

WINTER 2011

RIDERS *of the* ALISAL

PUBLISHED WHENEVER A LITTLE CORRAL DUST NEEDS KICKIN' AROUND

BARBEQUE BOOTCAMP
hosted by Executive Chef Pascal Godé



We've

REMODELED



Alisal Garden News

*Tours, Pumpkin Patch, **Going Organic** & More*

NEWS *from the* BARN



Howdy Y'all!

Feels like this new year sort of snuck up on us! Speaking of new... we'd love to tell you about exciting new additions to the Alisal family.

Jesse and I just returned from a trip to New Mexico to scout out some prime candidates to join the herd at the barn. Resumes piled high as word got out that we were recruiting for horses that would be employed at the most beautiful guest ranch in California. Our task of selecting the best of the best was very difficult as we encountered many nice and beautiful horses. Our hard work paid off as we returned home with three wonderful horses named Calvin, Bear, and Bandit. So without further ado, let me introduce to you...

Calvin is a six year old Palomino Quarter Horse. Calvin has been a working ranch horse most of his life and is a great roping and sorting horse. This handsome boy is sure-footed, smooth-gaited, and sure to be one of the favorites!

Next, let me introduce to you, Bear, who is an eight year old Bay Quarter Horse. This big, stout gelding came off the Krebs Ranch located in Kansas. This working cattle ranch has been breeding and raising quality ranch and show horses since 1887. Bear is a well-trained roping horse and we are excited that he has joined our family.

Lastly, we have Bandit who is a six year old black and white Paint Horse with dazzling blue eyes! This blue-eyed

bandit will steal your heart away! Bandit is a great roping horse and has been to many ropings all over the state of New Mexico. Just last December, Jesse won a team roping buckle with Bandit while in Bakersfield, California. Welcome, Bandit!

Also, we had three new additions to the Alisal family last year. You might remember seeing the wranglers ride Nacho last summer. Nacho is full of personality and we just love him. He is a beautiful Bay horse that wants to receive a lot of attention and we love giving it to him. He has been a great addition to our herd.

Coppertone is our mighty little Palomino gelding with a heart the size of Texas! This horse is very sweet-minded and we love getting to know him. He is every girl's dream horse donning his beautiful golden coat and blonde mane and tail.

Chance is our three year old Palomino Quarter Horse gelding. He is the grandson of the great Corona Cartel, the #2 leading living sire, racing Quarter Horse of all time! Wow, this horse has very impressive lineage and has made himself right at home here at the Alisal.

I can't wait to see all of you this year so that I can personally introduce you to these wonderful horses. Be sure to stop by the barn and say HOWDY!

Happy Trails!

Haddie Tal

Alisal Wrangler

» WHAT'S NEW *at the* RANCH? «



We listened...and now we are pleased to offer several exciting new package deals that we know you will enjoy.

The Best of Both Worlds... *Golf & Spa Package*

The Golf and Spa Package provides a daily round of golf on either of the Ranch's two 18-hole golf courses, or a relaxing and rejuvenating spa treatment. Studio accommodations with a wood-burning fireplace are included, as well as a hearty breakfast and gourmet dinner prepared by Chef Pascal. Come relax with us this winter. The biggest decision you'll have to make is... golf or massage?

We're Right in the Heart of Wine Country...

Harvest Weekend Wine Package

The Harvest Weekend Wine Package is a western-themed wine event held in November. This offering is a rare opportunity to go behind the scenes of the popular Lucas & Lewellen Winery. The weekend kicks off Friday night at the Ranch with a barbeque dinner and line dancing with live entertainment. Saddle up on Saturday morning for a horseback ride to the Old Adobe for a campfire breakfast prepared by our chef. The hay wagon will be there too just in case you prefer to be chauffeured to breakfast. That afternoon, you'll be transported to Lucas & Lewellen Vineyard's state-of-the-art production facility to join in a barrel and tank sampling, a production tour, wine swirling competition, all while enjoying live music. Later, sit down

to an exclusive winemaker's dinner with the principals of Lucas & Lewellen Vineyards. Sleep in on Sunday morning and eat a leisurely breakfast in the Alisal's famous Old Ranch Room, then choose your activity for the day: golf, fishing, tennis, horseback riding, or a relaxing spa treatment.

