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ALL YOU NEED TO PLAN YOUR PERFECT TRIP



Michael in Flagstaff, Arizona

# Family Fun in San Diego (Kid Friendly SD)

## San Diego, 4 Days

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# Guide Description



**AUTHOR NOTE:** There isn't a getaway in San Diego that can't be done without the children in tow. With tons of internationally recognized attractions that celebrate the young and young at heart, as well as eateries and playful activities that get the whole family involved, shuffling around the children during a weekend in San Diego might be tiresome but is enjoyable for all.

# Itinerary Overview

things to do  
restaurants  
hotels  
nightlife

## Day 1 - San Diego

**DAY NOTE:** Upon arrival into San Diego, head north to the San Diego Wild Animal Park, where you'll find a full day of activities that are entertaining for adults and children. The kids enjoy the safari rides and animals, while beer stations please the adults. Finish your evening with a burger and shake, the best around, and a comfortable night on Pacific Beach's classic pier resort, the Crystal Pier Hotel.



### San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park

Enjoy an African safari in East County



### Hodad's

The surfer's perfect burger



### Crystal Pier Hotel

Pacific Beach's Pier Hotel

## Day 2 - San Diego

**DAY NOTE:** Wake up early and walk across the street from your hotel to the Kono's Cafe, a simple menu that serves up huge pancakes, breakfast burritos and bacon for cheap. As your kids are likely to wake up early, you'll probably miss the line and after a hearty breakfast you can work your way down the boardwalk. Head into La Jolla for the day, where you can not just enjoy the beach but the seal lions and La Jolla Caves.

Right in the area is the local favorite Extreme Pizza, where you'll find a wide variety of entrees perfect for all members of the group. And for the parents who need to wind down, right next door is the new wine bistro Burgundy, get a glass while the kids are relaxing and everyone will sleep well.



### Kono's Cafe

Breakfast made for the surfer crowd



### Extreme Pizza

Unique toppings, reliable chain



### Crystal Pier Hotel

Pacific Beach's Pier Hotel

## Day 3 - San Diego

**DAY NOTE:** If you're willing to trek up to north county once again, visit Legoland California, where kids and adults ride all day long on some classic contraptions. If not, travel just south of the hotel to SeaWorld San Diego, where dolphins and whales are on display. Get a quick but nutritious lunch at Which Wich, where you'll choose between a plethora of sandwich options.

Return to the hotel and get "dressed up" for a nice dinner at downtown's favorite kids' spot, the Corvette Diner. A themed restaurant with more burgers and fries, it will really get the kids going, before they pass out.



### Which Wich

Which sandWICH will you choose?



### Corvette Diner



### SeaWorld® San Diego

Splash with Shamu and friends



### Crystal Pier Hotel

Pacific Beach's Pier Hotel

## Day 4 - San Diego

**DAY NOTE:** A family fun vacation in San Diego wouldn't be complete without a trip to Petco Park. Nosh on some Friars Franks and sodas while cheering on the local team, the San Diego Padres. Depending on the time of the game, try and catch a trolley ride into the area, making parking less of a hassle - plus it's relatively inexpensive and will get the kids excited and help rock them to sleep on the way back in (there's a stop around every corner, ask your hotel for the closest one). Finish the night (if your stomach can handle it) at Phil's BBQ, that serves up the best grillin' in town and is on your way back to the hotel in sports arena.



