

# Britt Scripps Inn

## Victorian Mansion, San Diego



In the late 1800s, Banker's Hill in San Diego became the prime area for the wealthy to reside. With magnificent views and cooling breezes, the hill eventually became dotted with grand Victorian mansions.

Today, a few of the remaining homes are used as residences, but most have been modified to accommodate law, dental and other offices, or sadly, demolished to make way for high rise condominiums and commercial buildings.

One colorful Queen Anne-style mansion that is bound to catch your eye sits majestically on the corner of 4th and Maple. It has been renovated into the upscale Britt Scripps Inn. The lavish home was originally built in 1887 for \$3000 by Eugene Britt, a water rights attorney. The next owner was Edward Scripps of the newspaper family. After a short occupancy by a law firm, it was acquired by Gordon Hattersley, III. Hattersley admired the property for 20 years before it came on the market. The property became available while he was vacationing in Hawaii. A realtor contacted him and the deal was completed over the phone.

Hattersley had a vision to restore the grand old home into a luxurious, romantic inn. Two years, and around \$6 million dollars later, Britt Scripps Inn opened in February 2005. It has become renowned as a respite for the harried, and a dream getaway for romantics.

When Hattersley acquired the house, the rooms were painted white throughout, including most of the intricately detailed woodwork. Many areas

were covered with multi-layers of wallpaper. Hattersley spared no expense in the renovation. He acquired elaborate, authentic antiques for all of the nine bedrooms and common areas. For the walls, new, soothing colors were researched for authenticity. Fabrics throughout the guest room and common areas are of the highest quality, and one can spend a day studying details of the wood-beaded fretwork, new wall coverings, and elaborate chandeliers. One focal point in the entry way is a series of three original stained glass panels depicting morning, noon, and night as experienced by animal life. Another is the hand-made 1883 Steinway Art Case piano that rests beneath the hand-carved oak staircase. Each guest room has a distinct theme with impressive details. The

ambiance ranges from the Gothic room with its stunning arched headboard crowned by yards of silk and brocade in jewel-like tones of purples, greens and gold, to the light and airy Garden Room filled with wrought-iron, floral fabrics and white-washed wicker. Six other rooms in the main house are: Golden Oak, furnished with golden oak furniture and hand-quilted bedding; Balboa, a stately and elegant room in soothing shades of blue and white; Aesthetic, designed with subtle Asian elements; Governors, named after California's 17th governor and decorated in conservative tones of tan and green; Renaissance, filled with a rare collection of ornately carved furniture accented with hues of plum and gold; and the Library, filled with aged wood furniture and a gold color scheme.



The ninth, and only room apart from the main house, is the Carriage House. This unit, popular with honeymooners, has been transformed into a private retreat filled with Tiffany bedside lamps and a Victorian walnut burl wood inlaid bed. It is surrounded by gardens and nestles under the first camphor tree planted in San Diego.

All guest rooms have been outfitted with the latest in creature comforts. The ultra-comfortable beds have been raised, widened and lengthened to accommodate today's larger frames, and are outfitted with silky 1,000 thread count sheets. Each bathroom has been given its own unique tile treatment. A few have claw foot tubs. All are complemented with Penhaligon amenities Ariana towels are kept cozily warm on towel warmers, and Ariana robes and cashmere throws await a relaxing moment.

Other room amenities include wireless internet access, and flat screen TVs.

As evening approaches, an antique wicker cart is rolled out into the main parlor with an offering of red or white wine and hors d'oeuvres. In the morning, a custom breakfast is prepared by an in-house cook, and can be enjoyed in the room, or on its adjoining private balcony, the small dining room, on the verandah, or at a table in the charming peaceful garden. The garden has served as a perfect venue for a small (125 persons) wedding with the wedding party using the mansion for accommodations. Nearby attractions include Balboa Park, which is a block away from the inn. Downtown San Diego with its Gaslamp District, expanded convention center, and the new San Diego Padres Baseball Park are just minutes away, as is the San Diego Zoo. Britt Scripps Inn is less than 15 minutes time from San Diego International Airport, and the Santa Fe Train depot which also serves Amtrak. Britt Scripps Inn is located at 406 Maple St., San Diego. Room rates includes breakfast and early evening wine and appetizers. For more info, call 888.881.1991 or 619.230.1991 or visit online at [www.brittscripps.com](http://www.brittscripps.com).