Come Learn with the Best... *Barbecue Bootcamp*

Next fall, Alisal will host its first-ever Barbeque Bootcamp. This program has been designed to teach participants how to grill the perfect meal. You'll learn from guest chefs how to choose your fuel source, maintain an ideal cooking temperature, select a cut of meat, season and cook foods to perfection. You will also learn the basics of Dutch oven cooking. Don't forget to bring your cowboy boots and join the horseback ride to the Old Adobe for a delicious breakfast. You'll also have some free time to enjoy the exceptional fishing or golf the ranch has to offer. All meals are included with the Barbeque Bootcamp as well as wine with dinner. Call to reserve your place in our October 2011 Barbeque Bootcamp, and bring a hefty appetite!

Remember, in addition to these new packages, we still offer the ever-popular Round-Up Vacation Package, Cowgirl Bootcamp, Couples Bootcamp and more! Please visit the Alisal website for details.

✧ Alisal GARDEN NEWS ✧



Welcome to the Alisal Garden News, our new section in the Riders of the Alisal. The idea of including garden news originates from you, our guests. We have had so many inquiries throughout the years that we felt it was time to find a way to keep you up-to-date about what is growing and blooming here on the Ranch.

The Alisal is fortunate to experience four distinct seasons which is unusual for this part of California. Having the high and low temperatures allows for a great range of plant diversity, especially for plants and trees that need many hours of cold temperature. Some of these plants include the Oriental Poppies, Flowering Cherries, Heavenly Lilac and Snowball Viburnum. You will also see our beautiful Iris, Ranunculus, tulips and daffodils scattered around the grounds. Spring brings an explosion of color to the

Ranch as our glorious tulip tree, *Magnolia Soulangeana*, blooms profusely over the course of several months. If you stroll past the Library you will come upon some cinnamon peeling bark with a bulbous trunk shape which is our prized double-flowering cherry tree, *Prunus Serrulata*. Over the pergola outside the Arts & Crafts room is a luscious, spilling purple Wisteria. We also have the stunning Forsythia which bursts into yellow blossoms then breaks out into lush green leaf.

Garden Tours

This coming summer we are very excited to offer weekly garden tours around the Ranch. One of our landscaping experts will take you on a leisurely walk around the grounds to point out what is blooming and growing, as well as answer any plant and garden questions you may have. You will be able to sign up for the weekly tour at Guest Services. We are currently working on posting name plates near the trees and plants of the Alisal. Once completed, we will make a map of all the labeled trees and plants for self-guided tours. Look us up in the Santa



Barbara Magazine January 2011 garden issue (www.sbmag.com/2011/01/in-full-bloom/). See if you can recognize where these crape myrtles are located.

Pumpkin Patch

We will be planting a Pumpkin Patch for our guests in the fall. Be sure to stop by and view the pumpkins, gourds and corn throughout the growing season.

