

San Diego



Miles of royal blue ocean meet endless expanses of cerulean sky on the distant horizon. At dusk, the sun slips away, and the environs burst into a vivid display of smoldering pinks and blazing oranges, best witnessed from the city's stunning coastal regions like La Jolla and Mission Bay. Magnificent weather and wide sandy beaches characterize this California city of sun worshippers and surf legends. Spanish influences grace exquisite cuisine, and stamp San Diego's unforgettable art and architecture, such as The California Building, a symbol of the city, which houses The Museum of Man. A landscape of palm trees and Torrey pines provide an alluring backdrop to a quintessential metropolis.

Memorable Experiences

Pacific Sunset

Linger at the far end of Pacific Beach pier for an irresistible view of sunset.

Hikes With a View

Observe rare conifers and enchanting ocean views on a coastal hike. .

Kayak Adventures

Explore hidden inlets of Mission Bay and Fiesta Island by kayak.

A Day at the Races

Spend a summer day at the seaside track of the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club.

Distinctive Details

Historic buildings like the one-room schoolhouse, and 'Little Adobe Chapel,' fill this charming area just north of downtown. Mariachi bands strum through outdoor verandas where margaritas are served in a 19th century Spanish setting.

Starwood Preferred Guest Recommends


Japanese Friendship Garden
Orange koi swim in a placid lily pond beneath the shade of an ivy covered trellis. A sanctuary of serenity in the midst of Balboa Park, this inviting garden offers peaceful strolls through intricately landscaped grounds. Rocks, plants, flowers and water are arranged in perfect harmony.

Destination Information

Country United States
State California
County San Diego
Elevation 42 feet
Population 1,256,951 (2006)
Language English

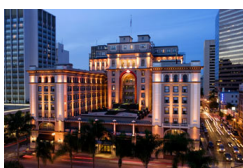
 **Country Code:** 1
Area Code: 619

 **San Diego International Airport (SAN)**

 **Transportation:**
Car, Trolley, Train

 **US Dollar**

Nearby Luxury Collection Hotels and Resorts



The US Grant

326 Broadway
San Diego, California 92101 United States
(619) 232-3121



Culture

An allegiance to arts and the great outdoors makes for a stimulating city stage.

Adventure



A Hike At Cowles Mountain

The city of San Diego stretches out below, a blanket of tiny white houses ensconced in green that merges into the hazy peaks beyond. To the northeast, Cuyamaca Peak rises above the horizon while the sapphire waters of Lake Murray sparkle to the south. From Cowles Mountain's rocky summit, 1925 feet above sea level, the panorama is incomparable. The view is a reward for those who make the mile-and-a-half trek up the dusty trail to San Diego's highest point.

Address: Mission Trails Regional Park, Golfcrest Drive

Family



Museum of Man

A ring of yellow starbursts encircles a vivid dome. Its motif of blue, green, yellow and white tiles continues in a bell tower, which rises 200 feet over Balboa Park, a glistening symbol of the city. The majestic 1915 building features a stunning façade, richly ornamented with statues of Spanish explorers and missionaries. Beyond a pale blue door, visitors encounter California's indigenous people, the Kumeyaay, and learn about how they dressed, what they ate, and where they lived. Maya and Egyptian civilizations are also explored, through extraordinary displays of monuments covered in hieroglyphics, and three thousand year old mummy masks.

Address: 1350 El Prado, Balboa Park

Phone: (619) 239-2001

Local Charms



The Old Globe

As the magic of night descends on San Diego, a ring of white lights illuminates the half-timbered facade of The Old Globe, casting a glow on the purple irises and manicured hedges that surround it. With its circular shape and English village style, the theater resembles Shakespeare's Globe in London. Situated on the exquisite grounds of Balboa Park, The Old Globe presents fifteen exceptional productions every year, including an annual Shakespeare Festival, and a holiday production of Dr. Seuss' *How The Grinch Stole Christmas*.

Address: 1363 Old Globe Way



Marston House

Spacious hallways lead to intimate rooms lined in redwood, where simple wooden furnishings arranged around red brick fireplaces offer a glimpse into early 20th century life. This exquisite example of a home designed in the Craftsman style by the renowned architect Irving Gill, is now a museum filled with fascinating original details, and open to the public for guided tours. Humble evergreens and leafy hedges shade the distinguished three-story residence, while a formal English garden, planted for the Marstons' 50th wedding anniversary in 1927, invites a romantic ramble.

