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It's that time of year again when we have our eyes focused on heading out of town to either enjoy a well-deserved respite from our daily routine or take a family vacation during the kids' summer break. Not surprisingly, the most popular destination for Arizonans is San Diego. Beautiful weather, amazing beaches, tons of activities as well as a booming foodie culture, all make this coastal paradise the perfect getaway for couples and families alike. However, the number of choices can become overwhelming so let us be your guide with our suggestions on the best places for you to dine, shop, play and stay.





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Places to Stay

Many visitors gravitate to the famed Gaslamp Quarter, which houses many restaurants and shops in San Diego's famed downtown. Nearby Seaport Village is also another very popular destination for visitors. Fortunately, there are no shortage of options for places to stay if you have your sights set on these destinations.

Our recommendations include the Manchester Grand Hyatt (pictured above), which is recognized by regulars for its twin, tall white towers on the shores of San Diego Bay. Enjoy premier amenities including views from every room, rooftop pools, free Wi-Fi, modern dining, and more. Sip in style and enjoy one of San Diego's top attractions at the new Top of the Hyatt, offering a sky-high view above the bay from the 40th floor of the Harbor Tower. Note, this hotel is not only very popular among visitors but it hosts many business events and conventions, so make sure to book your room well in advance if this is your planned resting spot. You'll be happy you did.

If your preference is to stay in the heart of the action, then your best choice is the Marriott Gaslamp Quarter, which is stumbling distance from a plethora of restaurants and shops, and sits next door to Petco Park, the home of the San Diego Padres. In fact, if you are looking for a unique way to watch a Padres game, or just enjoy beautiful scenic views, make sure to visit their ALTITUDE Sky Lounge, which is perched 22 stories above the historic Gaslamp District. This elite rooftop bar pairs stunning panoramic views with a sleek, modern atmosphere complete with a blazing fire pit and can't-miss happy hour. In addition to a bird's-eye view of a Padres game, you can take in Coronado Island, Coronado Bridge, Point Loma, and the San Diego cityscape.

A new addition to the area is Homewood Suites by Hilton located in Hotel Circle, which houses a cluster of lodging options and is popular among Arizonans. It is the perfect choice for its central location to the San Diego Zoo, SeaWorld, Old Town and Mission Bay. Also, by offering all suites, there are plenty of family friendly amenities

including a full kitchen and dining area as well as a heated pool and garden courtyard with fire pits and games.

However, if you prefer to stay a little further north by Mission Bay, we suggest Polynesian-themed Catamaran Resort Hotel and Spa. The tropical design and beachfront setting makes this unique among San Diego resorts. Its sister property, the Bahia Resort Hotel, offers guests a chance to step into a tropical paradise from one of its contemporary beachfront or garden rooms or a stroll down to the water's edge from a comfortable studio, which commands stunning bay views. Hyatt Regency Mission Bay caters to every type of traveler. Enjoy the sunrise and sunset views from the VIP corner suites, as well as an array of appealing amenities including amazing ocean views, three pools, three water slides (pictured above), and a seasonal water taxi that takes guests to a private entrance at SeaWorld. These are also excellent options if you plan on visiting nearby amusement park Belmont Park.

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SIX NEW HABITATS. READY TO ROCK JUNE 2017.



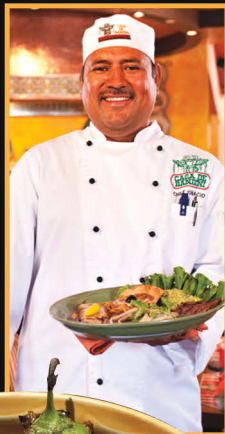
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Six Must Dos

Speaking of Belmont Park, this seven-acre amusement park is packed with rides and attractions that will keep the fun going from sunup to sundown. Visitors will enjoy roller coasters, bumper cars, carousel, a go-kart speedway, wave machines, a zipline, and more. Grab lunch and a show at Wavehouse Bar & Grill, home of a ten-foot wave machine named "Brutus Maximus" that surfers use to show off their skills. Four dynamic thrills make up Belmont's newest Adrenaline Zone attraction: The Rock Wall, Speedwall, Zip Line and the Leap of Faith (coming soon). On sand, on waves, on wheels – the best rentals on the beach are available at Mission Beach Rentals. The newest member of the Belmont Park family, visitors can rent paddle boards, wet suits, beach chairs, umbrellas and much more.

