

- 1. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS CATHOLIC CHURCH** 1919
130 W. Ojai Avenue
 Mission Revival structure designed by Mead & Requa.
 City of Ojai Landmark No. 7
 National Register of Historic Places
Today: Ojai Valley Museum

Ojai Valley Museum collection

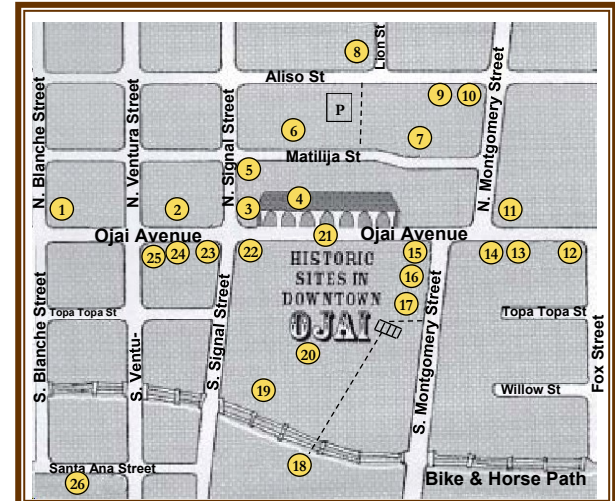


St. Thomas Aquinas Church

- 2. EL ROBLAR HOTEL** 1920
122 W. Ojai Avenue
 Mission Revival original design by Mead & Requa. Underwent a major remodel - 2024-2025.
Today: Hotel El Roblar
- 3. CLARK LIVERY** 1916
202 E. Ojai Avenue
 Site of the Nordhoff Livery beginning in 1887. Bob and Tom Clark were both stage drivers at times. Tom Clark owned the livery in the early 1900s. In 1916, Clark built an auto livery on the site using native stone. The auto livery was renovated into a drug store in 1927.
Today: Commercial space
- 4. THE ARCADE** 1917
Ojai Avenue (from Signal Street eastward)
 Mission Revival structure designed by Mead & Requa.
 Four arches added at the east end in 1927.
 City of Ojai Landmark No. 5
- 5. SESPE STONE WALL** ca.1914
120 N. Signal Street at Matilija
 Constructed around home of Tom Clark, Ventura County Supervisor 1904-1936, of sandstone blocks salvaged from original Ventura County Court-house. The Clark home was torn down ca. 1964.
 City of Ojai Landmark No. 19

- 6. NORDHOFF BRICK SCHOOLHOUSE** 1876
210 E. Matilija Street
 The first school within the town of Nordhoff (now Ojai); later the home of Ojai mayor, Alton Drown. The much-altered building began being used as a hotel/bed & breakfast in the late 1940s.
 City of Ojai Landmark No. 14
Today: The Lavender Inn
- 7. JOHN MONTGOMERY HOME** 1875
310 E. Matilija Street
 Historical accounts say John Montgomery's house began as an adobe and was wood-sided later. The large Edwin Baker family bought the home ca. 1888 and added rooms and the second story.
Today: Commercial space
- 8. GEORGE THACHER MEMORIAL LIBRARY** 1893
E. Aliso Street at Lion Street (northwest corner)
 Nordhoff's first library built on South Montgomery Street near where the Art Center is today. Sherman Day Thacher, founder of Thacher School, donated \$500 in memory of his brother George to purchase books. Moved to this location ca. 1938.
Today: Privately owned
- 9. ALISO STREET ADOBE** 1941
307 - 307A E. Aliso Street
 Built as a duplex by William L. Benson partly from adobe bricks, timbers, and roof tiles salvaged from the demolished parish hall of St. Thomas Aquinas Church. The "River of Life" doors also came from the church.
 City of Ojai Landmark No. 22
Today: Privately owned
- 10. PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH** 1884
213 N. Montgomery St. at Aliso Street
 The first church in the Ojai Valley. This Colonial Revival structure has been moved twice. It served Presbyterians for 46 years; then the Nazarenes for 50 years. Designed by J. Cleaveland Cady.
 City of Ojai Landmark No. 1
Today: Byron Katie - The Center for the Work
- 11. NORDHOFF GRAMMAR SCHOOL and CHAPARRAL AUDITORIUM** 1927 1938
414 E. Ojai Avenue at Montgomery Street
 Eight Mission-style classrooms were built in 1927: three and a kindergarten on Ojai Avenue and four on Montgomery Street. Three classrooms were added in 1929 and three in 1937. Designed by Roy Wilson.
 City of Ojai Landmark No. 24
Today: Ojai Unified School District

- 12. SHELL SERVICE STATION** 1936
459 E. Ojai Avenue
 Built for Elmer Friend in the Mission style. Designed by Austen Pierpont.
Today: Ojai Rôtie Restaurant
- 13. BILL BAKER'S BAKERY** 1927
457 E. Ojai Avenue
 Bill Baker was known worldwide as the "Picasso" of cake decoration. He created huge, elaborate cakes. He also produced health breads made from soy and lima bean flours.
 Designed by Roy Wilson.
Today: The Dutchess Restaurant
- 14. OJAI VALLEY WOMAN'S CLUB** 1911
441 E. Ojai Avenue
 Built in 1911 for the King's Daughters service group. The women voted to become the Ojai Valley Woman's Club in 1914. The clubhouse remains an active center for community activities.
 City of Ojai Landmark No. 8
- 15. CITY GARAGE** 1922
345 E. Ojai Avenue
 Robert Winfield built this service station in the Mission style for George Holsten. The Ojai Valley Cleaners was located here for over fifty years.
Today: Topa Topa Brewing Company



