

# HOLISTIC TRANSFORMATION

## JUNIPER PRESERVE'S NEW FOCUS ROOTED IN WELLNESS

By Joëlle Creamer

 Nestled in the arms of an ancient juniper tree forest, where the watercolored skies of Central Oregon dust the sightlines to the peaks of the Three Sisters Mountains, Juniper Preserve imparts a modern approach to living and eating well.

In 2022, the 640-acre resort (formerly named Pronghorn and established in 2003) opened under a new name and with a broadened purpose, encompassing a new mission as a wellness destination. Its two award-winning 18-hole Jack Nicklaus- and Tom Fazio-designed golf courses are still part of the core experience, while reprioritizing health and healing in its delivery of resort experiences.

"Our guiding principles are centered around well-being and nature to encourage personal health and a connection with all components of life," said Juniper Preserve General Manager Spencer Schaub in an interview with *Pasadena Living Well Magazine*. "Our setting and landscape naturally become an extension to our curated wellness offerings, which explore and celebrate the many different meanings of, and paths to, wellness."

The resort offers yoga and Pilates classes and wellness retreats, as well as guided tours that explore the area's natural caves, lakes, rivers, and mountains. The property's lava cave (which comes into play on a magnificent par-three on the Fazio course) plays host to sound baths, while the onsite spa provides a program of rejuvenating services.

Alongside Juniper Preserve's meticulously curated activities and amenities, the dining program awakens the senses to a nourishing résumé of culinary prowess.

In April 2023, a fire left the Juniper Preserve clubhouse significantly damaged, taking with it the onsite restaurant called Cascada. That unfortunate event sparked an opportunity to re-envision the future of dining at the resort. Under the leadership of Food and Beverage Director Jason Ray, the team at Juniper Preserve conceived a new concept that would offer visitors and residents an exploration of food in its most natural state and one of the most unique dining experiences in the United States.

"There's not a lot of frosting on the food," Ray explained. "Our



team presents an Indigenous menu that incorporates a journey of food and wellness before colonization."

He explained that each menu item is a masterful collaboration of his expert culinary team, beverage developer, sommelier, and local growers and purveyors. The menu is designed to change the way guests think about food, using the basis of "decolonized food systems," or alternative ways to access ingredients that are beneficial to the environment and bodies (simply, that which is hunted or gathered).

Sugar, beef, chicken, and pork are excluded from the new menu, and the dining experience centers around the concept that each dish has an origin story, from the nourishing, earth-giving ingredients to the vessels in which the food is served.

Set to open in January 2024, the 20-seat restaurant offers a preview into a more permanent vision planned at Juniper Preserve. Its name, "KéYa," meaning turtle, represents Mother Earth across many Indigenous narratives.

Signature menu items

include the Campfire Washington Crimson Whole Apple, which is roasted in embers and filled with seasonal berries, Oregon hazelnuts, and edible flowers (pictured), as well as the Kah-loke (meaning "many swans"), which is a beverage composed of salted butternut squash puree, cognac, local raw honey, and cinnamon, garnished with desert sage.

"This new venture reinspired the 'inner chef' of our culinary team," Ray continued. "Our chefs could accentuate their artistic ability, and that was the premise for getting this started." ■

***The food and beverage team at Juniper Preserve is comprised of an expert group of professionals including: Jason Ray, Director of Food and Beverage; Camilla Abreu, Asst. Director of F&B and Sommelier; David Oliver, Tasting Room Senior Manager; Ryan Eisert, Executive Chef; Tanner Huff, Executive Sous Chef; Fabrice Beaudoin, Sr. Chef De Cuisine; Joanna Latham, Pastry Chef; and Cody Kennedy, Head Mixologist and Beverage Developer.***