San Diego Zoo's new Africa Rocks exhibit spotlights the amazing biodiversity found on the African continent, with unusual and striking animals ready for their rise to fame. Opening on May 22, visitors can see a diverse group of animals that are native to Africa and may have been seen the movie Madagascar.

The zoo sits within Balboa Park, an urban park where culture and nature meet. Lush grounds, from gardens to forests, fountains to playgrounds, and sweeping architecture from Spanish Colonial Revival to mid-century Modern span the heart of the park. Nearly 20 museums filled with everything from dinosaurs to space travel, science to the study of humankind, photographs to old masters, and automobiles to orchids. Plays, musicals, orchestras, ballet, heritage dancing, song, and the San Diego Zoo, round out a vast array of things to see and do.





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Visitors can see another exciting show of animal life aboard a boat cruise from Hornblower Cruises & Events. Choose from the Summer Whale Watching Adventures Tour, a one- or two-hour Harbor Cruise & Sea Lion Adventure, which traverses 13 miles down the San Diego Bay or a three-hour Sunset Cocktail Cruise, where you can enjoy nighttime views of the San Diego skyline. Each ship has a snack bar with adult beverages, soft drinks and hot and cold snacks, plus souvenirs available for purchase. If you take this tour, make sure your phone is charged as you will be snapping plenty of photos. Get on line early to ensure a good seat along the ship's rail. Visit hornblower.com for more information.

**"..YOU WILL
BE SNAPPING
PLENTY OF
PHOTOS.."**

Explore Another Side of San Diego

Museums, cultural institutions & more

Did you know that in addition to having mild weather and a beautiful coastline, San Diego is home to over 40 museums and cultural attractions? Throughout San Diego County, we have museums to appeal to all ages—come learn about art, music, and our rich history, or explore the outdoors, sea life and outer space. Visit sandiegomuseumcouncil.org to learn about all the museums San Diego has to offer.



THE NEW CHILDREN'S MUSEUM

The New Children's Museum is an arts-based children's museum that inspires imagination and creativity in children and families. With three floors of interactive space, an organic garden and a park across the street, there is always something "new" to explore and discover. Open 7 days/week all summer. thinkplaycreate.org

MARITIME MUSEUM OF SAN DIEGO

Embark on a new adventure! Come aboard the Maritime Museum of San Diego. San Diego's only waterfront Museum for historical vessels and history Bay cruises. From the age of Steam to Sail to Submarines. Explore a world-class collection of 10 historic vessels, rare artifacts, and educational exhibits. Experience tall ship adventure day sailing or a high-speed naval history tour aboard the PCF 816 Swift boat. Open Daily. For tickets and more information visit sdmaritime.org.



SAN DIEGO MODEL RAILROAD MUSEUM

With over 27,000 square feet this museum truly is an unparalleled experience of art and history come alive. With six exhibits, the museum is one of the largest and the only accredited model railroad museum in the country. The Centennial Railway garden exhibit leads the way in new technology and sustainable exhibit design. If you like flashy lights and noisy trains puffing smoke, then the Toy Train Gallery is sure to spark smiles. sdmrm.org

SAN DIEGO AIR & SPACE MUSEUM

Aviation history unfolds at the San Diego Air & Space Museum. See the actual Apollo 9 command module, a rare Gee Bee racer, and a flying replica of Charles Lindbergh's *Spirit of St. Louis*. Through 2017, ***Be the Astronaut***, a fun interactive experience for heroes of all ages. If you're a history buff, aviation enthusiast, or looking for an experience your family will never forget, visit the San Diego Air & Space Museum. sandiegoairandspace.org.



FLEET SCIENCE CENTER

Get your hands-on science at the Fleet Science Center! Interact with intriguing exhibits, featuring **Game Masters**, premiering July 1, 2017. Game Masters celebrates the world's most innovative video game designers, from arcades of the 1980s to today's online offerings—complete with more than 100 playable games. Additional exhibitions include the Tinkering Studio, Retro-Active Science and Kid City (just for children 5 and under), plus catch a fascinating film in the world's first IMAX® Dome Theater. fleetscience.org

WHALEY HOUSE MUSEUM

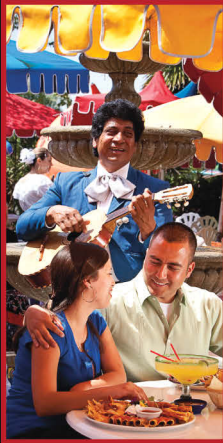
The Whaley House Museum in historic Old Town San Diego stands today as a classic example of mid-19th century Greek Revival architecture. Open to the public since 1960 it is one of southern California's most popular visitor destinations with guests traveling from across the globe to experience this world-renowned museum, which, the Travel Channel calls America's Most Haunted. WhaleyHouse.org