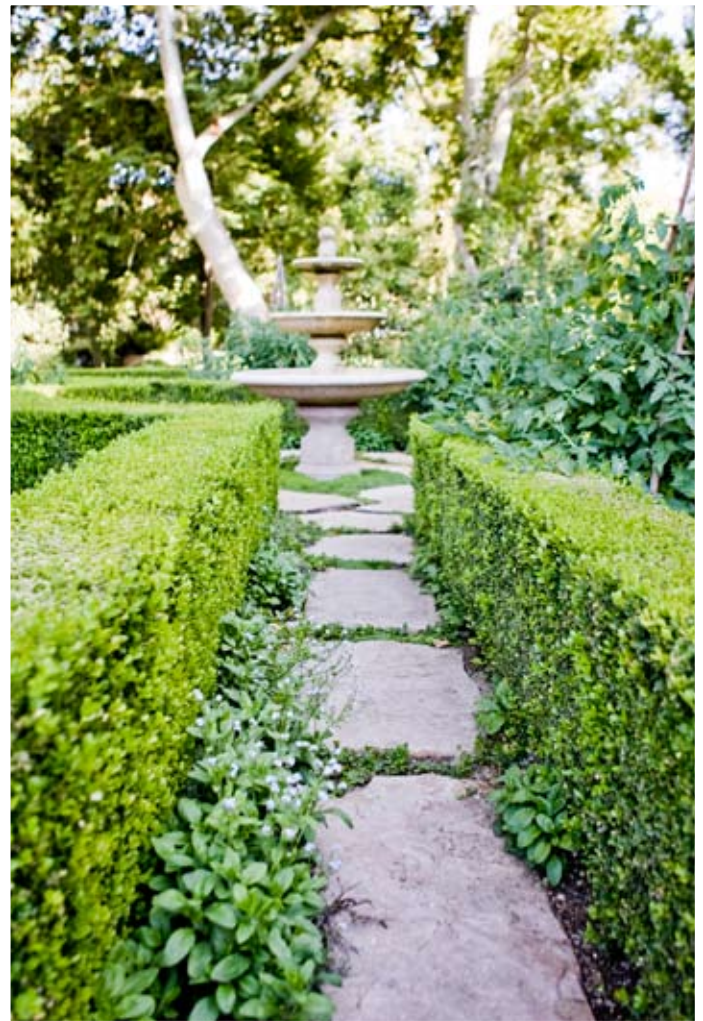
Organic

Many of you may not know that we are a sustainable and organic property. We do not use chemical pesticides or fertilizers. Rather, we mulch the property with organic fertilizers and compost tea. It is important for us to know that our guests as well as our wildlife are safe from chemical exposure.



Summer

Summer at the Alisal is a glorious time of year. Our signature trees are, of course, the Sycamores. We have two varieties - the Native California and the European. Flowers that we feature include dahlias, zinnias, and the roses which our deer love to snack on. We also have several varieties of roses, mostly Old Fashion and David Austin; their fragrance is wonderfully



aromatic. We have fruit trees that blossom in the spring and bear fruit in the summer. Have you seen our apricots, plums, peaches, persimmons and pomegranates? And what doesn't say summer like lavender? We grow Lavandula "Grosso" and "Provence." The hot pink and purple flowering trees that flank the brick walkway leading to the Fitness Center & Spa are Crape Myrtle, Lagerstroemia indica. You can notice them in other areas as well. As you can tell, we are proud of the many different varieties of trees, shrubs and flowers that we grow at the Alisal. We hope you will visit us throughout the year to enjoy all of our different blooming seasons.

