



CARMEL VALLEY RANCH

From A to Bee at Carmel Valley Ranch

Flower Power

Carmel Valley Ranch's signature experience begins even before we enter our apiary. Busy as always, our 60,000 Italian honey bees diligently forage for the pollen and nectar in every flower at The Ranch, with a particular affinity for the hundreds of flowers on each of The Ranch's 7,000 brilliant lavender plants.



"Bee" to Believe

At The Ranch, we don't think that you can simply *see* to believe, you must actually *bee* to believe. Only by donning our bee suits and walking into the hives—actually *being* a beekeeper—can we begin to understand the magic of these critical (and endangered) creatures. Inspired by the cooperation we see in our devoted bees, we don't merely *observe*, we actually perform meaningful hive duties, including honey harvesting, feeding new colonies, inspecting our colonies' health, and adding or removing supers (the chambers in which bees store excess honey).

A Secret Life



The sightings among the lavender and the soothing hums of the apiary belie a secret life: once inside the hives, we can begin to observe the sophisticated structure of bee civilization. From the guards at the hive entrance, to the nurses tending the young, to the "productive females" and "lazy males," to the notoriously elusive queen, each bee has a place inside this complex community.

Building Bonds

Working the hives together, we naturally become more connected to the bees. And through these bees, we naturally connect with our world. We see parallels to our own lives, and develop a better understanding not only of our bees, but also of ourselves.



Continuing the Journey

A taste of Carmel Valley Ranch's lavender honey is the next step, but the experience continues long after leaving the apiary. The essential oils from our lavender plants form the foundation of our Spa Aiyana experience and in-suite bath products, and traces of this fragrance can be found throughout our Lodge Restaurant menu. Our guests return season after season to experience the life cycle: hives are saved and lost, honey is harvested, lavender is primed for distillation, and our guests—who may have come to The Ranch as unaware as we were—embrace the cause of the vanishing bees.

John Russo, Our Semi-Resident Beekeeper and Lavender Expert



John owns and operates Carmel Lavender, an artisan lavender farm deep in Carmel Valley. At Carmel Valley Ranch, John cares for more than 60,000 Italian honey bees, organizes and leads Saturday and Tuesday "Bee Experiences" for Ranch guests of all ages, cultivates The Ranch's 7,000 lavender plants, and designs year-round programs related to our bees and lavender. John's blog can be found at carmellavender.blogspot.com and his website is www.carmellavender.com.

For more information, please contact our Concierge at (831) 620-6427.