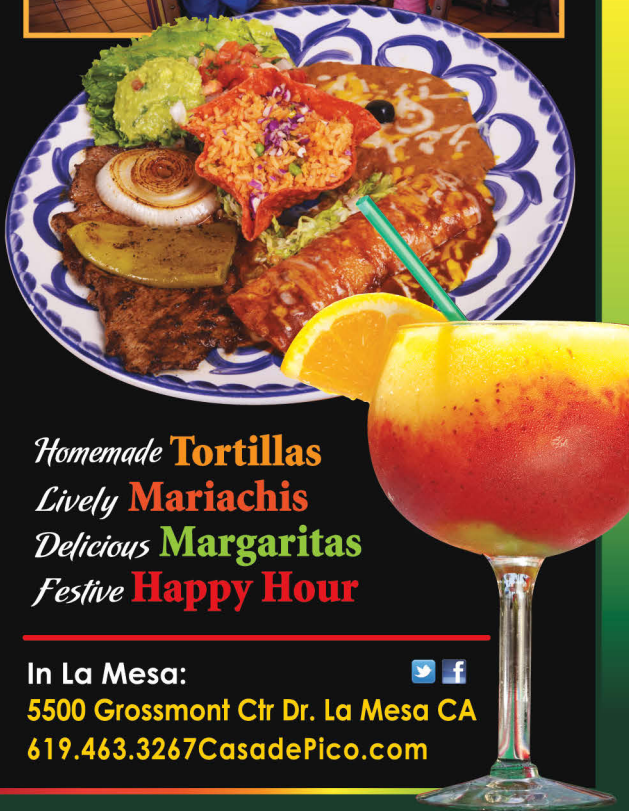
BIRCH AQUARIUM AT SCRIPPS

Birch Aquarium at Scripps is the public exploration center for Scripps Institute of Oceanography at UC San Diego. Perched on a bluff overlooking the Pacific Ocean in beautiful La Jolla, the aquarium features habitats of fish and invertebrates from the cold waters of the Pacific Northwest to the tropical waters of Mexico and beyond. Visitors enjoy one of the best ocean views in San Diego, tide pool touch tanks, and the opportunity to learn about our ocean and what we can do to protect it. aquarium.ucsd.edu

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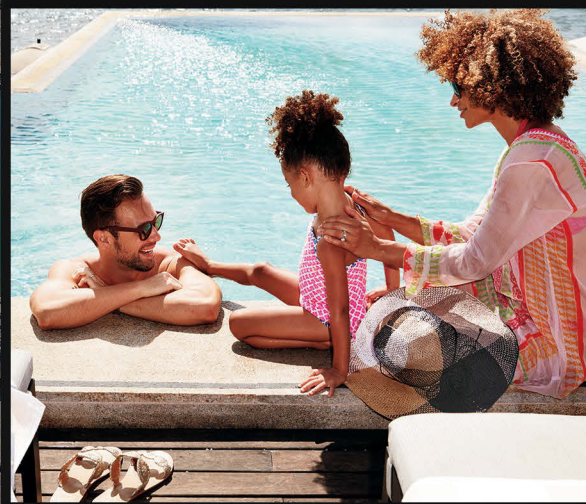
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Little Italy is a popular destination for both the great food and its location near both the coast and downtown. At 48 square blocks, San Diego's Little Italy is the largest in the United States. We recommend Filipi's, which doesn't look like anything special from the outside, but it has been sending diners home stuffed and satisfied for nearly 60 years. Little Italy also boasts two new, hip restaurants. Juniper and Ivy offers "refined American food with left-coast edge," courtesy of chef Richard Blais, a winner of Bravo's "Top Chef All Stars." Craft and Commerce reopened after an extensive remodel, revamping its menu and adding a new executive chef. It's also home to False Idol, a chic new, hidden tiki-themed speakeasy that is known for its mai tais. Taste of Little Italy is scheduled for June 14, when the neighborhood's one-of-a-kind eateries open their doors for food lovers to enjoy a sample of each restaurant's most popular dishes, including appetizers, entrees, desserts and beverages. This is your opportunity to get a taste from every restaurant in Little Italy all in one night.

