

From No Water to Wine, on Pinnacles Time



Photo: Kelli Uickell

Jon and Jan Brosseau built their bed and breakfast inn in 2000, after working with the property and vineyards for 20 years. The Gabilan Mountains, Pinnacles National Park, and the inn's large soaking tubs are the main attractions.

If you were looking to buy a weekend getaway property, would your choice be a spot covered in eight-foot brush, with no power and no water? For Jon and Jan Brosseau, owners of the Inn at the Pinnacles, "Yes!" says it all. The couple was also looking to make grape-growing part of their escapade, so in 1978 they purchased 160 acres up on the Chalone Bench, the local landmass whose limestone-ridden soil gives it enough distinction to be its own wine appellation.

Plant they did in 1980—wild boar, rattlesnakes and trucked-in water notwithstanding. A house soon followed, but that didn't fully do the trick: they researched what people look for in a fine inn, broke ground in 2000, and opened in 2002. Hands-on hosts, they designed the 6,000-foot property, doing the finish work, tiling, electrical, plumbing, stonework and final woodwork themselves. And a major bonus: they finally had the luxury of running water:

And luxury it is. The inn has six sumptuous suites, with whirlpool tubs, gas grilles on the decks, a pool and as Jon says, "370-degree views with zero noise pollution." The Mediterranean-style inn's setting is sublime, with

vineyard and mountain views, winds rippling hillside grasses like water, the trill of meadowlarks, and a peek at the pointy crags of nearby Pinnacles National Park.

The park's sculpted spires are what draw most of the inn's visitors—but those spa tubs are what draw them back to the property after some of the park's sinew-stretching hikes. The Brosseaus host every evening's wine and cheese sampling on the lavender-bordered courtyard, often offering vintages from their own vineyard. Visitors sleep well in big, inviting beds, and are rested up the next morning to swarm the Brosseaus' mighty breakfast tables, laden with decadent delights.

The Pinnacles have been there millions of years, but going on 40 themselves, the Brosseaus feel pretty comfortable up there too. And if the water runs out, everyone can always drink wine.

The Inn at the Pinnacles is located at 32025 Stonewall Canyon Rd. in Soledad. For more information or reservations, call 831/678-2400 or go to www.innatthepinnacles.com.

—Tom Bentley