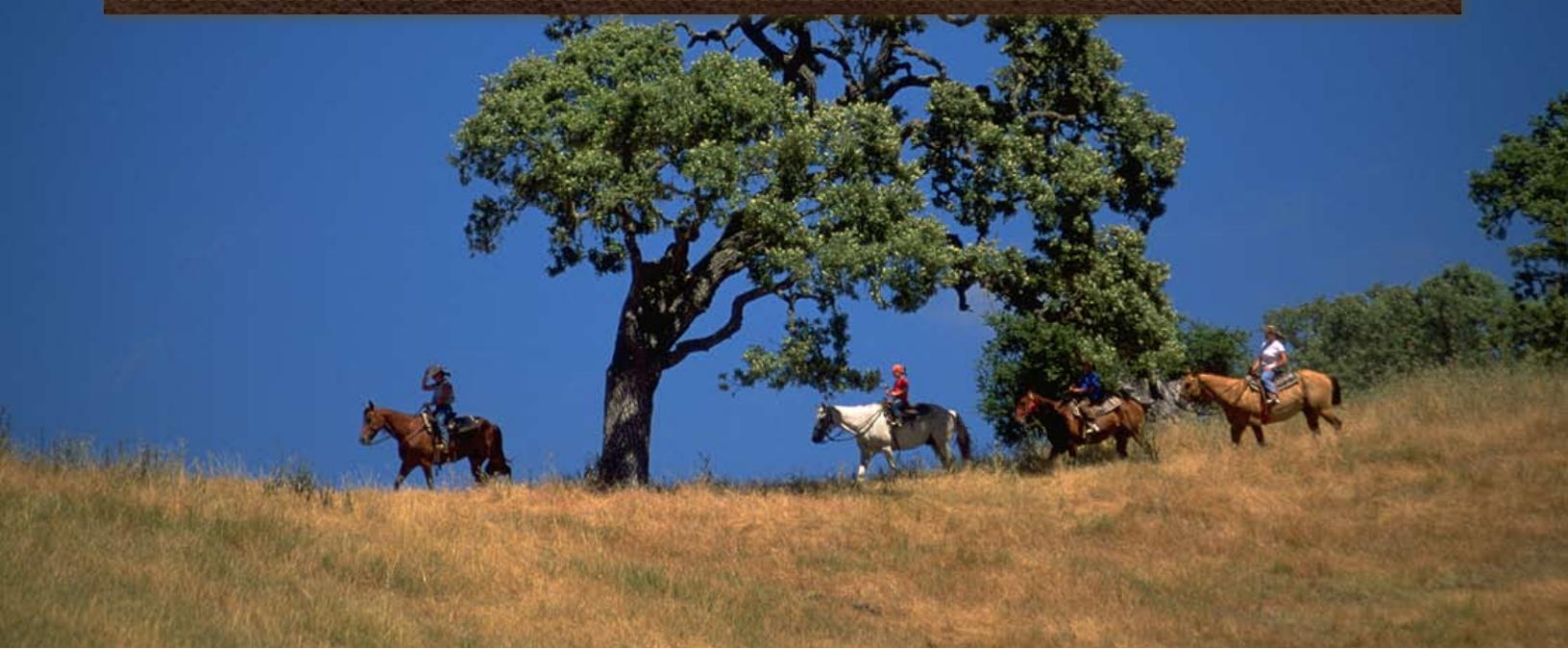
Trace Iest Robinson, Landscape Designer

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Photos by Nancy West Photography

ALISAL'S HORSES RETIREMENT PLAN



Every year the Ranch recruits new horses in an effort to preserve the quality of the horse herd and to retire our aging horses. When a new horse comes on board, the wranglers allot a certain amount of time getting to know the horse and his needs. Once the wrangler is knowledgeable and comfortable with the horse's demeanor, he will allow the horse to start out with our advanced riders. Only after the horse has familiarized himself with the riders, trails, and other horses are the intermediate and beginning riders allowed to mount the horse.

We are often asked how long a horse will work before retirement. Well, this varies depending on the horse. Often times, a horse can serve the ranch until his late-twenties and still be in excellent shape, while other horses can become arthritic and need to retire at an earlier age. Horses that are near retirement have reduced workloads and are given easier responsibilities such as in our Kid's Program. When horses reach the point where going out on the trail is too hard on them, they become lead-around horses and used for corral lessons. Our lead-around horses are considered "semi-retired." They work a couple times a week by taking children, under the age of seven, on rides around the corral. These wonderful horses always get extra special treatment as they have definitely earned it.

Why not just retire these horses right away, you ask?

Because horses are social and part of a working herd, it is very important for them to feel needed. If a horse is retired too early they begin to lose their feeling of self-worth. By allowing these horses to be lead-around horses and participate in corral lessons, they are able to retain their sense of worth.

For our fully-retired horses, the Ranch has a beautiful "pension pasture" reserved especially for them so that they can spend the remainder of their time relaxing and being carefree.

On another note, some of you might remember Cinnamon. Well, this lucky fellow is enjoying picturesque ocean views at his new home on the Cojo Ranch with Katie and Justin Cota (former Alisal wranglers). He was given to them and their two young children this last summer and from what we hear, he is now quite spoiled. Cassie, their daughter, is three years old and she thinks Cinnamon is just the coolest horse ever. Katie says all she wants to do all day is feed him carrots and horse cookies. We couldn't think of a better life for Cinnamon! He's definitely getting his dose of hugs and kisses!

Happy Trails!

Haddie Tal

Alisal Wrangler

ANNOUNCING *the* ALISAL WINE CLUB

Many of our guests have a common heartwarming memory of their visits to the Alisal. Do you remember sitting around your usual table by the fireplace in the Ranch Room with your family or spouse, enjoying another delicious Chef Pascal entrée, while sipping your favorite wine? Family never seemed closer than it did around that table.

We've noticed many Alisal guests have more than just this in common. They share an appreciation for great food, beautiful scenery, lasting traditions, and of course, fine wine!