### Old Town Trolley

Taking you from point to point



### PETCO Park

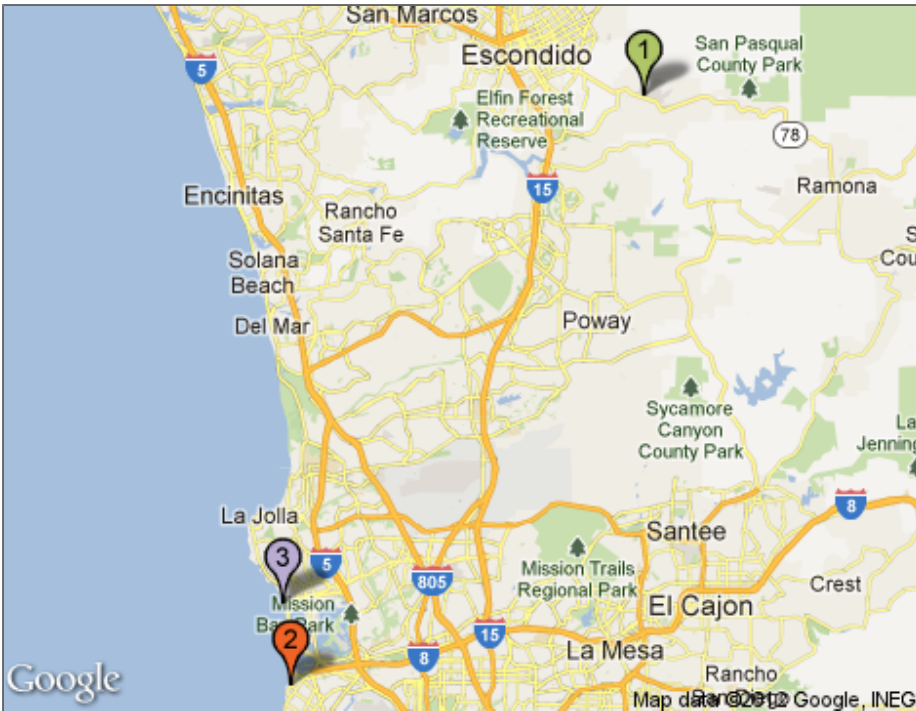
Fantastic baseball stadium



### Phil's BBQ

The best bbq in the area!

# Day 1 - San Diego



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**contact:**  
tel: (760) 747-8702  
<http://www.sandiegozoo.org/park/>

**location:**  
15500 San Pasqual Valley Road  
San Diego California 92092

## 1 San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park

### OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

Make sure to get in a safari ride while there - it's the best attraction in the park!

**DESCRIPTION:** Inspired by the African Serengeti and the endless expanses of the Asian plains, the 1,800-acre San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park offers you an exotic safari adventure unlike any other outside of Africa itself. San Diego Zoo's Wild Animal Park is home to more than 3,500 rare and exotic animals - most of whom roam freely in vast enclosures. Witness a family of giraffe mingle among the gazelles and cranes while rhinos gather at a watering hole. Observe South African cheetahs lounging on a sunny hill or gaze into the eyes of the majestic California condor. Board the the Journey into Africa tour for a 45-minute tour past herds of elephants, zebras, and several endangered species. Venture into the dense forests and grassy savannas at the Heart of Africa, a 32 acre safari trail. Miles of walking trails lead guests to overlooks of lions, tigers and special encounters with exotic creatures. Stroll through Nairobi Village for shopping and dining. © Viator



viator

**contact:**

tel: 1 619 224 4623  
[http://sandiego.citysearch.com/profile/external/35771798/san\\_diego\\_ca/hodads\\_restaurant.html](http://sandiego.citysearch.com/profile/external/35771798/san_diego_ca/hodads_restaurant.html)

**location:**

5010 Newport Avenue  
San Diego CA 92107

**hours:**

10:30a-8:30p M-Su

**2 Hodad's**

**DESCRIPTION:** The word "Hodad" is a slang term used to describe a surfer "wannabe." A hodad may own a surfboard and may even haul that board to the beach, yet never actually surfs. This joint has character, surfing character, with surfing memorabilia covering the walls and a jukebox playing appropriate tunes. Guests experience a surf dream world at this Ocean Beach establishment. For an extra treat, try sitting in the booth constructed from the front of a VW bus. Now THIS is Southern California! © wcities.com



