

# CLOUT&ABOUT

## The Larkspur Collection of Fine, Quality and Affordable Boutique Hotels

Over the last few months, in my quest for notable lodging of the *don't-break-the-bank* kind, worthy of mention for those traveling on a budget but preferring to maintain the high quality of service and cleanliness for those (like me) who have OCD in our DNA ~ I was pleased to have discovered the Larkspur Collection. These are the premium, top of the line group of hotels under the umbrella of The Larkspur Hotels. We have three hotels to feature that fall in this group (there are a total of 8). You'll find many similarities among them ~ and there is a uniqueness to each. An ambiance and personality, perhaps based on their locations and usually indicative of the city they are proud to represent and be an integral part of.

### The Tiburon Lodge



Driving to Tiburon brought me back to memories of my youth and visiting the town with my family. I love this town by the water. It's gorgeous here and the sun shines as soon as you get over the bank of fog by Golden Gate bridge. The Tiburon Lodge is a wonderful place for an escape from the hustle and bustle of the city, a quick getaway or for an off-site conference. It is a block away from Main Street and Ark Row, where you can treat yourself to fun and fine shopping and restaurants and you can watch the ferry come and go. The view by the dock of the bay is breathtaking.

The Tiburon Grill right next door is a pleasurable place to dine. As well, take a leisurely stroll and head on over to Guaymas, sit outdoors and take in some sun. If you prefer to relax closer to your room, an inviting pool beckons.

## Casa Munras, Monterey



**Lobby at Hotel Munras**

Monterey is one of my favorite places on earth. There is so much to see, do and eat in this precious town. The Casa Munras is situated in the heart of Old Town Monterey. As it's name conjures, it is spanish and hacienda style in ambiance. Esteban's is the in-house restaurant serving tapas and spanish cuisine. Across the inviting warm and cozy lobby, Sano Spa is ready to transform a weary traveler into a relaxed soul.

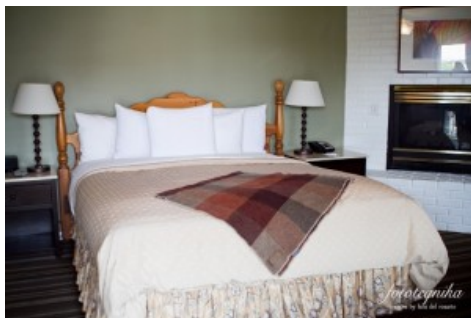
We found the staff at Casa Munras very helpful and friendly and definitely proud of their town. The location is perfect, too. At the time of our check in, there was a large group registering their party of six family from Europe. It's quite family oriented, with spacious rooms with fireplaces.

There is a pool in the property if you prefer to bask in the sun here. For us, we drove to nearly Asilomar and played in the sun and sand there.

Fisherman's Wharf is five minutes away and we enjoyed our early evening stroll by the water.

## Similarities

These three star properties offer luxury comfortable Larkspur Signature Featherborne® beds, spic and span, tucked in tight to my approval. Luxurious L'Occitane bath and body products leave you smelling nice and fresh at the end of your day.



## Hotel Abri, San Francisco

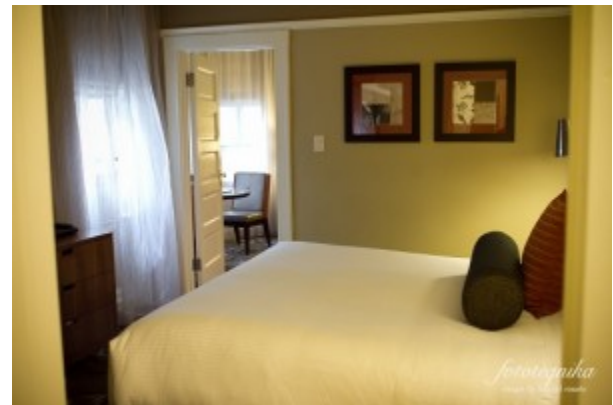


The Hotel Abri belongs to the Larkspur Collection and for me (personally), I would rate it as one of their best. This hotel is right smack in the heart of Union Square in San Francisco, as urban touchy feely as you can get and is characteristic of this beloved city. Formerly known as the Monticello Hotel, the newly refurbished and redesigned Hotel Abri maintains the old charm of its roots but is hip and trendy in its updated redesign and decor. It is one of my treasured finds. Rob Brehant, the hotel's General Manager is its most able captain and was a charming and hospitable host to a few of us in the media who were privileged to meet up for cocktails and a familiarization overnighter.

As we discussed hotels and beds over dinner that evening, Rob explained the bed situation to me as follows: *"Featherborne bed, 3 inch topper on top, fitted sheet, down comforter, fitted sheet tucked in tight"*. I was hesitant to ask him about thread count because I knew he would know. The dinner at next door's Puccini & Pinetti lasted over three hours, with a group of media writers and editors exchanging stories and experiences. There are 91 rooms in the hotel, including 24 urban suites and 4 corner suites. We visited them all and they were all impressive. All rooms include a 42" LCD (2 TVs if you were in a suite) and if you by chance bring your iPhone or iPod with you, there's a docking station where you can easily recharge. If you're in town traveling on business and forget a gadget or two, or an accessory ~ you can purchase or borrow what you need by simply checking in with the concierge. Guests of the Hotel Abri are reminded that if they're in the city to shop and need help with their shopping bags, a simple call into the operator (or the concierge) and they'll send someone over to pick up your bags for you! An absolutely wonderful service in the heart of downtown shopping heaven.



**The Hotel Abri's Registration and Lobby**



If you're inclined to party, the place is right across the street from the [Infusion Lounge](#). Go ahead and party even if you're the designated driver for the evening.



**Go ahead, help yourself!**

There's a lot of orange in the building too. That's their corporate color, and you can't miss it. From the signature gumball machine at the registration guest, to all the logo-bearing giveaways that will soon brand this lovely hotel and make them famous.

The staff of the Hotel Abri ~ from Rome (the doorman meeting and greeting you as you arrive and get out of your car) and all the way to Rob at the top ~ is friendly and hospitable. And it is service of the warm and sincere kind. You'll find yourself amidst happy folks here, and perhaps making a friend or two. I know I did.