

HOME DINING RECREATION TRAVEL COMMUNITY HEALTH SHOPPING

# 805 LIVING

DECEMBER 2009

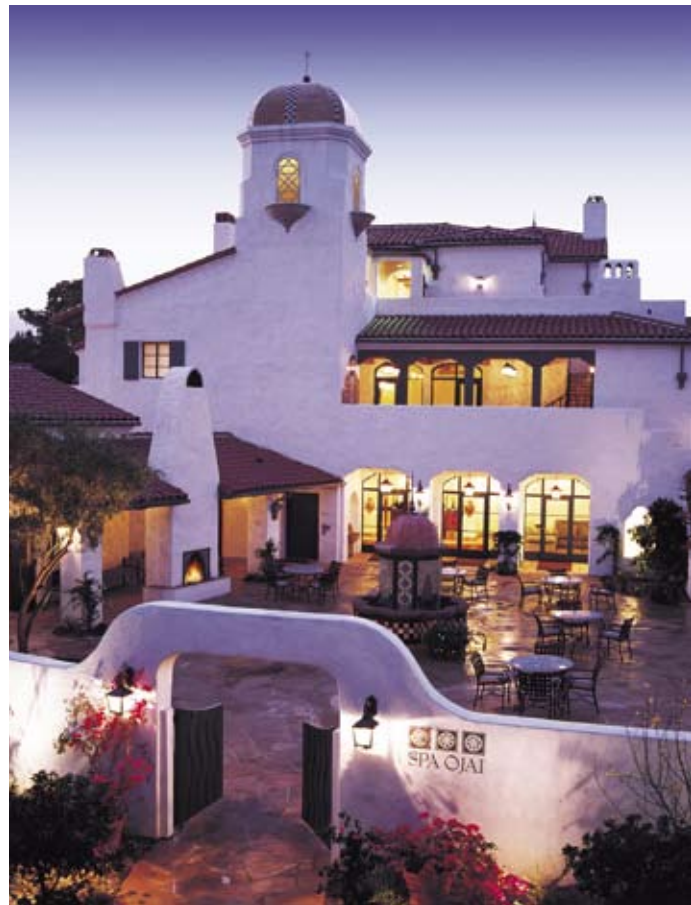


'TIS THE  
*Season*

# Mind/Body/Soul

By Maryann Hammers

Ojai Valley Inn's Artists Cottage is a special place to nurture creativity—preferably after a spa treatment or two.



## GIFTS OF ENLIGHTENMENT

Don't give presents. Give experiences.

Is there an impossible person on your gift list? Maybe she already has everything, or perhaps he just doesn't like anything. The following ideas can help please the pickiest recipient with an experience that they'll never regift, toss out, or stow away.

**FOR CREATIVE TYPES:** The bucolic town of Ojai is the setting for the 86-year-old Ojai Valley Inn. A gift card for the resort's quaint Artists Cottage & Apothecary may be just the thing for the artist on your list.

Dozens of art workshops (\$75; \$150 for a private lesson) are offered in small groups or private classes. Participants can paint silk scarves; dabble in oils, pastels, collages, or watercolor; or make precious metal jewelry under the supervision of the resort's artist in residence. Call for dates and times.

Also in the Artists Cottage, the Essence in Balance class (\$260) offers lessons in blending essential oils; a massage using your new custom scent is included. Price includes use of the spa, massage, and take-home recipe. Accommodations not included.

For a bigger splurge, overnight packages for two people start at around \$577, including Artists Cottage classes. *Ojai Valley Inn & Spa, Ojai, 800-422-6524, [www.ojairesort.com](http://www.ojairesort.com).*

**FOR SELF-IMPROVEMENT SEEKERS:** Send them to a 50-minute workshop (\$60 each) at the California Health & Longevity Institute at the Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village. Choose from these January workshops:

- Mindful Eating: Reconnecting with Your Body, led by a registered dietitian, teaches participants how to build a healthful relationship with food and develop a better body image.
- Fitness Techniques to Reduce Stress covers stress-management tools and techniques, plus exercises that restore balance and eliminate tension.
- Live the Life You Want assists those who struggle with personal or professional goals. A lifestyle consultant helps guests define their personal best with simple strategies to cultivate positive habits and achieve peak performance.

Call for dates. You can splurge with overnight accommodations (from \$235) and/or a spa treatment (from \$145). *California Health & Longevity Institute, Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village, 818-575-3000, [www.chli.com](http://www.chli.com).*

# MADISON WESTLAKE

**FOR NEW AGERS:** What could be better for the mystic hippie on your list than a little *chi*, a little art, and a little yoga in a seaside cottage on sacred Chumash lands in Malibu? During the Body & Art Weekend Workshop (January 15–17), participants learn about the ancient healing art of Thai yoga massage, which combines acupressure, breathing, stretches, energy work, and meditation to relieve tension, improve circulation, boost the immune system, and return balance to the body. They'll also awaken their creativity with “chi of painting,” using charcoal, finger paints, and pastels to relearn play, spontaneity, and the connection between hand and heart.

Price: \$350, including a healthful lunch and materials (bring your own yoga mat). Accommodations not included. *The workshop will be held at Olandar, a private home and retreat in Malibu. Call 310-457-5398.*

**SOMETHING FOR ALMOST EVERYONE:** In Touch Day Spa, at Spectrum Club in Thousand Oaks, has enough offerings to help you check off quite a few names on your list—teens to adults.

- Teen Skin Care (\$95) covers cleansing, preventing breakouts, and nutrition, and includes a customized skincare regimen.
- Makeup Application (\$95) explores topics like colors, products, skin types and ingredients, plus tips for accentuating your best features while minimizing problem areas. Available one-on-one or for two friends, sisters, or mom and daughter.
- Couple's Massage Class (\$400 per couple) teaches deep-tissue Swedish massage techniques. Participants spend half the four-hour session learning to give a massage, and the other half getting massaged.

Classes available by appointment and include access to the Spectrum Club, with its steam room, sauna, indoor heated pool, workout equipment, and a huge array of aerobic, Pilates, yoga, spin, and kickboxing classes. *In Touch Day Spa, Thousand Oaks, 805-778-1771, [www.intouchdayspa.net](http://www.intouchdayspa.net).*

**FOR THE BEACH WORSHIPPER:** In honor of its new harbor-front location, Spa by Diane Loring, in Ventura, offers “Surf and Spa” packages (from \$225) for the surfer wannabes on your list. The package includes private surf lesson (board and wetsuit provided), chocolate body-scrub spa treatment, spray tan, and a beach tote bag to keep. Accommodations not included. *Spa by Diane Loring, Four Points by Sheraton & Holiday Inn Express, Ventura Harbor, 805-641-0022, [www.spaventura.com](http://www.spaventura.com).*

**FOR BUDDING ROMANCE NOVELISTS:** Does she love “chick lit”? Does she crave romance? Has she always ached to pen her autobiography or novel? In this two-hour Love Story writing workshop (from \$470) at Sandalwood Spa at Trilogy Central Coast in Nipomo, participants learn how to compose a romantic true story by describing a true personal relationship.

Price includes workshop, garden Jacuzzi (with champagne and chocolate), and 90-minute couple's massage. Overnight accommodations at Casitas of Arroyo Grande included, along with breakfast in bed the next morning. Offered on several dates in February. *Sandalwood Spa, Nipomo, 805-343-7520, [www.sandalwoodtrilogy.com](http://www.sandalwoodtrilogy.com).* ■



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