Address: 3525 Seventh Avenue

Phone: (619) 298-3142



Shopping

From fine chocolate to hand blown glass, a sense of artisanship fills these distinct destinations.

Local Specialty



Chuao Chocolatier

The subtle spice of the pastilla chile combines with the bite of cayenne pepper. Together they suffuse an ancient Mayan recipe for hot chocolate, resulting in a stimulating signature flavor, Spicy Maya. Since 2002 the Antonorsi brothers have created bonbons, chocolate bars, pastries, gelato, and hot cocoa in their collection of five boutiques in San Diego County. Combining unusual flavors such as buttercream and crushed peppercorns, strawberry pulp and balsamic vinegar, Chuao Chocolatier infuses a Venezuelan tradition of fine chocolate production with their own creative approach.

Address: 4465 La Jolla Village Drive, University Towne Center
Phone: (858) 546-1463

Neighborhoods

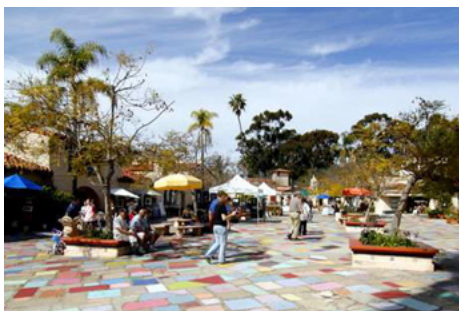


Ocean Beach

Victorian tea sets sit upon embroidered linen, rare books fill wooden cases, and bins of vinyl brim with surf records. Further down the aisle, a 1950s physiological chart hangs behind a shelf of antique beakers in an area devoted to scientific relics. Over one hundred vendors sell their goods at the Newport Avenue Antique Center, one of dozens of antique stores and surf shops that line this fabled stretch. Every Wednesday, live music fills the air as local farmers set out their sunflowers and asparagus for the festive farmer's market.

Address: Newport Avenue, Ocean Beach

Shops & Boutiques



Spanish Village Art Center

A mosaic of chalky pastel hues covers the main courtyard of this exquisite destination, designed after an authentic Spanish village. Low adobe buildings with terra cotta roofs, each decorated in their own distinctive way, house studios and galleries of all types. Past the palm-fringed doorway of one, a woman paints watercolors while a man blows glass beyond the turquoise frame of another. From sterling jewelry to hand painted silk, a variety of finely crafted items and works of art are on view and for sale within these forty-one studios.

Address: 1770 Village Place
Phone: (619) 233-9050



Cuisine

The bounty of the sea mingles with the culinary customs of Mexico for cuisines of tantalizing style.

Acclaimed



Café Chloe

Succulent green apples await within a footed pewter bowl, while diminutive pastries sit protected beneath a gleaming glass dome. From the restaurant's sign, a silhouette portrait encircled by a ring of pearls, to the tailored brown and white awning that shelters guests from the San Diego sun, Café Chloe is awash with emblems of elegance. Classic bistro fare such as moules frites is served alongside modern twists such as macaroni, pancetta & gorgonzola gratin. Each afternoon, Café Chloe offers an "urban tea" where small bites are offered alongside a steaming pot of tea or a chilled glass of prosecco.

Address: 721 Ninth Avenue #1

Phone: (619) 232-3242



Tapenade

A long row of stools upholstered in burgundy leather runs along an unadorned wooden bar. Simple white tablecloths and pale yellow walls provide a fitting backdrop for the colorful, provencal creations of acclaimed chef Jean Michel Diot. Alaskan halibut sits upon a cushion of organic yellow and red vegetables, while the orange tails of shrimp cocktail drape gracefully over the edge of a martini glass. Tapenade's five-course tasting menu with wine pairings provides a singular evening of gourmet satisfaction.

Address: 7612 Fay Avenue, La Jolla

Phone: (858) 551-7500

Local Specialty



El Agave Tequileria

Dark brick walls, enhanced by wooden shelves filled with a stunning array of añejos and reposados tequilas form the dining room. Out on the patio, classic red tiles cover the floor where leafy potted plants and cast-iron chairs sit among vine-covered trellises. Consistently voted "best Mexican restaurant" in San Diego, El Agave Tequileria is graced with a historic Spanish charm. Guests sample the world's most extraordinary tequilas while dining on exquisite dishes such as Mole Poblano Don Julio and filet mignon served on a tortilla and covered in melted Manchega and chile chipotle.

