By Mark Pomeroy

With its sweeping vistas, dramatic mountain ranges and pastoral farm lands, Santa Ynez Valley has long been the refuge for many of California’s most illustrious families. Famous names from finance, film and sport have chosen to call this peaceful valley home.

Set in a quintessential California landscape of flaxen-colored fields watched over by century old Live Oaks is Sycamore Valley Ranch, an oasis that offers the utmost in privacy, serenity and beauty. With the San Rafael and Santa Ynez mountains as backdrops, this approximate 2700 acre property extends as far as the eye can see. Located on Figueroa Mountain Road near the quaint village of Los Olivos, well known for equestrian estates and sprawling vineyards, this property offers a wondrous retreat in a secluded valley.

Originally part of the La Laguna Rancho, a 48,000 acre Mexican land grant, the ranch lands slope gently down from Lookout Mountain and Zaca Ridge to the Alamo Pintado Creek. The Ranch was acquired in 1977 from the estate of one of the original founders of Crocker Bank.

The owner’s inspired vision for the property was to design and construct a sophisticated European home for formal entertaining, yet

5225 FIGUEROA MOUNTAIN ROAD | LOS OLIVOS, CALIFORNIA

Style: French Normandy
Lot Size: 2,698 ± Acres
Architect: Robert Altevers

Main Residence Sq. Ft.: 12,598±
Bedrooms/Baths: 6 / 7 full baths & 2 powder rooms
Year Built: 1982

Offered at $100,000,000
SycamoreValleyRanch.com
SYCAMORE VALLEY RANCH

Front Exterior Landscaped Gardens & South Lake Views would also lend itself to a casual lifestyle that suits the valley setting. To achieve his ambitious plans he entrusted the architectural design to Robert Altevers. The majestic half-timbered homes that stand sentinel along the Normandy coast between Deauville and Honfleur inspired Altevers. The master builders of Normandy were known for their imagination, skill and deft use of patterned brickwork, richly patinaed oak and windows of generous proportion. Sycamore Valley Ranch pays tribute to the grand manor homes of France with unique ceiling details in every room and seven different parquet floor patterns. It took five years to complete the design and construction of the approximate 12,000 square foot home.

Landscape architect Thomas Stone developed the original 32-acre conceptual site plan and envisioned all landscape and hardscape elements of the gardens. The focus of the landscape was to be a central approximate four acre lake with a waterfall and bridge. The design of the lake was dictated by the stately oaks, to ensure that they would not be adversely impacted by overwatering. Once the overall landscape design was approved, Altevers sited the home to take advantage of two equally compelling vistas, views north to the mountains, and vistas south over lush formal gardens. The final design called for construction of a smaller lake, with the house sited between the two lakes and accessed by a stone bridge evocative of London Bridge.

The splendid architectural and landscape design is immediately

North Meadow & Spectacular Mountain Views Beyond
apparent as one crosses the stone bridge and approaches the regal home that stands in the leafy shade of towering sycamore and live oak trees. The circular motor court is paved with indigenous stone that is used throughout the property, and unites the home and grounds to their natural surroundings.

A massive carved front door opens into a breathtaking double-story entry hall. Artisans painstakingly applied thirteen coats of dark lacquer to the beams until the desired luster was achieved. Homes in Normandy always featured an important central stairway that paired a sumptuous balustrade and banister of carved oak that led to the upper floors. Here the extensive use of oak creates a welcoming atmosphere of refinement and warmth. Carved into the newel posts of the grand stairway is a stand of Sycamores – emblematic of the property name. These delightful carvings are found throughout the home. An 18th century brass chandelier of lovely proportion casts...
a soft light on the beams and parquet floors. Floor to ceiling windows offer endless views to the patio areas and grassy fields.

To the left of the entry hall is the spacious and inviting living room; high ceiling heights and a wall of windows beckons one into the extensive gardens. The hearth of the brick pattern fire place is a gathering place for family and guests to warm themselves on cool autumn evenings. The handsomely proportioned dining room with fireplace is located steps above the living room, and can easily accommodate two large tables. A fireplace, brass chandeliers, Bordeaux patterned parquet floors and an elegant box beam ceiling create an elegant ambiance suited for evenings on a grand scale. Large mullioned windows look out to the front garden where landscape lighting bathes the sycamore and oak trees in a soft golden light. The family room/kitchen is more casual in design with its ceiling of rough-sawn decking and beams. The planked floors have a decidedly more rustic feel and are held in place with wrought iron nails. The walls of exposed brick and timber; the beam mantle, and fireplace of Bouquet Canyon stone imbue the room with warmth and integrity. A cozy breakfast room extends out from the Family room and overlooks the entry gardens and the lake to the south.

Opening onto the Family Room is the wonderful country kitchen. In Normandy the kitchen is the warmest room in a home and the kitchen at Sycamore Valley is a worthy example of this tradition. The copperware industry was very important in northern France; hence
its extensive use in all kitchens. Copper hoods over the range and center islands are copper clad with brass trim. Over the larger central island, a brass rail extends around the hood for hanging large copper pots. Counter surfaces feature Portuguese tile and butcher block and the oak cabinetry is fronted with antique German glass. The kitchen was designed for large scale entertaining and features commercial size refrigerators, dishwashers, ranges and large walk-in pantries. Located beyond the kitchen is a command office, powder room, staff quarters and laundry room.