Being in the heart of one of the world's most noted wine regions, the Ranch has had a long tradition of serving wines from some of California's finest vineyards, including our close neighbors: Melville Winery, Di Bruno & Curran Wines and Lucas & Llewellyn Vineyard. When the popular wine-centered movie *Sideways* came out a few years ago it was not surprising that the director choose to film a scene right here at the Ranch and in the nearby Santa Barbara Wine Country.

As interest in fine wine has grown, so too have the number of guests suggesting we share our access to some of the world's great wines with others. As a result, for the first time ever, we are introducing the Alisal Wine Club!

The Alisal Wine Club features three membership options to satisfy every wine lover. Shipments can be sent monthly, every other month, or quarterly. Every shipment is guaranteed - you'll love it or we will replace it for free.

With each wine, you will receive the Cellar Notes monthly newsletter; and exclusive wine pairing recipes prepared by our own executive chef, Pascal Gode. You can rate our wines for a chance to win monthly wine giveaways, and reorder wines at significant discounts when quantities allow. You may choose your preference of either red or white wines, or an assortment.

Membership Benefits Include:

- Cellar Notes monthly newsletter — detailed wine information and perfectly paired Chef Pascal recipes
- Free, annual subscription to the national wine, food and travel magazine: *Touring & Tasting* (newsstand price: \$6.95 per issue)
- Member discounts — up to 70% off retail wine prices
- No membership fees
- Cancel anytime
- Every wine is 100% guaranteed!



With a special emphasis on the finest wines from Santa Barbara County, wines chosen for the Alisal Wine Club will also feature the best of California, Oregon, Washington and from around the world.

Enjoy limited production offerings from highly-regarded wineries such as: Viader, Keenan, ZD, Sea Smoke, Foxen, Peju, Jaffurs, Chalk Hill, Whitehall Lane and many more. In addition, savor a choice Super Tuscan from Italy, or a French Bordeaux.

The wine chosen for the Alisal Wine Club's debut will begin shipping in March. Charter members who join within the first thirty days will enjoy a variety of free 'thank you' gifts like Alisal branded corkscrews, wine totes, discounts on spa services for your next Alisal visit, and much more. The first twelve signups to the Golden Spur Club will receive a bottle of the highly coveted Sea Smoke Pinot Noir in their first shipment.

For additional information regarding the Alisal Wine Club, visit www.alisalwineclub.com

ANNOUNCING our first annual BARBECUE BOOTCAMP

*Hosted By Executive Chef Pascal Godé
October 27-30, 2011*



On the heels of our wildly popular Cowgirl and Couples' Bootcamps, we are pleased to announce our first annual Barbeque Bootcamp; Saturday, October 27-30, 2011 with special guest Grill Master and Hitching Post II Restaurant owner Frank Ostini. The Ranch has been specializing in barbecue for over 60 years and now we are letting guests in on a few of our trade secrets. During this three-night, four-day program, guests will hone their grilling skills, gain grilling confidence, and learn the ins and outs of Santa Maria-style BBQ from Alisal Executive Chef Pascal Godé and Hitching Post II owner Frank Ostini. Each morning will be focused on a different aspect of grilling and afternoons will be free for horseback riding, golf, or a visit to the spa. In the evenings, local guest chefs and winemakers will man the grills and guests will have the opportunity to taste some of the rich varietals for which the Santa Ynez wine region is known.

BBQ Bootcamp Highlights Include:

THURSDAY

- Welcome Reception and Western-style dinner to meet the class

FRIDAY

- Morning seminar on grilling, from ancho chilies to tri-tip, and everything else in-between with Chefs Godé and Ostini
- Free afternoon for golf, horseback riding, or spa treatment
- Dinner prepared by Chefs Godé and Ostini featuring Hitching Post Wines

SATURDAY

- Create-your-own-spice-blends class with Chefs Godé and Ostini
- Cook your own dinner entrees with some help from the grill masters.
- Local micro-brew beers will be featured.

