



SOLAGE

Auberge Resorts Collection

| BY TRACY ELLEN BEARD

Solage, Auberge Resorts Collection recently celebrated its 15th anniversary and a \$30 million renovation. Located in one of Napa Valley's famous wine towns, Calistoga, California, Solage boasts two stunning event spaces, delicious dining, opulent accommodations, and an upscale spa.

REFRESHERS AND RENEWALS

Solage's recent renovations ended at the close of summer 2021. The focus was to update and overhaul the public spaces and to add a few new additions to the property. The resort purchased new pool furniture, and the bocce ball courts received a makeover. Additions to Solage included a second hot tub, six private cabanas, extra patio space at Solbar, and a second restaurant, Picobar. The suites received a few upgrades, including fully fenced patio areas, fireplaces, water features, plunge pools, and outdoor showers.

Next year another less extensive renovation is in the works to give a "facelift" to areas not part of the previous project.

STUDIOS AND SUITES

I recently visited the Solage. The studios and suites have vaulted ceilings, pebble-stone floor showers, and beautifully furnished outdoor patios. My studio had well-appointed, comfortable furnishings that included a desk, chairs, and a California king-sized bed. The color palette in the studio reflected the stunning landscape hues of Napa Valley.

I loved the fireplace, water feature, chairs, and table on my spacious patio, and I enjoyed reading my book each evening while stretched out on my Roman couch. The soaking tub was perfect for an evening of relaxation, and each night I found a new scented bath bomb to enhance my bathing experience. Suites at Solage feature one or two bedrooms; many offer a soaking tub or jetted hot tub, an outdoor shower, and a fire pit. A few units have a plunge pool.

SPA EXPERIENCES AT SOLAGE

The spa at Solage encompasses the treatment rooms, relaxation room, boutique shop, bathhouse, and bathhouse bar.

BATHHOUSE OPTIONS

The bathhouse at Solage features five different co-ed geothermal pools. The Vitality Plunge Pool reduces inflammation and swelling. The hot Tranquility Saline Pool features powerful jets that immerse bathers in a therapeutic massage. The Restorative Mineral Jetted Pool helps joints and muscles to move freely, and the Relaxation Pool is the perfect place to float and linger. Finally, the Magnesium Rich Pool filled with ambient temperature water and magnesium sulfate helps to calm the body and mind. Soaking in this pool can also improve a bather's sleep quality.

FITNESS CENTER

Solage guests and club members can participate in a variety of fitness classes. These include T-rex, Pilates, yoga, HIIT, and boot camps. The

robust schedule comprises three to five classes daily. There are also special “event” classes where the resort invites a well-known local yoga instructor to lead a lesson or two. All sessions take place in a well-equipped workout facility. The side doors open wide giving the space a spectacular indoor/outdoor feel. The fitness center has a membership component, and many locals participate in the classes.

The second fitness building, located across the pathway from the first, features Precor cardio machines, free weights, and Paramount strength training equipment.

SOLBAR

Solbar is the long-standing restaurant at Solage, and it is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. The restaurant's design is comfortable yet stylish and has a chic living room vibe. Area Marketing Manager Melissa Douma said, “We don't want to be known as a stuffy or unapproachable location, and we have a great reputation with the locals for having delicious upscale comfort food that makes you feel good.”

PICOBAR

Executive Chef Gustavo Rios took some time away from Solage and returned to work on his passion project, Picobar. Melissa shared, “He was here from the beginning, and the restaurant has been about two years in the making. He is so good at what he does in terms of bringing all kinds of flavors together. Chef Gustavo has taken things from his coastal home in Ensenada, Mexico, along with its traditions, and infused them with local ingredients from Napa. He has successfully blended the cuisines from his two homes.”

I started my dinner at Picobar with a Green Flash from the bar, a tasty margarita with cimarron tequila, house-made jalapeño herb syrup, and lime. The “glow-in-the-dark” color was fun, and the drink was refreshing with a slight bit of heat at the finish. Melissa suggested I order the Whipped Avocado, and I am so glad I did. I love guacamole, and this was what I would call elevated guac on steroids. The avocado was creamy and flavorful, topped with cilantro oil, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, crumbled goat cheese, and fresh micro herbs. It was divine.

I also ordered The Sol Original, two tacos with crispy petrale sole, cilantro, spicy aioli, and sweet and sour cabbage. These were delicious,

and I understand why they are a traditional staple on both the Solbar and Picobar menus. The menu had numerous delicious options, so I ordered the Quesa Tacos with short rib, ham, bacon, Monterey jack cheese, grilled onions, and a tomatillo-type salsa. These tacos were rich, and it only took a few bites to satisfy my tastebuds.

Everything had been so flavorful that I was not about to skip dessert. I chose the Fresas Con Crema, poached strawberries mixed with vanilla whipped Chantilly all covered in a meringue shell. Chef Gustavo outdid himself. Not only was this dessert tasty, but also the soft, creamy, and crispy textures pulled the dish together to create a party in my mouth.

ACTIVITIES

Calistoga offers plenty of things to do. Spend a day at one of the world-famous geothermal hot spring pools, visit impressive wineries, shop in the town's boutique stores, or read a book poolside at the resort.

The Solage concierge is always happy to make reservations for dinners and wine tastings or to book a cycling tour, horseback riding trip, or hot air balloon ride. The person at the desk can also point out the area's best trails for hiking, biking, and running. Bicycles of different sizes are available for guest use.

Just a couple of miles from Solage is one of my favorite wineries, Schramsberg Winery. Schramsberg is the second oldest winery in Napa Valley, and they make delicious sparkling wine; their Davies Vineyards collection boasts some incredibly delicious Napa Valley reds. Book a reservation for a tour of this stunning property and a delectable tasting at one of the shaded picnic tables.

SOLAGE IN CALISTOGA

Solage is a high-end, family-friendly member of the Auberge Resorts Collection. Each affiliate in the collection offers quality accommodations, stellar service, and impeccable amenities. Book a stay at Solage, Auberge Resorts Collection for your next Napa Valley adventure. ♦

