

The Transformation
of an
**OLD
SPANISH
ESTATE**

by
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THE last of the historic Spanish land grants of San Diego county to retain its pre-American atmosphere is to be preserved as a shrine to California's historic past, a parklike region containing nearly fifteen square miles, teeming with associations of the princely days when the old dons lived in California in almost feudal splendor; of Fremont and Stockton and Kearny and Kit Carson; of Ramona and Alessandro and the padres who proved that the bravest are the kindest—all in the midst of the peace and plenty and beauty for which their vision laid the foundations.

And, strange to say, this idealistic undertaking is being carried through by a "soulless corporation."

Don Juan Maria Osuna, soldier and first alcalde of San Diego, was a man of the soundest taste in wines and horses and lands and ladies, and when he was granted 4000 hectares of land by the King of Spain to encourage the upbuilding—in this western land, of noble houses equal to the aristocracy of Europe, he ranged far and wide before he finally chose a principality in what is now the northern part of San Diego county. The San Dieguito River watered it, friendly mountains guarded it closely, but the sea was visible through their canyons, to the west, and to the north, in winter, the snow-topped San Bernardino mountains gleamed like far towers seen through a veil of dreams. It was the very heart of the country in which, in recent years, Owen Wister and Peter B. Kyne have loved to work, because of its beauty and tranquility.

There Don Juan built himself an adobe manor house which still stands in the shade of majestic pepper trees as ancient as itself. It is simple yet full of dignity. Its walls are a good three feet thick. Its windows are inset so far that the sills make excellent seats, on both sides. Its ceilings are high and its rooms capacious, and it looks out, through a vista of palms and pepper trees, on a lovely picture framed in by purple mountains.

The old military road from San Diego to Los Angeles ran through the estate, then known as Rancho San Dieguito, and on one prominent knoll the watch was kept by soldiers who rode both ways from it on long patrols in times of danger. Over that road Fremont marched in later years, and Kearny's men followed it into San Diego after the battle of San Pasqual.

The ranch played an important part in the war with Mexico. Leandro Osuna, then its owner, was a bitter antagonist of the Americans. In the first encounter of the battle of San Pasqual it was he who saved the life of Gen. Pico by running Capt. Moore of the American force through with a lance just as Moore was about to shoot Pico in hand-to-hand combat. After the war Leandro Osuna committed suicide. The dream of his family had been of a landed aristocracy, and he feared the Americans would deprive him of his beloved ranch.

When the Santa Fe Railway interests bought Rancho San Dieguito sixteen years ago and changed its name to Rancho Santa Fe, it was feared by the lovers of California's past that the old place soon would lose its historic atmos-

phere. But W. E. Hodges of Santa Barbara, vice-president of the Santa Fe, was impressed by both the history and the beauty of the estate and through his efforts it finally was decided to reserve it for the building of America's most perfectly planned community and to so restrict it that not only would the old ranch house and all the other relics of the past be preserved, but the new buildings erected should also seem a part of the romantic past.

It is probably the most highly restricted area of its size of any kind in the world. In the most exclusive residence districts of cities the restrictions are mostly financial. One cannot build a residence costing less than a certain sum. But on Rancho Santa Fe one cannot build any residence or any other structure which is not in harmony with the whole area. In that fifteen square miles every resident may look out of any window of his home and see nothing but beauty.

There has been built a guest house and civic center so perfect in Spanish type that a man who found himself sailing over them in an airplane might well believe he had drifted over some lovely suburb of Seville. Seen from any point of the area, they present the same picturesque impression, the same suggestion of beauty and harmony and tranquility. Inside, those buildings have every modern American appliance and yet their romantic atmosphere is preserved. In the guest house, "La Morada," every bedspread, curtain, and light shade have been specially designed. The hall lights look like rusted lanterns by castle gates in ancient days, though the light, of course, is electricity.

When you go into La Morada it is like entering a private home. A hostess greets you. You are invited to sit down in one of the big chairs before the hearth. It is not a hotel, just a guest-house for people who are interested in Rancho Santa Fe.

The skyline one sees from La Morada is oddly suggestive of that around Mexico City, and there are other things which make one who has visited in Mexico or Cuba or Spain drift into reveries. Just looking up through the smoke of one's "puro," in the big room which in ordinary hotels would be a lobby, one catches sight of a balcony so reminiscent of other lands that one half expects to see a long-lashed, fan-guarded senorita step out to smile encouragement to a serenader. I know, at least, that as I gazed on it thus I suddenly awoke to find myself humming—

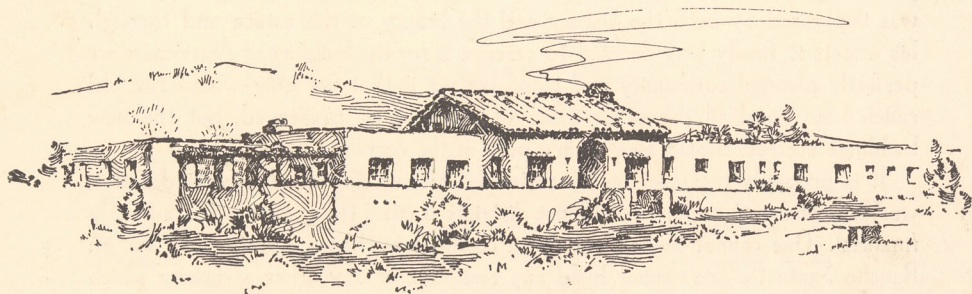
Sol de mi vida
Del corazon,
No me desprecies,

Da me tu amor;
Si tu me olvidas
El sol se obscura—

or words to that effect. I learned the song by ear only, from hearing it sung under many a balcony in the sunny and romantic land to the south of us.

Then as one steps out on the terrace one is inevitably reminded of "los portales" in the beautiful old castle of Chapultepec, a palace far more inspiring to the eyes than Versailles or Fontainebleau and probably unrivaled for commanding outlook and beautiful surroundings by any other in the world.

The owners have undertaken, in short, to make Rancho Santa Fe a monument to California's past as well as expressive of faith in its future, and though simplicity has been the keynote of the whole development, perfection has been the aim. The whole great area now has the appearance of having been landscape gardened, the fifty miles of surfaced roads which have been built through it all being designed to outline and accentuate its beauties; its native flowers, shrubs and trees being preserved in lovely groupings.



Rancho Santa Fe's Exclusive Guest House
 "LA MORADA"

—Limited number of guests; reservations by phone or wire.
 —For people wanting a quiet place in the most beautiful and historic region of California. John Steven McGroarty tells about it in his story — "The Endless Miracle of California"

Rancho Santa Fe, San Diego County, California

RATES

Room with shower,	1 person	\$3.00
“ “ “	2 persons	4.00
“ tub bath	1 person	3.50
“ “ “	2 persons	4.50
“ with twin beds and bath		5.00
Breakfast		.75
Luncheon		1.00
Dinner		1.25
Sunday dinner		1.50

HOW TO GO TO RANCHO SANTA FE

Comfortable Santa Fe trains between Los Angeles and San Diego will take you to Del Mar; thence by auto to Rancho Santa Fe. If driving, take the San Diego Highway; turn east one-quarter mile north of Del Mar, or at Solana Beach. Signs mark the road.