

TRAVEL

Hotels get green light

Gaia Napa Valley, which bills itself as the valley's "first fully environmentally sustainable hotel," opened recently on Highway 29 in American Canyon.

The 133-room hotel, built with recycled materials wherever possible, boasts chemical-free landscaping, energy-efficient heating and air conditioning, water conservation, solar panels and skylights, zero chlorofluorocarbons, new-growth wood and low-emission paints, among other "green" features. A restaurant and spa are expected to open later this year.

Guest rooms include microwaves, 27-inch flat-panel TVs and high-speed Internet access. Doubles start at \$99 plus tax. Call (888) 798-3777 or (707) 674-2100, or see www.gaiahotelnapavalley.com.

Farther up the price scale, Solage Calistoga will also open an eco-friendly edge next spring in Napa Valley. The 89-room cottage-style property will have a "green team" of employees focusing on environmental programs such as landscape preservation and energy conservation. Rates will range from \$275 for a room to \$850 for a one-bedroom suite.

The Solage property, which will include a spa with mud baths and hot-spring soaking pools, is the first of a new brand from the creators of Auberge du Soleil, Esperanza, Calistoga Ranch and the Inn at Palmetto Bluff. For details, visit www.solagehotels.com.

In the meantime, San Francisco visitors can go green at the newly opened Orchard Garden Hotel, across from the Chinatown gate on Bush Street. Built to strict environmental standards, the 86-room hotel was still experiencing "teething problems" last week, according to the front desk, but it is accommodating guests. Online rates begin at \$139. Call (415) 399-9807 or see www.theorchardgardenhotel.com.