Coronado Beach is world-renowned and widely considered one of the 10 best beaches in the United States. This 1.5-mile long, white sandy beach is set against the backdrop of the iconic Hotel del Coronado with its peaked red roof. The long sandy beaches literally sparkle, thanks to the mineral mica in its golden sand. The beach also neighbors a Naval base, so many military aircraft will buzz the beachgoers, commanding the attention of all within view of the impressive sight.



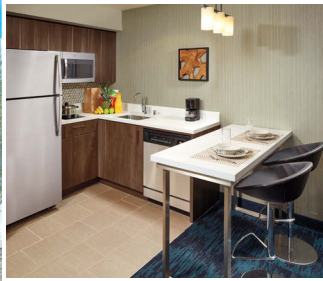
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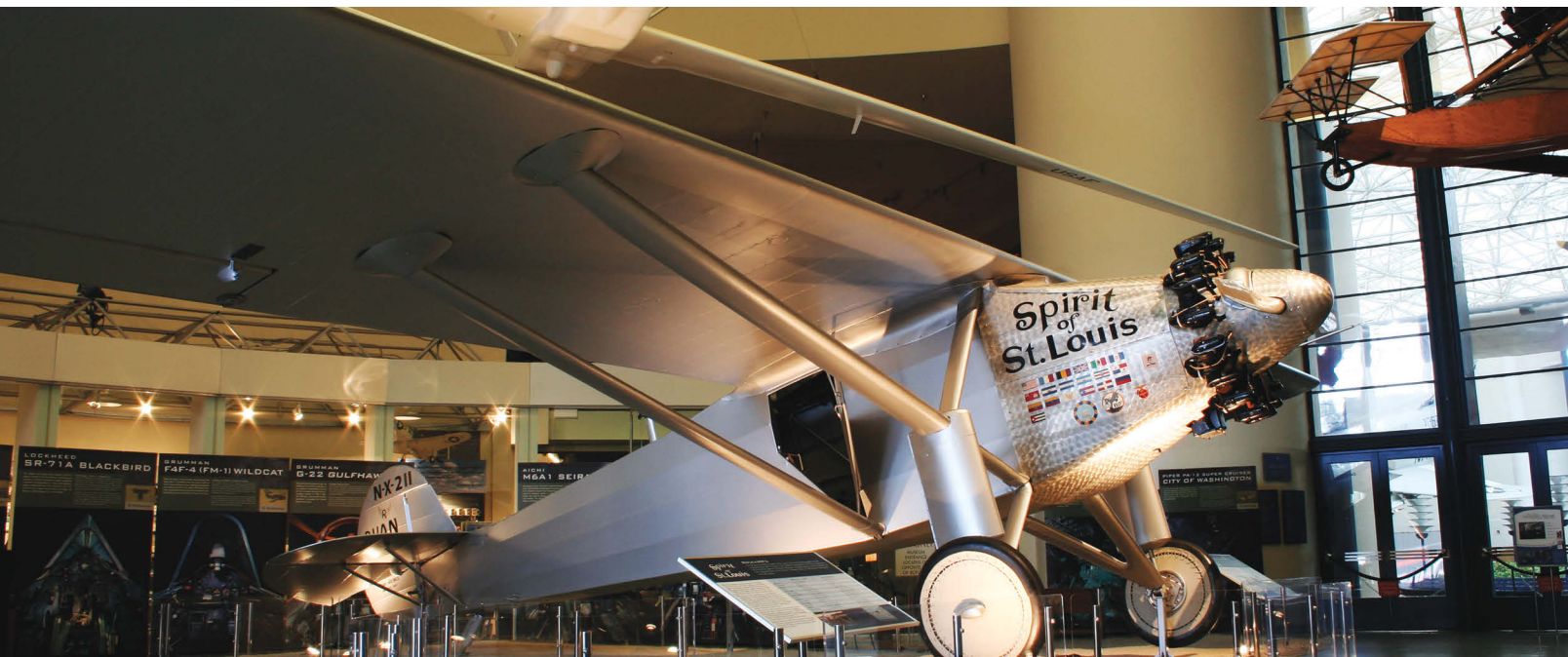
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San Diego Lite

While San Diego offers a ton of fun in the sun, sometimes it is nice to take a break from the busy beaches, crowded restaurants and long lines at the tourist destinations. So, if you'd like to enjoy a scaled back version of San Diego, you can experience what the locals enjoy when they seek to escape the big city hustle and bustle by visiting North County's hidden gem, Solana Beach. This largely undiscovered enclave 20 miles north of San Diego was called the friendliest beach city in Southern California by the L.A. Times. While a much smaller seaside community, Solana Beach offers its own selection of beaches, shopping and dining options.