SUNDAY

- Private Breakfast Horseback Ride to the Old Adobe with Dutch Oven cooking demonstration
- Check out

PACKAGE INCLUDES:

- Three-night stay accommodation (all with wood-burning fireplace)
- Welcome basket with Western-style weekend accessories
- All meals, including special dinners with local celebrity chefs, winemakers, and brewmasters
- Seminars on grilling methods and equipment, Dutch oven cooking, spice blending and more
- BBQ instruction and booklet
- Private Sunday morning breakfast horseback ride to the Old Adobe

The cost of the BBQ Bootcamp package is \$2,500. For those guests interested in participating in our dry run on March 31 - April 3, 2011, please contact Dave Lautensack, General Manager at lautensack@alisal.com. A very special rate for this Spring Training BBQ Bootcamp will be offered.

» CALENDAR *of* LOCAL EVENTS «



Spring is a wonderful time to visit us here in the beautiful Santa Ynez Valley. The weather is just right and the green hills are dotted with vibrant, colorful wildflowers. This makes the perfect backdrop for the many special events that are planned throughout the season. Below are just a few of those activities. Be sure to book your stay at the Ranch soon so that you don't miss out on all the fun!

February 14-15

1st Annual Wine Around

Two days of exclusive wine & barrel tastings paired with gourmet hors d'oeuvres at three of the area's favorite wineries. This is a real treat for any wine lover.

May 7

81st Annual Rancheros Vistadores (Visiting Ranchers) Blessing at the Old Mission

500+ horses and riders participate.

May 20

Amgen Tour of California Stage 6 Solvang individual Time Trials.

Watch up close as the largest and most prestigious US professional bike race and the world's best cyclists come to the Santa Ynez Valley.

The Santa Ynez Valley is recognized as one of the county's best places for bike riding. The area is known for its scenic flats and gentle rolling hills filled with world-class vineyards, the quiet shaded lanes, and the steep mountain roads perfect for a vigorous cardio workout. Therefore, it is not surprising that America's most famous bike race will once again be coming to Solvang this May. Teams and riders participating in the Amgen Tour of California race will include Tour de France top competitors, world champions and Olympic medalists. This is a great chance to catch top riders like Levi Leipheimer and Michael Rogers as they participate in the Individual Time Trial that winds through Solvang. If you are an avid cyclist or even a novice it's a great time of year to bring your bikes to the Alisal and ride the roads and see the pros.

March 11-12

SCOR Solvang Century & Half Century Annual 50 or 100-mile amateur bike ride for charity.

You don't have to be a pro cyclist to enjoy peddling through the Valley. That's why every spring many people make the Alisal home base for a fun and challenging bike event called the SCOR Century and Half Century ride. For two days in March over 4000 bike riders come to the area to participate in this well-organized ride for 100 miles or 50 miles. This is not a race, so riders of all skill levels are welcome. It is sponsored by S.C.O.R., (Specialized Coronary Outpatient Rehabilitation). The organization founded in 1974, is a non-profit recreational bicycling club which encourages bicycling as a form of rehabilitative therapy after heart attack, coronary bypass surgery, angioplasty and other forms of heart disease.

March 18-20

19th Annual Taste of Solvang

Dessert party, walking smorgasbord, wine tasting and picnic events

April 2

Hans Christian Andersen Birthday Party

Storytelling, music and refreshments at HCA Museum – fun for the whole family

April 16

Vintners' Festival

A premier wine tasting event featuring the area's best wineries, sponsored by Santa Barbara Vintners Association

Solvang Celebrates Centennial – The village of Solvang, California's "Little Denmark," is celebrating their 100th anniversary.

To mark the occasion a series of themed events and activities are scheduled every month of the year. For example, on **"Third Wednesday" of every month** a historical walking tour around the village takes place in cooperation with the Elverhøj Museum of History & Art. In **March**, the 19th annual Taste of Solvang will celebrate area cuisines and wine. In **September**, the 75th annual Danish Days will fete all sights, sounds and savory flavors of Denmark. In **December**, Julefest marks the Danish month-long winter holiday festivities.

✦ CHEF'S CORNER ✦

Many of you have inquired about the sources of our fresh vegetables during the summer. Currently we purchase all of our heirloom tomatoes, jalapeno peppers, baby greens, squash, bell peppers, tomatillos, sweet onions and peaches from Buttonwood Organic Farm. We buy almost their entire crop of tomatoes - between 2800 to 3200 pounds. On occasion, we purchase some of our other vegetables through the Berryman Produce Company and other small, local, organic farmers. If we had our way, we would purchase all of our fruits and vegetables from local organic growers. However, the challenge for the Alisal is to find enough local farmers to supply our sizeable summer demand.



