my palate gravitates to the red and golden beet salad from nearby Salinas Valley, fol-

lowed by delicately crusted Monterey sand dabs served with tarragon sauce and a side of sweet potato fries. It's sheer perfection when paired with a local sauvignon blanc from Bernardus Winery. Even more perfect — walking 20 paces to my guest room's perfectly turned-down bed.

Carmel is known for its crisp mornings. The best wake-up call — the smell of freshly baked popovers wafting from the kitchen. Embracing the region's locavore focus, the Inn serves up everything from top-shelf coffee to blueberries culled within a ten-mile radius. I power up with a hearty breakfast and set out for a day of scouting and wine tasting. Soon I'm daydreaming about a cushy lifestyle



**Clockwise from far left: Sadie, director of pet relations; classic cocktails served by star mixologist Drago in Terry's Lounge; and beachside romance**

tucked away in a cottage named "You Earned It" with views of Pebble Beach. *Sigh.*

My stride quickens as I pass through the European-style village. Flower-strewn courtyards link boutiques and a bevy of inns including the

Lamp Lighter Inn, Vagabond's House Inn, and Forest Lodge — all sister properties of Cypress Inn. When it comes to my stay at this legendary property along Monterey Bay, Mayor Clint Eastwood's famous one-liner sums it up best: Go ahead, make my day. [cypress-inn.com](http://cypress-inn.com) ✪