Returning to the Entrance foyer, one enters the Master wing. A regal fireplace of green marble is the focal point of the Library/Study. A decidedly masculine room, the walls feature expansive shelving for an impressive library. Ceiling and floor detailing add to the room’s grandeur where breathtaking views can also be enjoyed. The Master suite is of lovely proportion with its charming fireplace of blue and white patterned Portuguese tile. The lady’s master bath is a sanctuary of calm; floor to ceiling glass walls overlook a walled garden with bassin and outdoor shower. The man’s bath is elegant and masculine...
with dark wood, brass fixtures and marble counters. Both baths include large cedar lined walk-in closets. All elements combine to create a most private and luxurious retreat.

Upstairs are three large guest suites; each individual in design and ambiance. Above the Library and Master suite is an airy bedroom with cathedral ceiling and French doors that open on to a charming balcony. The two guest suites located above the living and dining rooms offer unique views. One looks south to the lake and features a wonderful copper bath and large walk-in closet; the second of equal size enjoys views of the entertainment terrace and mountains. Both rooms have immediate access to a large recreation room with cathedral ceilings and a kitchenette. The home retains many original wall coverings: ginghams, stripes and toile de Jouy – preferred fabrics used frequently in Normandy decor.

A breezeway connects the Main Residence to the office and garage complex. The downstairs features an office/conference room; a four-bay garage, and additional storage space. Upstairs is a service apartment and workout room with sauna.

While the home’s custom finishes and grand reception areas are magnificent, the spectacular grounds that extend out from the home in all directions are truly awe-inspiring. Stone pathways and stack-stone low walls of serpentine stone link the entertainment areas and the meadow to the north. A full service outdoor barbecue and kitchen pavilion is centrally located and can service intimate family dinners or large scale gatherings. Floors and walls of the structure are built of bouquet canyon stone. In the evening, the entire garden is bathed in a delicate light that illuminates the pathways and steps.

The large south lake is the site for the brilliantly designed guest house which provides four luxuriously sized guest suites, each with its own distinct character and charm; three of which enjoy lake views. Each room offers ultimate privacy and feature oversized bedroom with dressing room and bath areas. Among the different features of the rooms are stained oak flooring and plaster ceilings with boxed beams, vaulted ceilings and floors of Idaho pine, and bouquet stone or exposed brick walls with timber beam ceilings.

A dominant feature in the north garden is the European style hunting lodge that serves as the prime viewing location for competitive tennis matches played on the sunken...
championship court. The main room features a soaring cathedral ceiling and carved wooden bar – an ideal location for billiard and ping pong tables. The fireplace is built into a wall of stacked stoned and the walls are finished in bauge, a design technique used throughout Normandy. Shafts of straw are mixed into wet plaster before it is troweled onto the walls. This result is a wonderfully rustic texture. Upstairs is a spacious loft area; from the main floor a staircase descends to a subterranean wine cellar built entirely of local stone. The cool constant temperature of the rooms is ideal for the cellaring of fine Burgundies and Bordeaux.

The undulating contour of the French gray bottom pool resembles a peaceful mountain pond and blends seamlessly into the garden environment. A nearby spa nestled into a grouping of stone boulders appears to be a quiet pool along the course of a gentle stream.

Beyond the pool and terrace areas is a marvelous green meadow that stretches out to the horizon and is crisscrossed by walking paths and a meandering stream. The stream is fed by the northern lake that flows down from the garden and under the stone bridge, where it cascades into the larger lake. A walking path encircles this lake and passes near a sandy beach and a charming viewing pavilion.

Large boulder outcroppings offer delightful places to pause and contemplate the breathtaking vistas. Both lakes feature tall water sprays that are reminiscent of the ‘jet d’eau’ on Lake Geneva.

Meticulously manicured lush formal gardens feature colorful beds of begonias, petunias, bright orange marigolds and yellow snapdragons. These planting beds are changed seasonally and are similar in design to those in Bagatelle, one of the most beautifully landscaped parks in Paris.
A leisurely walk from the main residence leads to the spectacular movie theater and dance center, designed by architect Evans Jones. Double entry doors open to the central lobby replete with candy counter and popcorn machine. Immediately to the left is an extraordinary dance studio featuring mirrored walls and ballet barre - an inspirational room for the aspiring serious artist. The theater’s proportions are grand with seating for fifty guests. The wide screen rivals any public theater and the stage floor includes a hidden trap doors for magical acts. There are two private ground floor viewing suites, as well as the private owner’s suite located on the second level. This theater is truly unique in design and function and will delight any audience.

All water needs are sourced through multiple private on-site wells. The property includes many additional outbuildings: multi-purpose barns, miniature petting zoo, staff housing and two bedroom guest house. There is also an administration building, as well as a paved heli-landing area. The main residence is also serviced by a backup generator.

The continued privacy and natural beauty of the lands surrounding the Ranch is assured as the property borders the Los Padres National Forest to the north that is comprised of over 2,000,000 acres of unspoiled wilderness terrain.

Today Sycamore Valley Ranch is an elegant, yet informal estate that blends effortlessly with the natural landscape. Meticulously designed and crafted for permanence and ease of living, with a generosity of size and spirit that is grand as the Santa Ynez Valley - Sycamore Valley Ranch is a magnificent property to be enjoyed for generations by family and friends.
SYCAMORE VALLEY RANCH - AERIAL WITH APPROXIMATE PROPERTY LINE
SYCAMORE VALLEY RANCH - PARCEL MAP
LAND SURVEY AND NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES (APPROXIMATE)