Below is a recipe in which we use some of these wonderful organic vegetables. We hope you enjoy it.

Gnocchi "alla Romana" with Tomato Basil Sauce and Parmesan Cheese

Recipe makes 6 servings

INGREDIENTS

3 cups whole milk
¾ cup semolina flour (resembles fine yellow cornmeal)
1 tsp salt
¼ cup plus 2 tbsp unsalted butter, melted
3 ozs finely grated Parmigiano-Reggiano cheese (¾ cup)
1 large egg

PREPARATION

Whisk together milk, semolina and 1 tsp. of salt in a 2-quart saucepan and bring to a boil over medium heat, whisking. Simmer, stirring constantly with a wooden spoon, until very stiff, 5 to 8 minutes. Remove from the heat and stir in 2 tbsp. butter and ¾ cup Parmigiano-Reggiano. Beat in the egg. Spread the gnocchi mixture ½ inch thick on an oiled baking sheet and chill approximately one hour uncovered or until very firm.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees

Cut out rounds from gnocchi mixture with a 2-inch round cookie cutter (push scraps into remaining mixture as you

go) and arrange, slightly overlapping, in a well buttered 13 inch by 9 inch baking dish. Make a small second layer in the center of the dish with the remaining rounds. Brush gnocchi with remaining ¼ cup of melted butter and sprinkle with the rest of the parmesan cheese. Bake in oven until gnocchi are beginning to brown, 15 to 20 minutes. Let stand 5 minutes before serving with the tomato basil sauce (recipe below)

TOMATO BASIL SAUCE

½ cup extra virgin olive oil
1 small onion, chopped
2 garlic cloves, chopped
Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper
2 quarts chopped fresh tomatoes
6 to 8 fresh basil leaves
4 tbsp. unsalted butter (optional)

In a large casserole pot, heat oil over medium high heat. Add onion and garlic and sauté until soft and translucent, about 2 minutes. Add tomatoes and simmer covered on low heat for about 30 minutes. If sauce tastes acidic, add unsalted butter, 1 tsp at the time to round out the flavors. Add chopped basil leaves to the tomato sauce and bring it to a quick boil and remove from heat. Served the tomato sauce on the side with the gnocchi.

OUR E-STORE

Is Now Open!



Alisal's Online General Store

We are happy to announce that the Alisal's online General Store is open for business!

Our e-store offers a great selection of "branded" apparel for him and her, gourmet food, hats and gear, gifts, jewelry, spa products and more. You will find the clothing to be fashionable and comfortable yet rugged. The jewelry items are unique as well as beautiful, and the gourmet goodies will bring back Alisal memories. We invite you to visit the General Store at www.shopalisal.com and see all that there is to help you recapture that Alisal feeling.

New Alisal Gift Card

Nothing surpasses the gift of an experience, and an Alisal experience is like none other.

We are pleased to announce that Alisal gift cards are now available online and at the Ranch. They are easy to buy in any denomination and can be used for a stay, golf, spa services, dining, or for shopping at our online General Store. An Alisal gift card makes the perfect gift for someone special. They can also be purchased at the Ranch for use during your stay. Give specific denominations to your children while you are here so that you can control their purchases while enjoying some added peace of mind.



We're Remodeling!

The next time you visit the Ranch you will be pleased to notice that we have been busy remodeling.

Twelve pool suites will be getting a bright, new facelift.

Units #28, 29, 30, and 31 are already complete and units #32-39 have a scheduled completion date of March 2012. Room #39 will be modified to meet ADA regulations and will be designated Handicapped Accessible.

The newly renovated suites boast a wide range of updates while still maintaining the western flair you've grown accustomed to at the Alisal. We have added over 70 square feet to the main bathroom and included a custom tiled shower with glass panels, separate bathtub, pedestal sink,



new light fixtures, and tile flooring. We have also included a large, lighted magnifying mirror, full-

length mirror, and oil-rubbed bronze fixtures.