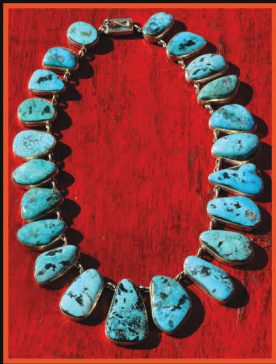
Fletcher Cove is a popular but not overly crowded beach that was carved out of a bluff with hydraulic pressure, as it took one man with a fire hose three months to complete the job. Cedros Street houses more than 120 shops, businesses and restaurants on one long, but walkable, stretch. It also features a design district where you can discover original furniture, home decor and art so you can bring a piece of Southern California home with you. Hikers can get their fix with Annie's Canyon Trail, which offers a moderate and strenuous loop. Search Annie's Canyon Virtual Hike on YouTube for a sneak peek at this new addition that opened last summer.

For dining, visitors can choose from three excellent upscale restaurants which are all located across the street from Del Mar racetrack: The Fish Market, Pamplemousse Grille and Red Tracton's. You'll enjoy a fine meal at any of these places but it won't come cheap. For a more affordable meal, the locals swear by Beach Grass Cafe and Alfonso's, which we're told has the best Mexican food in town. For downtown nightlife, Saddle Bar is usually hopping and is known for its welcoming atmosphere toward visitors, while Culture Brewing Company has a tasting room that is a must do for craft beer aficionados. For more information about Solana Beach, go to visitsolanabeach.com.



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Old Town Fun

A ten-minute drive down the Pacific Highway from Downtown San Diego, Old Town San Diego offers attractions, restaurants, shopping and hotels. Within walking distance there are many great places to shop and dine with unique merchandise and a quaint atmosphere. Bazaar del Mundo, Fiesta de Reyes, the Old Town Market and many boutique shops offer a variety of uncommon gifts.

Wander through lush gardens or browse at one of the many specialty shops for treasures from around the world. Indulge in authentic Mexican food at one of the favorites Casa de Pico, Casa Guadalajara, Casa Sol y Mar and Casa de Bandini. Pause to reflect at the fountains at Fiesta de Reyes and in the Bazaar del Mundo and plan a day or two to visit the dozens of historic sites. Take a tour of a haunted building and spend a day at one of the many museums. Year round, Old Town is the place for food, folklore, and fun.



Looking Ahead

While San Diego is best-known as a popular summer getaway, most of its appeal still applies to its offseason, when many deals can be had. Perhaps the best offering is the annual Kids Free promotion where during the entire month of October, kids eat, stay and play for free throughout San Diego. Take advantage of great deals at more than 100 participating partners to help you get ready for the ultimate family vacation or couple's getaway. The San Diego Museum Council invites kids to explore its more than 40 museums with children ages 12 and under receiving free admission with a paid adult (limit 2). This deal typically includes the San Diego Museum of Art,

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San Diego Archeological Center, San Diego Natural History Museum, and the Women's Museum of California – the only women's history museum in the country. Classic car buffs will love the San Diego Automotive Museum, you can see diverse sea life at the Birch Aquarium at Scripps or Maritime Museum of San Diego. A couple of the other destinations that previously participated in this offer are the San Diego Zoo, SeaWorld, USS Midway and Hornblower Cruises. The 2017 partners will be announced in August. Visit sandiego.org for more information.

Other fall events to note are the world's leading Stadium Racing series, which will return to the Americas for the first time in six years in what promises to be another action-packed season. See the world's greatest sailors do battle in a series of short course races. In November, the thoroughbred horse racing world will descend on Del Mar for the Breeder's Cup. This two-day, \$28 million extravaganza attracts the best horses, trainers and owners from across the globe and has become the unofficial end and culmination of the racing season. The race-track is a mile from the shores of Solana Beach, so if you plan on being in the area for the races on Nov. 3 & 4, you can also enjoy all the things to do we mentioned earlier.

With balmy summer temperatures nearly 30 degrees cooler than the Valley average, San Diego offers a cool respite from our scorching heat. For visitors, there are a range of activities, from amusement parks and sunset cruises along with tons of shopping and dining options, as San Diego has something for everyone.

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