

For Immediate Release

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HISTORY MEETS STATE-OF-THE ART RETAILING
AT ONE COLORADO

Attracted by San Gabriel Valley's temperate climate and fertile soil, a small group of wealthy settlers from Indiana formed the San Gabriel Orange Grove Association in 1874. Purchasing much of the old Rancho San Pasqual east of the Arroyo Seco to what is now Fair Oaks Avenue, they began selling acreage to fellow settlers intent on a new life as California citrus growers. In 1875, the new community adopted the Native American name Pasadena, meaning "crown of the valley." With the construction of Hollingsworth's general store (1876) and the Central School (1878), the corner of Colorado Boulevard and Fair Oaks Avenue quickly became the center of the community. More than 100 years later, **One Colorado**, situated at this same intersection, serves as the anchor for the area's renaissance.

From the 1870s through 90s, what is now Old Pasadena began a period of rapid expansion. Stately one- and two-story masonry structures with elaborate detailing replaced the earlier wood frame buildings. These new structures featured arched windows, terra cotta and decorative brick and stonework, along with articulated cornices in various styles. With the widening of Colorado Boulevard in the 1920s in an attempt to save the area as a viable commercial zone, new facades designed by some of Pasadena's most prominent architects were added to several of the older buildings, creating a common architectural theme. Chief among the styles in the new facades was California Mediterranean, long associated with Pasadena's wealthy residential districts, and the modern style then in vogue, Art Deco. It is these extraordinary, finely-crafted buildings that form the centerpiece of the One Colorado retail development.

Prior to the current development, the block that is now One Colorado was a district of discount shops and bars of dubious repute — a far cry from the area's glorious past. But it was this very climate of decline that allowed the area's architecture to remain largely intact, providing an excellent opportunity for restoration and civic improvement. The demolition of a large section of Old Pasadena north of the project galvanized the community, and in 1976 the Cultural Heritage Commission was established to identify and protect Pasadena's historic buildings. The importance of the area's incomparable architecture was given its highest accolade in 1984, when the United States Department of the Interior placed Old Pasadena on the National Register of Historic Places.

Bounded by Colorado Boulevard, Fair Oaks Avenue, Union Street and DeLacey Avenue, One Colorado is composed of some of the finest buildings in the district. Along Colorado Boulevard, the development's merchants are housed primarily on the ground floor of the two-story masonry structures. The designs of the buildings fronting Colorado rise and fall with varying roof heights and carved stone details. Though each facade is unique and richly detailed, they all exhibit a pleasing stylistic uniformity due to the popularity at the time of the Mediterranean and Art Deco styles. Of the buildings along Colorado, only 55 West Colorado retains its original, 19th Century facade.

By contrast, the buildings on Fair Oaks Avenue retain much of their Victorian flavor, and #47 North Fair Oaks is one of the most outstanding structures in Old Pasadena. Built in 1887, its smooth, rich red brick appears much as it did when first built. Elaborate Renaissance detailing with elongated iron columns, intricate terracotta plaque ornaments and arched double windows speak of the area's past glory. This stunning two-story structure housed Pasadena's first City Hall from 1893 to 1902.

Adjoining this impressive structure at #39 is the two-story Slavin Building erected in 1893, named for prominent contractor Mathew Slavin, who was responsible for building at least ten other commercial properties in Old Pasadena. The "Slavin Block," so identified by the inscription on the parapet, now houses **The Metropolitan Museum of Art Store**.

The interior facades (facing the courtyard) were little altered during the course of Pasadena's building booms. They form One Colorado's system of pedestrian alleyways that provide a glimpse into Old Pasadena's bustling past. These simple brick and masonry facades are sometimes stuccoed, but are usually left unadorned, with the ghosts of faded signs, metal sash windows, decorative grilles and remnants of fire escapes invoking the image of an old commercial quarter. Another charming detail of this most intact of Old Pasadena's alley systems, is the distinctive cobblestone gutter running down the center of each alley.

Securing these architectural treasures for the future, One Colorado is proud to participate in the area's rejuvenation. The Old World craftsmanship and attention to detail frame one of California's most important contemporary retail facilities and invite shoppers to enjoy the leisurely pace and enchanting atmosphere of days gone by.

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