We didn't leave the half bath out of the fun, it now has new tile flooring, lighting and fixtures. In addition to the work done in the bathrooms, the suites also received a fresh coat of paint, more shelving in the walk-in closet, a ceiling fan, new windows in the bedroom, new doors throughout, and lush landscaping behind the building.

We look forward to showing off our newly renovated suites as we think you will love what we've done with the place!

S O C I A L M E D I A

Sharing the Good Times

For most of you who come to the Alisal the experience is a shared adventure. Unlike many hotels and resorts where guests check-in, retire to their room and then leave the property for business or pleasure, here at the Alisal half the fun is sharing the Ranch activities with loved ones, family, or business associates. As a result, lasting memories are created, and bonds are built with fellow guests and the staff alike. It may sound cliché, but we feel like those who join us in this special place are a part of our extended family. Therefore, it is only natural that keeping in contact with our family be a top priority for us. In order for us to accomplish that we have joined several social media streams such as Facebook, YouTube, Flickr and Twitter.



At the beginning of last year, we launched our Alisal Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/AlisalRanchResort>. Now, just one year later, the Alisal community has grown to over 1000 friends. We really appreciate all of you who take time out of your busy lives to share your memories and suggestions with us and the others who visit our page. We read your posts on a daily basis and enjoy being able to share breaking news about the Ranch. You will see that some of our posts include updates on your favorite Alisal staff member, new package offers and other times we just like sharing photos and links to videos about the Ranch.



We have been very impressed by all the creative guests who have posted their videos about the Alisal on YouTube. Some of the most popular videos are:

“Where Eagles Dare”

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p-zBFX_Ohcl highlighting the Bald Eagles nesting near the lake.

“You Make Me Smile”

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHrOqH-vUPA>, a great horseback riding piece.

We even put up a couple of videos of our own: one that offers some important tips for new horseback riders and a fun one on how to hit a particularly difficult trap shot. Just enter “Alisal Ranch” in the YouTube search box to start reliving some of Alisal’s treasured moments.



For our photographers out there we have joined Flickr, the photo sharing website. It seems like people love taking photos while at the Ranch, so we encourage you to upload your Alisal vacation photos to our Flickr photo stream. Each guest’s digital vacation memories are available for viewing in their own album (or set) which you can review on the right side of the page. They say a picture is worth a thousand words; some of your photos truly leave us speechless! To see guest photos go to Alisal Flickr photo stream at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/alisalquestranch>. To share your Alisal photos with the community send them to webmarketing@alisal.com.



Twitter is another media avenue that the Ranch has become a part of since Twitter is without a doubt the best way to share and discover what is happening right now. Our Twitter page is a way we can get out special time sensitive information about the Ranch and pass on details about events that are taking place right here. Even though we just started it mid-year we have since tripled our followers and more are checking out our tweets and posting every day. To find us on Twitter do a people search for AlisalResort.

WHO'S WHO *at the* ALISAL



Meet Tony Thompson, Head Wrangler

Few would argue that horseback riding epitomizes the Alisal experience; so naturally, many of you know Head Wrangler Tony Thompson. We thought you might be interested in knowing a little more about this man who embodies the Alisal and all it has to offer.

Tony grew up in the Santa Maria Valley which is about 30 minutes north of Solvang. His first exposure to ranch life came as a teenager while working for a family friend that owned a small ranch and raised Quarter horses. Tony's time at the Alisal began right out of high school when he was hired as a seasonal employee in 1980. He was young and his horse knowledge was limited but some of the older, more experienced Wranglers – including Jake Copass – took him under their wing and taught him what he knows today. In 2002, he was promoted to Head Wrangler.

The Ranch has always offered exceptional riding trails and beautiful scenery for visitors but since Tony has taken charge the horse operation has improved significantly over the years. For instance, he remembers that in the old days the number of riders per wrangler was much higher than it is today – sometimes 15 guests with one wrangler in the front and another in the back. Today's smaller rides allow guests to interact on a more personal level with our entertaining yet safety-minded wranglers. We even permit our guests to lope horses which few other guest ranches allow.

Tony had no idea that his summer job 30+ years ago would turn into a career for him, but he is thankful it did. He says that every day he wakes up and pulls on his boots, that he is grateful to be heading to a place he loves. The Alisal is a special place for him and he is proud to be able to share his love for it with our guests.