The History of Estancia La Jolla Hotel & Spa

The 9.5 acres of Estancia La Jolla Hotel & Spa were originally property owned by the Scripps Family for many years. Reportedly sold to Bill and Ruth Black in 1948, it became what we now know as Blackhorse Farms. The Black family used their equestrian ranch for training young thoroughbreds. Blackhorse was not the family’s primary home; rather it was their escape.

William “Bill” Black was an oilman, banker and President of the Del Mar Turf Club and was on the Theatre and Arts Foundation Board. Both he and his wife Ruth were notable figures within the local academic and social communities. Their philanthropic endeavors include an endowment given to the cardiovascular laboratory at Scripps Memorial Hospital.

The building concept for Estancia La Jolla centers on the architectural style of California Rancho, which was first attributed to Spanish colonizers in Southern California in the early 1800’s. The Rancho itself was typically several low-rise buildings gathered around common courtyards and patios. The structures, often fitted on an uneven site, had meandering roofs connecting a variety of public and private spaces, including the “corridor”, commonly known as the original outdoor family room.

The hotel has been carefully created to blend the historical elements of a typical California Coastal Rancho with the natural environment. A key, consistent design concept that has been maintained throughout is to make the most of the climate our guests have come to enjoy. The adobe structures that comprise Estancia La Jolla provide a closer relationship between outdoors and indoors, a more intimate association with the garden and an informal, relaxed experience, with simplicity being the overriding principle.

Beyond the distinct outdoor rooms and gardens, the interiors unfold within this intimate retreat setting. Throughout the use of simple and natural materials the property will possess an inherent chic of quiet confidence. Outdoor materials will be brought indoors, fireplaces of whitewashed stone, ceilings of batten and board, floors of pebbled and rustic concrete in redwood grids. The interior décor embraces a number of styles while reflecting a somewhat rustic, yet worldly and sophisticated lifestyle. In all cases, the senses are sparked by the wind, daylight and fresh coastal air within this urbane country enclave.