

# Via

AAA Traveler's Companion

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A special report:  
Endangered  
destinations **44**

Hotel Diamond selected as Reader's Favorite—Hotel with history

READERS' FAVORITE

## Hotels with history



**HOTEL DIAMOND** Chico, Calif. "Ask for the Diamond Suite," says Robby Halford of Salinas, Calif. "It's decorated with antiques and has an amazing view of the town. Recently reconstructed, the hotel meets the modern needs of today's travelers with grace and beauty." (866) 993-3100, [www.hoteldiamondchico.com](http://www.hoteldiamondchico.com).

»» **THE AHWAHNEE** Yosemite National Park, Calif. "A true architectural masterpiece," says Les Carpenter of Danville, Calif. "The soaring dining room window focuses attention on the glaciated stone of the canyon wall. On one trip, we stayed in the room Queen Elizabeth occupied in her visit to the valley." (559) 253-5676, [www.yosemitepark.com](http://www.yosemitepark.com).

**BENBOW INN** Garberville, Calif. "I was here more than 30 years ago and returned only recently," writes Susan Carothers of San Francisco. "The large fireplace, hardwood floors, and grand dining room—all set on the banks of the gushing Eel River—made me feel as if I'd never left." (800) 355-3301, [www.benbowinn.com](http://www.benbowinn.com).

**GOLD HILL HOTEL** Gold Hill, Nev. "Built in 1861, this is the state's oldest hotel," says Ron Cameron of San Mateo, Calif. "Cozy and well-appointed, the rooms remind me of something from an old *Bonanza* set; and the restaurant (Crown Point) specializes in delicious yet unusual fare such as elk filets, wild boar, and Maple Leaf Farms duck breast." (775) 847-0111, [www.goldhillhotel.net](http://www.goldhillhotel.net).

**LA PLAYA HOTEL** Carmel, Calif. "Is there any spot more delightful than La Playa's restaurant veranda overlooking the gardens?" asks Richard Dillon of Mill Valley, Calif. "The converted Mediterranean villa is decorated with old black-and-white photos." (800) 582-8900, [www.laplayahotel.com](http://www.laplayahotel.com).

**MISSION INN** Riverside, Calif. "What began as a 12-room adobe boardinghouse in 1876 now occupies an entire city block of downtown Riverside," says Sylvia Sundholm of San Jose. "It resembles a Mediterranean or Spanish village, with narrow passageways, arches, a five-story spiral staircase, plus towers, domes, minarets, and a high pedestrian bridge." (800) 843-7755, [www.missioninn.com](http://www.missioninn.com).

**WOLF CREEK INN** Wolf Creek, Ore. "Built in 1883, this is the oldest continuously operated hotel in Oregon," reports Ron Bolt of Sutherlin, Ore. "It once served as an important stagecoach stop on the 16-day journey from San Francisco to Portland. President Rutherford B. Hayes, Clark Gable, and Carole Lombard have slept at the inn. Jack London wrote some of his works in a room on the second floor." (541) 866-2474, [www.thewolfcreekinn.com](http://www.thewolfcreekinn.com).

Know of a captivating aquarium in the West? Email us at [otr@csaa.com](mailto:otr@csaa.com) or write to *On the Road*, VIA, 150 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco, CA 94102. If we quote from your description in our January/February issue, we'll send you \$50 and a VIA T-shirt.