yelp

**contact:**

tel: 800/748-5894  
fax: 858/483-6811  
<http://www.crystalpier.com/>

**location:**

4500 Ocean Blvd  
San Diego CA 92109

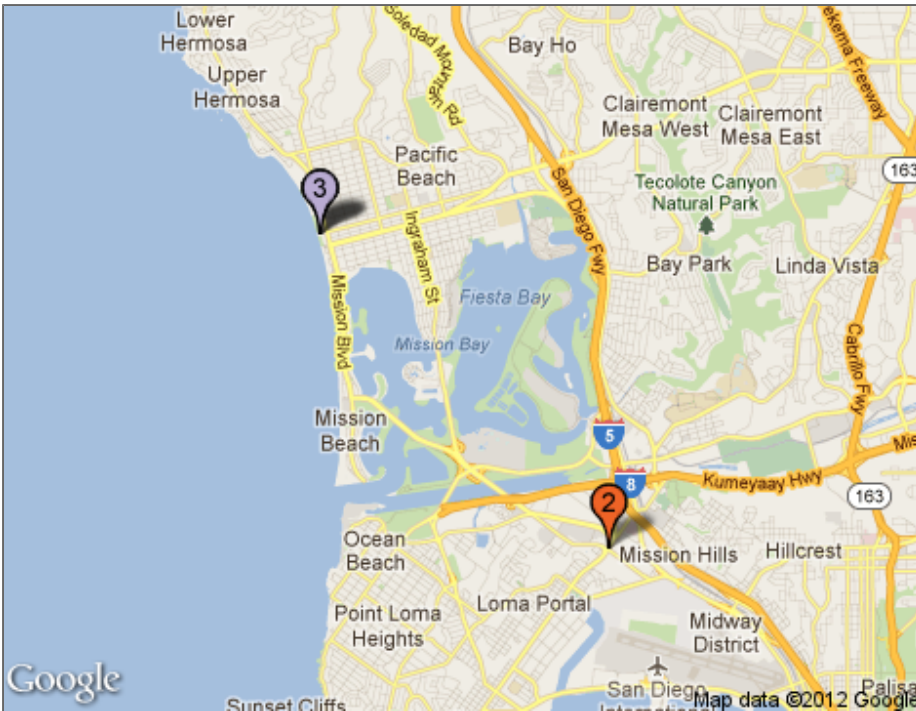
**3 Crystal Pier Hotel**

**DESCRIPTION:** If historic charm is higher on your wish list than hotel-style service, head to this unique cluster of cottages sitting literally over the surf on the vintage Crystal Pier in Pacific Beach. You'll get a separate living room and bedroom, a fully equipped kitchen, and a private patio with breathtaking ocean views -- all within the whitewashed walls of carefully renovated cottages from 1936. Each of the Cape Cod-style cottages has a deck. The more expensive units farthest out have more privacy. Six less expensive units are not actually on the pier, but still offer sunset-facing sea views. Guests drive right out and park beside their cottages, a real boon on crowded weekends. This operation is strictly BYOBT (beach towels), and the office is open only from 8am to 8pm. These accommodations book up fast; reserve for summer and holiday weekends 8 to 11 months in advance, 4 to 6 months in advance for winter. Or with luck, you might be able to nab someone's cancelled reservation. © Frommer's



Photo courtesy of Crystal Pier Hotel

# Day 2 - San Diego



## QUICK NOTE

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### contact:

tel: 1 858 483 1669  
<http://www.roadfood.com/Restaurant/Reviews/434/konos-surf-club-cafe>

### location:

704 Garnet Avenue  
San Diego CA 92109

### hours:

M-F 7a-3p, Sa-Su 7a-4p

## 1 Kono's Cafe

### OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

There's always a huge line during the weekends, but the line goes fast and is worth the wait!

**DESCRIPTION:** Kono's serves up a beach breakfast that's popular with locals and tourists alike, which can lead to an intimidating line- but it moves quickly and there are surf videos to watch and quotes of the week to laugh about. If customers choose to walk outside (burgers and other lunch foods are available, and breakfast is served all day), their meal comes with a view: the ocean and all the characters strolling by. Kono's is as casual as the beach, and plates are big and inexpensive.  
© wcities.com



yelp

**contact:**

[http://sandiego.citysearch.com/profile/external/41264801/san\\_diego\\_ca/extreme\\_pizza.html](http://sandiego.citysearch.com/profile/external/41264801/san_diego_ca/extreme_pizza.html)

**location:**

3555 Rosecrans Blvd  
San Diego CA 92110

**2 Extreme Pizza**

**DESCRIPTION:** Fresh ingredients, the tasty combinations of toppings, and a mouth-watering store-baked crust. As for the innovation side of things, well that's easy. Think about it. What does an office full of freethinking, pizza connoisseur daredevils get you? It gets you mandarin oranges, Canadian bacon, pineapples, mozzarella, and cheddar (Paia Pie). It gets you black beans, ground beef, olives, onions, cilantro, and cheddar (California Cactus). And for the politically savvy pizza-eaters, it gets you homemade hummus in place of tomato sauce, tomatoes, olives, feta, fresh basil, pepperoncinis, and mozzarella (Peace in the Middle East). This is the sort of pizza invented by people who sail from kites, who snowboarded before there were snowboards, and who learned to always color outside the lines.



