

SAPPHIRE LAGUNA FACT SHEET

- OPENED:** February 21, 2007
- ADDRESS:** The Old Pottery Place
1200 South Coast Highway
Laguna Beach, CA 92651
(949) 715-9888 (Sapphire Laguna restaurant)
(949) 715-9889 (Sapphire Pantry)
- OWNER/
EXECUTIVE CHEF:** Globally-recognized Chef Azmin Ghahreman, most recently the executive chef of the St. Regis Monarch Beach Resort & Spa in Dana Point, is the driving force behind Sapphire Laguna.
- Honing his decidedly international culinary approach, Ghahreman has also served as executive chef at Four Seasons properties throughout the world, including Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia; Kona Coast, Hawaii; Istanbul, Turkey; Singapore; and Wailea, Maui.
- LOCATION:** Overlooking the Pacific Ocean, Sapphire Laguna is situated on the original site of the landmark Pottery Shack, a community hub and purveyor of pottery and art for nearly 60 years. The new restaurant is an integral part of The Old Pottery Place, a newly developed 16,500-square-foot complex which also includes an art gallery with an outdoor glassblowing demonstration area, a bookstore and specialty boutiques, along with a reinstated statue of Eiler Larsen – one of Laguna’s famed “greeters.”
- CUISINE:** Global Cuisine: comfort food inspired by cuisines from around the world featuring the best California and the world has to offer.
- CULINARY
HIGHLIGHTS:** While the cuisine at Sapphire Laguna is characterized by Ghahreman’s distinctive international style, its cornerstone is the freshest possible local ingredients. The evolving menu changes seasonally and often – based on what is freshly caught and available from small farms, nearby markets and artisan suppliers.
- Lunches, dinners and weekend brunches offer an array of entrees, among them: *Malaysian Black Pepper Shrimp*; *Black Cod with Banana-Curry*; *Pan-Seared Barramundi with Truffle Frites*; *Chicken Pot Pie served with a Dozen Market Vegetables*; and *Braised Prime Short Ribs*.

- ARCHITECT: Si Teller of Teller Architects, Laguna Beach, Calif.
- DESIGN/DÉCOR: The inspiration for Sapphire Laguna was gleaned from its predecessor, the original Pottery Shack, an example of “early California fruit stand architecture.” With a rural, beachy feel, this rustic style was prevalent along the coast from the turn-of-the-century until the mid 1960s. In this spirit, the design concept embraces simple, organic building materials, with an infusion of fine craftsmanship and artistic details for a colorful and inventive interpretation of the original “shack style.” Parts of the original building are incorporated as well.
- Striving for an energizing atmosphere designed to spark conversation and camaraderie, Ghahreman recruited Teller Architects to convey a sense of intimacy and comfort. Elements of warmth and whimsy – including glass, wood, light and art – are used to further the arty, sensuous theme, such as actual wine barrels for wine storage and display; a bar counter made of root wood from a redwood tree dating back to the 1700s, distressed wood furniture and flooring, layered lighting for depth and drama, and beautiful fine art by local artists, including famed glass artist John Barber.
- Interior highlights also include a muted color palette of subtle blue hues, sweeping ocean vistas, an open kitchen, a ten-person round communal table as the restaurant’s core, and walk-in wine cellars holding up to 900 bottles.
- The finished product pays homage to nature and art – both deep-seated in the Laguna Beach lifestyle. And in a fitting tribute to the site’s former occupant, ceramics and pottery are carefully incorporated throughout the restaurant.
- WINE: Sapphire Laguna features reach-in wine vaults which house an eclectic wine collection – more than 900 bottles, emphasizing varietals from around the world. All vintages are stored in temperature-controlled units behind a rustic wall made from actual wine staves. In addition, approximately 25 wines by the glass are available.
- SEATING: The main dining room seats 58 and the bi-level outdoor terrace seats 42. Outdoor diners enjoy the warmth of a sit-around fire pit on the bottom level.
- A bar area has 12 bar stools and two banquette-style areas, which accommodate up to six people each.
- SQUARE FOOTAGE: Approximately 2,900 square feet, not including The Gourmet Shop.

GOURMET SHOP:

Sapphire Pantry, the adjacent 930-square-foot gourmet shop is an extension of Ghahreman's interest in fine wines, artisan cheeses and local produce and allows guests the chance to enjoy the fresh cuisine of Sapphire Laguna at home. Featured are freshly made food for take-home meals, parties or picnics and savory and sweet packaged delicacies from all over the world.

HOURS:

Lunch: Monday through Friday, 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Intermezzo: Daily, 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Dinner: Nightly, 5:30 to 10:30 p.m.; open until 11 p.m. on weekends.

Brunch: Saturday and Sunday, 10 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Gourmet Shop: Daily, 7 a.m. to 9 p.m.

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