

Stanford Terrace Inn

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Stanford Terrace Inn People who remember the Stanford Indian will remember that the Stanford Terrace Inn was once the Tiki Inn, a 1960s-style lodge with a motel motif. Years later, the Indians became the Cardinal, the Tiki was bought and renamed by alumni who don't charge Stanford prices. Plus, they give a 10 percent discount to anyone who claims a Stanford connection of any kind. Five years ago, the owners eco-ed up all 80 rooms while maintaining a house beach-party feel - palm trees at the entrance, a saltwater pool in a brick courtyard and a paint job in the colors of the sun. The campus is so close that from the shallow end you can see graduate student housing.

Comfort Zone

Ten allergy-free rooms have HEPA filters, which remove 99.9 percent of airborne particles. All rooms have either a sofa or easy chairs or both, and there is room enough to bring your own furniture.

Bath and beyond

Oatmeal and cucumber bath soaps, almond body lotion and honey shampoo are all made without animal cruelty. Towels are oversize bath sheets. Each room comes with microwave oven, dorm fridge and recycling bin.

Grounds for approval

The heated pool is 25 feet (not meters) long and only 6 1/2 feet deep, meaning that co-owner Rich Kelley, a Stanford MBA and former NBA player, can stand in the deepest part and look around. There is free wireless throughout, so you can work poolside, while lounging in a wicker-like chaise made of a friendly synthetic. The back courtyard has a redwood deck surrounded by Japanese maples and flower

boxes. Imported beer is available at the front desk, as well as Stanford Terrace Cabernet and Chardonnay, made at Guglielmo Winery in Morgan Hill.

In the vicinity

No matter how fancy residential Palo Alto becomes, the retail strip along California Avenue remains charmingly unimproved and unimpressive. **Good to know**

While technically just another hotel along the El Camino, the Terrace Inn is good enough for members of the Bing family, who are the major benefactors of the Bing Overseas Studies Program at Stanford. The quietest and darkest is room 224, which has a king-size bed that is big enough for two kings plus two yoga mats and an instructor, plus a living area and office.

Highs and lows

The free continental breakfast has a waffle station and Connoisseur coffee, roasted in Redwood City. The inn provides a free shuttle to and from anywhere in Palo Alto or on the Stanford campus. Three out of four sides of the inn are concrete. Windows in the rooms face the courtyard, which limits the ventilation. Bring an eyeshade: The courtyards are bright and there is light bleed over and under the curtains.

Vitals: 531 Stanford Ave., Palo Alto. (650) 857-0333, www.stanfordterraceinn.com. 80 rooms with rates from \$199 to \$320 for the Mayfield Suite with kitchen, dining room, king bed and Jacuzzi. Three rooms are wheelchair accessible.

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- <http://www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?f=/c/a/2008/10/02/NS5I12QA4A.DTL&type=printable>