citysearch

**contact:**

tel: 800/748-5894  
fax: 858/483-6811  
<http://www.crystalpier.com/>

**location:**

4500 Ocean Blvd  
San Diego CA 92109

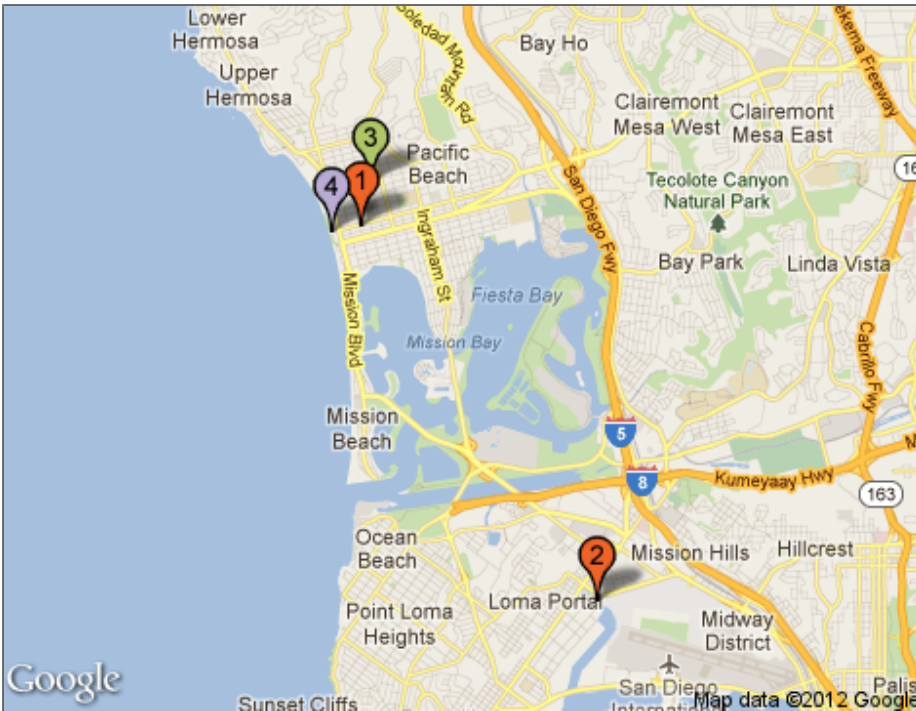
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Photo courtesy of Crystal Pier Hotel

# Day 3 - San Diego



## QUICK NOTE

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Return to the hotel and get "dressed up" for a nice dinner at downtown's favorite kids' spot, the Corvette Diner. A themed restaurant with more burgers and fries, it will really get the kids going, before they pass out.

**contact:**  
tel: (858) 270-9424  
<http://www.whichwich.com/>

**location:**  
1001 Garnet Avenue  
San Diego CA 92109

**hours:**  
Mon-Wed, Sun 9 a.m. - 10 p.m.  
Fri-Sat 9 a.m. - 12 a.m.

## 1 Which Wich

**DESCRIPTION:** With a huge selection of meats, sides, spreads and veggies, you can never go to Which Wich in Pacific Beach and get the same combination. A simple concept with loads of flavor, there is breakfast options, a spam option, turkey, chicken, salami, roast beef and everything in between. All at the same price (with extra for avocado or extra cheese), if you layer the flavors you'll get more punch with each bite. Don't skimp out here, just make sure they dish out the right flavors!  
© NileGuide



yelp

**contact:**

tel: (619) 542-1001  
[http://sandiego.citysearch.com/profile/external/452769/san\\_diego\\_ca/corvette\\_diner.html](http://sandiego.citysearch.com/profile/external/452769/san_diego_ca/corvette_diner.html)

**location:**

2965 Historic Decatur Rd  
San Diego CA 92103-3112

**2 Corvette Diner**

**DESCRIPTION: The Scene**

Black and white checkered floor, chrome accented counters and real soda fountains fill the two-tiered dining room, with a shiny, vintage corvette on display in the center. Waitresses don huge wigs and display impressive pin collections on their aprons, and their colorful personalities are exaggerated during impromptu song-and-dance routines whenever Rock Around The Clock cranks on the juke box.

**The Food**

In classic 1950s diner style, every burger is named for a pretty lady and the milkshake section is the longest on the menu. Chicken fingers and mac 'n cheese please the kiddos, which make up the bulk of the clientele, and parents will delight in a decent salad selection. After dessert, watch out for flying Bazooka bubble gum at your table as the check arrives.



citysearch

**contact:**

tel: (619) 226-3900  
<http://www.seaworld.com/sandiego/>

**location:**

500 SeaWorld Drive  
San Diego California 92109

**3 SeaWorld® San Diego**

**DESCRIPTION:** Spend a full day exploring the awe-inspiring world of marine life at SeaWorld San Diego. Every encounter is a new adventure when you come face to face with the friendly dolphins, magnificent white beluga whales and playful penguins of SeaWorld San Diego. Experience life far under the sea as you feed dolphins, get up close to a polar bear and count the teeth on a shark! Of course, there's also the mythical rush of the Journey To Atlantis water coaster and Shamu - our biggest star both day and night in Believe and Shamu Rocks. See itinerary below for full descriptions of SeaWorld attractions. Special Offer - Book for travel in 2010 and receive unlimited admission for seven (7) consecutive days - BOOK NOW! © Viator