Total tour distance = 2.5 miles (4 km) Map by Colleen McDougal (adapted)

- 16. OJAI FIRE STATION** 1936
109 S. Montgomery Street
 Built with W.P.A. funds. Home to the Ojai Valley Historical Museum from 1979 to 1996. Ventura County Landmark No. 62
Today: The Ojai Vineyard Tasting Room
- 17. OJAI ART CENTER** 1939
113 S. Montgomery Street
 Dr. Charles Butler spearheaded the building of this community project. The center is member-supported and multi-disciplinary. Designed by Austen Pierpont. 1997 Exterior renovation by Marc Whitman.
- 18. OJAI JAIL** 1928
Libbey Park
 Ojai's second jail structure; home to some 650 inmates during the 50 years it was in use. Designed by Roy Wilson. City of Ojai Landmark No. 12
- 19. LIBBEY BOWL and SYCAMORE TREE** 1957/2011
Libbey Park
 Venue for the Ojai Music Festival and other cultural events. Original 1957 bowl designed by Austen Pierpont and Roy Wilson. New bowl built in 2011 from plans by David Bury. The sycamore tree, known as the Peace Tree or Marriage Tree, is sacred to the Chumash. The over 200-year-old tree is Ventura County Landmark No. 27.
- 20. CIVIC CENTER TENNIS COURTS** 1896
and TENNIS TOURNAMENT
Libbey Park
 Site of "The Ojai," one of the oldest amateur tennis tournaments in the United States; begun by William L. Thacher who founded the Ojai Valley Tennis Club in 1895 (still in existence). The Wall of Champions plaques commemorate the tournament and the players. City of Ojai Landmark No. 11
- 21. PERGOLA and MEMORIAL** 1917/1999
FOUNTAIN
Libbey Park
 Mission Revival structure with pergola and two grand arches fronting the park. Designed by Mead & Requa. Demolished in 1971. Rebuilt in 1999 from the Mead & Requa plans modified by David Bury. The pergola fountain was also rebuilt in 1999. The fountain plaque dates to 1904 when the original fountain/horse trough was built.

- 22. POST OFFICE TOWER and PORTICO** 1917
201 E. Ojai Avenue
 Mission Revival structure designed by Mead & Requa. The tower was loosely fashioned after the campanile of the Havana Cathedral in Cuba. City of Ojai Landmark No. 6
 Ventura County Landmark No. 26
- 23. OJAI PLAYHOUSE** 1914
145 E. Ojai Avenue
 Local realtor John J. Burke built the movie theater. It was called the Isis Theater until 1926. Today's lobby had originally been a market with an adjacent ice plant. A Mission-style façade covered the three businesses. The façade was renovated in 1917. City of Ojai Landmark No. 26
- 24. MARAVILLA IMPROVEMENT COMPANY** 1921
(later called the Ojai Valley Company)
121 E. Ojai Avenue
 The company was initially formed to develop and sell land in the Arbolada Tract. The Arbolada development was conceived by Edward D. Libbey. Designed by Frank Mead. City of Ojai Landmark No. 21
Today: Twice-Sold Tales
- 25. OJAI LIBRARY (East-West wing)** 1928
111 E. Ojai Avenue
 Designed by Carleton Monroe Winslow. North-South wing: 1981
- 26. SMITH-HOBSON ESTATE** 1907-1926
401 S. Ventura Street
 Former home of the Hobson and Smith families. Abram and Helen Hobson purchased a bungalow on this property in 1907. They renovated and enlarged it over many years. It was converted to the Spanish style in 1925-1926. The family gave the property to the City in 1973. City offices opened in 1976. City of Ojai Landmark No. 23
Today: Ojai City Hall



Photo credit: Julius Shulman

Ojai City Hall - 1976



A Walking Tour of Historic Downtown Ojai

No walking tour of downtown Ojai can begin without acknowledging the contributions of Edward Drummond Libbey of Toledo, Ohio. The wealthy glass manufacturer and his wife Florence first visited the dusty little village of Nordhoff (Ojai) in 1907. They built a winter home in the Foothills Tract in 1909-10.

Mr. Libbey fell in love with the town and in 1916 spearheaded a downtown redevelopment based on City Beautiful principles that became an example to other California cities. His vision was brought to reality by the talent of architects Frank Mead and Richard Requa of San Diego, builder Robert Winfield, and with the cooperation of the local residents.

Ojai's historic downtown was placed on the California Register of Historical Resources in 2018. The district includes 28 contributing structures that are located between Blanche and Montgomery Streets.

We invite you to enjoy this self-guided walking tour of our charming city!



City of Ojai Historic Preservation Commission

401 South Ventura Street
 Ojai, CA 93023
 (805) 646-5581

www.ojai.ca.gov