



RELAX AND UNWIND AT THE  
STORIED

# MISSION INN RESORT AND CLUB

By-Family Beautiful

We have driven past the sprawling facility several times on our way to Mount Dora, and each time I said, "Some day I want to check out that place." That time finally came.

The luxury destination is a little over half-an-hour northwest of Orlando, so you can get there from Sarasota in about two hours. Its in a funny-named town in Central Florida, "Howey-in-the-Hills," founded in 1925 by William Howey. The name changed from the Town of Howey to Howey-in-the-Hills two years later. The rolling hills in the area make it a beautiful part of our state.

Mission Inn Resort has something for everybody: Four restaurants, two golf courses, a spa and a marina half-a-mile away. The resort is set on 1,100 acres!

While we were there we saw two weddings-- one outside in a courtyard—and the other in the resort spacious, elegant ballroom.





We also took advantage of the tennis academy run by Cesar Villarroel, a Level One USPTA & USPTA instructor. He and his equally charming son train a wide range of adults and junior on their six well-maintained soft courts. Cesar offers a series of clinics and leagues for guests. World Tennis Magazine rated the resort's program among the top 25 in the county.

After checking in to our spacious fairway-view room, we freshened up for dinner at the upscale El Conquistador Restaurant. We had jumbo shrimp cocktail while sipping pinot noir. My wife had gluten-free pasta with steak and I had a filet with potatoes and asparagus. We both enjoyed a scoop of ice cream with chocolate sauce for dessert.

The second best part of enjoying a decadent meal, is the ability to walk a few hundred yards back to our rooms. (We did stop for a quick ping-pong game as we passed by the pool area!)

The buffet breakfast in La Hacienda Restaurant included omelets made to order, followed by lots of freshly cut cantaloupe and melon. The service at both restaurants was personable and dependable.

After brunch, we walked to the tennis courts along a scenic walking trail. The resort also has two historical and educational trails celebrating Central Florida's early-Spanish conquistador explorations. Many of the building names and décor have a Spanish influence.

Even though Mission Hills is in a remote location in Lake County, there is still plenty to do around the area. We drove into Tavares and boarded the "Florida Train" to watch a performance on-board. What a treat to see the countryside out the window while being entertained in the aisle!

Afterward we drove into quaint Mount Dora—where we happened upon a street event that drew thousands to the historic downtown area. We even ran into some friends there from Sarasota!

Mount Dora is only 20 minutes away from Howey-in-the-Hills.

Mission Inn Resort & Club has it all. It just depends what you want to do. I'm glad we finally had the opportunity to visit for a couple nights in this slice of paradise just two hours—and worlds away—from Sarasota.

<https://missioninnresort.com/resort/>