Address: 2304 San Diego Avenue

Phone: (619) 220-0692

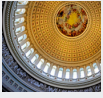


Point Loma Seafoods

Salty sea air drifts over the blue and white-striped umbrella covered patio as diners carry out their fish and chips, fried clams, and oyster plates. Boats bob against their moorings and seagulls fill the sky. Point Loma Seafoods serves the freshest fish, purchased directly from local fishermen. Specials include swordfish in summer and clawless, California spiny lobster in winter. A legendary local destination, Point Loma's authentic clam chowder served in sourdough bread bowls is best enjoyed with regional whites and beer from small American breweries.

Address: 2805 Emerson Street

Phone: (619) 223-1109



Noteworthy

Beauty surrounds this sporting and recreational paradise on the edge of the Pacific.

Day Excursions



Queen Califia's Magical Circle

Armored in a mosaic of shimmering gold, Queen Califia stands proudly atop a thirteen-foot eagle, itself completely covered in hand-cut, mirrored glass. Each piece gleams with rich scarlet, fresh green apple, delicate lavender and bold yellow hues. Her majesty reigns over an enchanting garden of colorful sculptures designed by renowned artist Niki de Saint Phalle. Visitors enter through a maze of black, white, and mirrored tiles that leads to the garden's central courtyard, encircled by a 400-foot undulating snake wall.

Address: Iris Sankey Arboretum, Kit Carson Park, Bear Valley Parkway
Phone: (760) 839-4691

Family

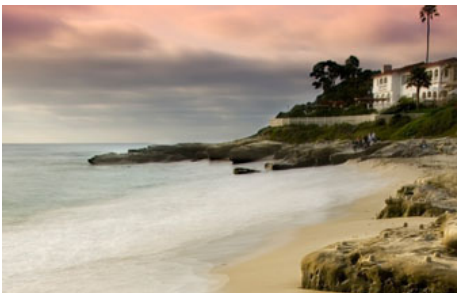


Kilimanjaro Safari Walk

Tawny spots on the giraffe's long, elegant neck blend into the dry grass that grows on the Savanna plain. Meander through the Kilimanjaro Safari Walk and the reproduced environment of East Africa at San Diego's Zoo. For two miles, the winding trail leads visitors on a fascinating backcountry adventure over suspension bridges, past fragrant botanical gardens and rugged terrain where lions and elephants roam. Kilima Point offers an inspiring panorama of a stunning African landscape.

Address: 15500 San Pasqual Valley Road, Escondido
Phone: (760) 747-8702

Highly Recommended

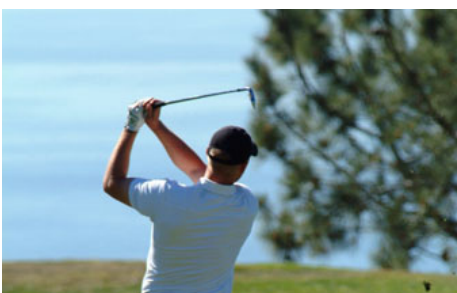


Windansea Beach

The sun shines, the wind blows, and the waves break hard on this fabled stretch of rocky La Jolla coastline. Skillful surfers ride dramatic swells formed by underwater reefs, while sunbathers seek out secluded spots protected by smooth sandstone formations. Once the playground of surf legends, Windansea Beach features a simple surf shack originally built in 1946 by Don Okey, Fred Kenyon, and Woody Ekstrom. Now a historic landmark, the thatch-roofed shelter housed epic luaus and shaded 1960s superstars like Mickey Munoz and Butch Van Artdalen.

Address: 6800 Neptune Place, La Jolla

Recreation



Torrey Pines Golf Course

White-capped waves crash into the sandy shoreline far below the towering bluffs of this exquisite landscape. As the afternoon progresses, the tide calms and the cool Pacific waters sparkle. Two eighteen-hole golf courses, the North Course and the South Course, are comprised of sweeping oceanfront terrain, crowned by fringes of Torrey pines, rare native trees that give the course its name. Traversed by the most feted golfers in the world, Torrey Pines challenges with tight fairways and stunning grounds, most notably, the par-3, hole number three on the South Course, and the North Course's hole number six.

Address: 11480 North Torrey Pines Road, La Jolla
Phone: (858) 452-3226