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mellow monterey

Boutique, LGBTQ+ inn The Charles opens in Pacific Grove, California



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The Charles is a new, LGBTQ-inclusive inn for **Pacific Grove**, on the southern edge of Monterey Bay in California.

The accommodation is the vision of designer Charles Gruwell, who returned to his coastal hometown to create the luxurious escape.



(Photo: Mary E. Nichols)

The bed and breakfast threw open its doors in June.

Gruwell has over 45 years of experience designing homes and other properties as far afield as Los Angeles to Indonesia. This includes country clubs, restaurants, and other boutique hotels.

One of his first projects was designing his niece's hair salon in Pacific Grove. His career has then taken him all over the world. The Charles marks a homecoming labor of love.

His past portfolio is diverse. He's helped design resorts for the Four Seasons and Mandalay Bay, as well as Disney's Animal Kingdom Lodge in Orlando, Florida.



(Photo: Mary E. Nichols)

Coming home

His mother's passing, at the age of 103, prompted him to return home and begin to ease back a little on work commissions.

"I came back here because I wanted to be back to my roots. When I was growing up, I didn't realize that I lived in the most beautiful place in the world. Now, at 73 years old, I know," he told the [Los Angeles Blade](#).

The Charles is the flagship for the Metro Lifestyle Brand, founded by Gruwell and local hotelier brothers Don and Jay Desai. A [second property in Napa, California](#), has already been purchased and will become the next member of The Charles Hospitality Collection after its planned renovation.



Charles Gruwell with Don and Jay Desai (Photo: Mary E. Nichols)

Historic building

The building in Pacific Grove dates back to 1904 and is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Gurwell leaned into the residence's history and aimed to restore it to its former glory... with a dash of British-inspired grandeur.

"Timeless and elegant" was the guiding aesthetic.

"I have an affinity for the hotels in London," Gruwell told **Concept Carmel**. "Bed and breakfasts, elegant six-star hotels. I wanted to bring the style and flair of London to the Monterey Peninsula."



(Photo: Mary E. Nichols)

The Charles offers 11 guest rooms and suites. Heavy, embroidered fabrics, sumptuous carpets, and plush furniture feature throughout, along with traditional-style fittings and eclectic art.

In addition to its rooms, guests can expect a continental breakfast. The inn also offers an afternoon charcuterie board in its living room for guests to socialize over.

Gruwell is thrilled the hotel has placed inclusivity at its core.

"In all my travels, I've gone to different hotels and no one ever really talks about them being inclusive, inviting the LGBTQ community to be seen and welcomed, and celebrated. They nod to it, but no one ever really makes a declaration about it. So, why don't we create a stylish, elegant interior and invite the LGBTQ+ community so they know they can come to Pacific Grove and stay in a stylish and inclusive hotel environment where they don't have to make any explanations about who they are or what their preferences are. They can just come and feel welcome, they can be celebrated, and they can be the individuals that they are in our hotel."

Monterey Bay

Pacific Grove is within walking distance of Monterey Bay and Cannery Row, which has the Monterey Bay Aquarium. Carmel By The Sea is just five miles away, and there are plenty of local beaches and watersports activities, such as kayaking.



Lovers Point Park, Monterey (Photo: Shutterstock)

"Style and inclusivity are at the heart of our brand," Gruwell told [Newsbreak](#). "We want The Charles Pacific Grove to be a haven for global citizens who value diversity, cultural richness, and unparalleled style."
