

HACIENDA SANTA ROSA

A dream come true

The word Hacienda conjures images of a lone horseman galloping across a desolate landscape of cacti and agaves, and then massive gates open for him to pass into a courtyard surrounded by gardens, fountains and a looming home of historical grandeur with thick walls, terra-cotta tiled floors, extensive terraces and high timber ceilings. Going through the gates of Hacienda Santa Rosa, here in San Jose Del Cabo, you will experience the rush of having just galloped back to these times of Mexican Colonial life. Hacienda Santa Rosa does not sit on a massive estate deeded by the Spanish crown, nor does it boast a self-sufficient community behind it's walls, but every architectural attribute of this hacienda is in keeping with 18th century life. Standing beside the monumental 400 year old mesquite tree in the courtyard, listening to water spilling into the fountain, looking into the rooms that in years past would have housed the horses, you would never believe Hacienda Santa Rosa is less than a year old.

Paco Lopez and Gina Gomes are the creators of Hacienda Santa Rosa. It was built to showcase Paco's Old World and Spanish Colonial furniture replicas, his artwork and the antiques they find during their travels on mainland Mexico.

Prior to meeting Gina, Hacienda Santa Rosa was a nameless, vague vision of Paco's. He is a skilled cabinet maker who has been pleasing architects, decorators and private home owners with his cabinetry skills since his move from Mexico City twelve years ago. Examples of his fine carpentry can be found in developments such as Villas del Mar, Querencia, El Dorado, Rancho Cerro Colorado and Puerto Los Cabos, to name a few. Over the years he listened to the clients who were moving into these homes talk about wanting a 'hacienda feel' with their furnishings. Paco has visited and stayed in many of the restored Mexican haciendas and has studied extensively the art forms of furniture. The selection of furnishings he saw presented to these homeowners for purchase was what he considers, high priced rustic imitations. He dreamed that some day he would have the time, money and location to focus his carpentry on making furniture reproductions at prices that more people could afford.

As what happens with many dreams one can arrive at them while seemingly going in the opposite direction.

First, Paco purchased a piece of land in Santa Rosa, a neighborhood just outside San Jose del Cabo on the way to the airport. Intending to build a workshop for his growing cabinet making business, he was forestalled when denied a building permit. Land usage in this neighborhood did not allow for noisy, industrial business. It didn't matter that a similar business was just down the street, the rules had changed. He had to find another location and his purchased land sat empty, except for the majestic mesquite tree with it's root system reaching to the end of the street and around the corner. Horses and cows continued to enjoy the raw land, shading themselves under the tree and Paco went looking for another location for his workshop.

Second, while hunting for a new location he was introduced by a land owner to an out of work carpenter, newly arrived from Guadalajara. Paco quickly learned this was no ordinary carpenter. He was part of a wood carving dynasty going back three generations. Their family name is Sandoval and the current generation consists of the father and six sons, all continuing the family trade, capable of crafting authentic hacienda style furnishings. Soon Paco was employing three of the Sandoval clan and, poco a poco as time allowed, they started working on some furniture designs.

The third component and the one that became the catalyst to launch Paco's dream was when he met his partner Gina Gomes. She fell in love, not just with Paco, but also with the land site that he had originally planned for his workshop. When Gina saw the mesquite tree and the tranquil gaze of the animal community lounging below it, it conjured an image of a Mexico she had romanticized while growing up in the United States. "It's the perfect place to build a hacienda as a place to sell your furniture." she told Paco. "Run with your dream." she said. And he listened!

One year later Hacienda Santa Rosa was completed. Paco did much of the construction work himself. And the art pieces displayed are also his own; the Santa Rosa statue made of bronze that welcomes you; the hand painted tiles and ceramic urns; the quality furniture replicas expertly carved by the Sandoval brothers and influenced by French and Spanish designs. He uses wood available to him - alder, red cedar and African mahogany. Each room is filled with distinctive, elegant furniture such as armoires, bedroom sets, leather chairs, benches, mirrors, trunks, t.v. cabinets, antique carts and livery food troughs.

With passion and well-deserved pride Paco and Gina will welcome you, and with the tradition of hacienda hospitality, they will offer you a refreshment and a tour. Paco is especially delighted to show off the talents of the Sandoval wood carvers. "I can recognize who carved the piece by the way the cuts are made. Each hand has an artistic signature." Paco explains and continues telling of the talent involved with layering the pieces of wood to make the three and four dimensional carvings look like one piece.

The furnishings are works of art and in keeping with Paco's dream, they are affordable. His desire is for everyone to enjoy them for generations to come.

To visit Hacienda Santa Rosa, follow the highway out of San Jose, towards the airport, turn right at the Pemex station just before the Aramburo's supermarket, take another right at the end of this road, go two blocks, turn right and on the left is Hacienda Santa Rosa.

They are open Monday to Friday 9:30 am to 6 pm and Saturday 9:30 to 2 pm
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