

NEW CULTURAL CENTRE TO CELEBRATE PALMS SPRINGS' AGUA CALIENTE HERITAGE



Image credit: Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

23 May 2018 – Construction on a new 5.8-acre Agua Caliente Cultural Center in downtown Palm Springs officially began on May 11th with an official ground-breaking ceremony. Located on the corner of Indian Canyon Drive and Tahquitz Canyon Drive, the new centre will feature a cultural museum, a Gathering Plaza, gardens and an Oasis Trail, as well as an Agua Caliente Spa and Bathhouse. The project is set to complete in 2020 and will celebrate the history, culture and traditions of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians.

Encompassing a wide-range of experiences and learning opportunities, which convey the values and legacy of the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, the new cultural centre will build on the traditions of the Agua Caliente people, as well as the renowned natural features of the ancestral lands.

Spanning approximately 48,000 sq ft, the new museum will be a repository for cultural artefacts, stories and history, with collections featuring throughout the main, changing and art galleries. Among the numerous outdoor activity spaces and adjacent to the Agua Caliente Hot Mineral Spring, a Gathering Plaza will serve as a commemorative focal point, where Tribal members and visitors can celebrate the community and its history, as well as pay respect to the life-giving waters that helped shape the region.

Recreating the distinctive character, geology and natural beauty of the nearby Indian Canyons, one of the ancestral homes of the Agua Caliente, the Oasis Trail, will meander between the Museum and Spa. As well as providing an interactive, cultural learning environment, the trail will include terraces, a waterfall, sandy beach, fire pits and meditation labyrinth.

Celebrating the ancient healing waters of the Agua Caliente Hot Mineral Spring, the Spa will offer treatments rooms, outdoor mineral pools, men and women's bathhouses, a tranquillity garden, fitness centre and salon. Estimated to be at least 12,000 years old, the water from the Agua Caliente Hot Mineral Spring contains a mineral composition that has not yet been found anywhere else in the world. The Tribe has shared the healing water with visitors for over a century and the new spa will be the fifth bathhouse/spa on the site, with the first one having operated in the late 1880s.

Tribal Chairman Jeff L. Grubbe said, "This new cultural centre provides an incredible opportunity to share and celebrate our history, culture and traditions with this community and visitors from around the world. Each federally recognized tribe throughout this country has a distinct culture that includes traditions, language, historic clothing and housing styles as well as historical food and medicine preparations. We want to share that with others as well as acknowledge the fact that we are alive and well today living in the modern world."

Designed by JCJ Architecture, the design concept aims to reflect the tribe's values and draws inspiration from Agua Caliente traditions, such as basket weaving and pottery, as well as the natural elements of the surrounding desert landscape and Andreas Canyon.

For more information about Palm Springs visit: www.visitpalm Springs.com

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About Palm Springs

One hundred miles east of Los Angeles, Palm Springs is a desert playground with year-round sunshine, blue skies and stunning natural beauty. Nestled beneath California's San Jacinto Mountains, the city is famed for its Hollywood legacy, Native American heritage and huge collection of mid-century modern architecture. The desert oasis boasts a wealth of adventurous hiking trails and historical canyon tours, as well as chic boutiques, world-renowned golf courses and unique experiences, including the chance to stay in the former homes of Marilyn Monroe and Elvis Presley. For more information see www.visitpalm Springs.com.

About The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians is a federally recognized Indian Tribe located in Palm Springs, California, with 31,500 acres of reservation lands that spread across Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, and into the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto mountains. The Tribe currently owns and operates two 18-hole championship golf courses, the Spa Resort Casino in downtown Palm Springs and the Agua Caliente Casino Resort Spa in Rancho Mirage. For more information about the Tribe, visit www.aguacaliente-nsn.gov.

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