

HOTEL CALIFORNIA
**THE STORY, THE
 SETTING, THE SPIRIT**
 TODOS SANTOS BAJA MEXICO



Photos courtesy of Tibor Nemeth

Nestled between La Paz and Cabo San Lucas on the Baja California peninsula of Mexico sits a hidden gem called Todos Santos, home to an award winning tequila, Hotel California Tequila, and the legendary hotel that inspired it. Once a place of thriving sugar mills, this Pueblo Mágico or “Magical Village” has been rejuvenated in recent years as an understated, yet burgeoning arts and surf community. And at the center of town, lucky travelers will find an equally magical place – Hotel California. This space overflows with mesmerizing tales, cool vibes, and house tequila that bottles up its charm for all to share.

Built in the late 1940s, the actual Hotel California came long before hippies and rock ‘n’ roll, but this off-the-grid establishment draws people in and brings to life the iconic song of the same name, that surprisingly, is only coincidentally connected to it. In fact, the actual story of Hotel California and its house tequila, is in many ways more interesting than the musical folklore that swirls around it.

The original owner of Hotel California was a Chinese immigrant named Antonio Wong, who called himself Don Antonio Tabasco in an attempt to fit in with locals. Living in Todos Santos with his wife and seven daughters, he not only established the hotel, he also built the town’s first gas station and brought ice to Todos Santos for the first time. This put Hotel California’s bar on the map early on as the only place in this desert oasis where folks could grab an ice-cold beer. Understandably, it made the hotel, and Don Antonio quite popular.

The hotel continued to be a refuge for existential travelers and expatriates through the ‘60s, ‘70s, and ‘80s, but accounts are hazy at best. Eventually, the hotel fell into a state of neglect. Fast forward to this century when a Canadian couple, John and Debbie Stewart, purchased the hotel and morphed it into an 11-suite boutique inn, catapulting the space to award-winning status. Today, the hotel experience is complete with its own critically acclaimed house tequila served at the totally in vogue Baja bar.

“Sadly, John passed away before his dream of having a house tequila could fully be realized, but his legacy lives on in every sip,” said Brian Whitney, CEO of Sipping Spirits, LLC. “We believed in John’s vision. And after spending years exploring various taste profiles and bottle designs, we created a spirit that would not only bring his dream to life, but also bring people a tequila experience unlike any other.”

Hotel California Tequila is made in honor of this celebrated hotel and the travelers and townspeople who call this area home. Crafted from organically grown agave sourced from the Highlands of Jalisco, created using a special Cold Distillation process, and presented in mesmerizing artisan-fired bottles, Hotel California Tequila is equally as uncommon as its roots. Available in Blanco, Reposado, and Añejo varieties, it has already won several awards, earned critical praise, and continues to capture the attention of tequila connoisseurs all over the globe.

The tequila cocktails served at the hotel, like one of their specialty margaritas, will instantly connect you to the Baja way of life. But even if you’re thousands of miles away from the actual hotel, one sip of Hotel California Tequila, and you’ll want to kick back, relax, and stay awhile.



Each variety of Hotel California Tequila features an artisan-fired glass bottle, complete with a hand-stamped and inked label. And after the bottles are crafted and ready, they’re rinsed with tequila instead of water – ensuring nothing comes between tequila enthusiasts and the unique experience of this small-batch spirit.



**STRAIGHT FROM THE
 HOTEL CALIFORNIA BAR**

HEAVENLY HOTEL

INGREDIENTS
 2 oz. Hotel California Tequila Blanco
 2 oz. Fresh Orange Juice
 Lime Wedges
PREPARATION
 Combine tequila, OJ, ice, and a squeeze of lime in a shaker, shake it like you mean it, and enjoy the Baja state of mind.