viator

**contact:**

tel: 800/748-5894  
fax: 858/483-6811  
<http://www.crystalpier.com/>

**location:**

4500 Ocean Blvd  
San Diego CA 92109

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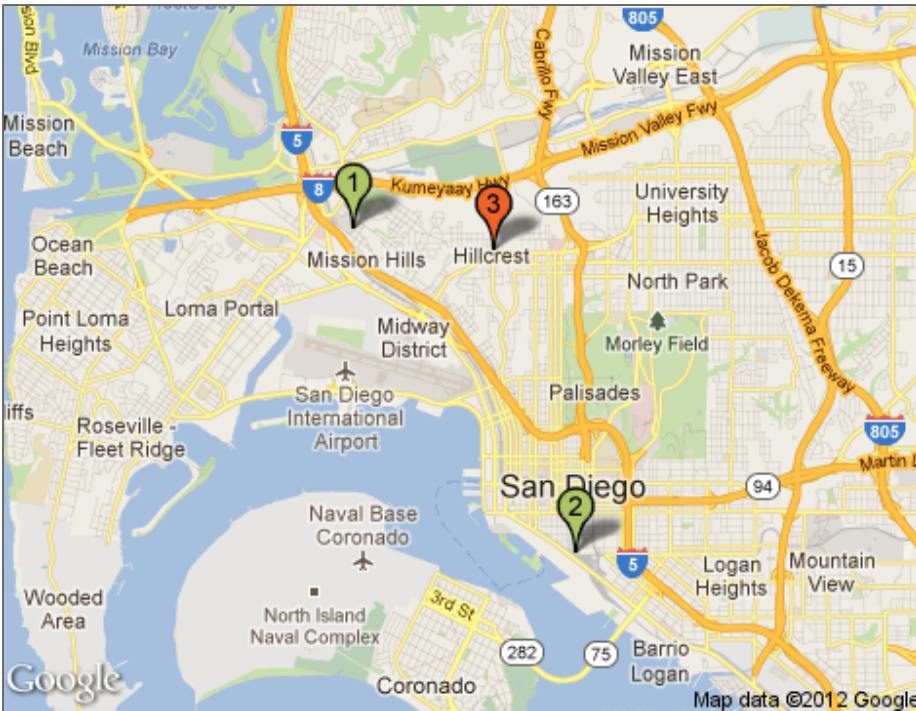
Photo courtesy of Crystal Pier Hotel

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you might be able to nab someone's cancelled reservation. ©  
Frommer's

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# Day 4 - San Diego



## QUICK NOTE

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**contact:**  
tel: +1 619 298 8687  
<http://www.trolleytours.com/>

**location:**  
4010 Twiggs Street  
San Diego CA 92103

## 1 Old Town Trolley

### OUR LOCAL EXPERT SAYS:

During the Padres games these trolley's can get really busy - so make sure to get there early and be aggressive when finding a place to sit!

**DESCRIPTION:** These highly visible green and orange trolleys with well-informed tour guides provide an excellent first glance at the city. For one price, you can tour the city of San Diego with plenty of time to stop and visit attractions along the way. Board or disembark at any of the eight stops, and as long as you reboard at the same stop, you can continue along the full tour. Trolleys embark every 30 minutes for the two-hour tour that stops at such attractions as Horton Plaza, the San Diego Zoo and Balboa Park. © wcities.com



wcities



# San Diego Snapshot

## Local Info

Semi-tropical San Diego, with its mean temperature of 70 degrees, Mediterranean-like white-washed stucco buildings and strong cultural influences from southern neighbor Mexico, is as close to visiting a foreign country as visitors could get and yet, is as American as apple pie.

The heart of this bustling city lies at the foot of the harbor just minutes by car from Lindbergh Field, where most travelers disembark. Spanning from the North County beach areas to the South Bay cities along the Mexican border, San Diego is one of the top ten largest cities in the United States, and while all of these areas fall under the San Diego umbrella, each individual community maintains its own personality, geography and identity. In San Diego's case, the whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts.

## Downtown

Less than three miles from the airport is downtown proper. This thriving commercial area with its active waterfront is a bustling, colorful combination of major hotels, convention facilities, restaurants, nightclubs and shopping venues. Its focal point is Horton Plaza, an architectural masterpiece that holds trendy shops, lively restaurants, a movie theatre and even an ice rink during the holiday season. Horton is ideal for parking and within walking distance to any of the restaurants, shops or clubs just outside its walls.

Just east of Horton Plaza is the Gaslamp District, a 16-block source of civic pride. Once slated for destruction, this area has been reclaimed by the people of San Diego thanks to the 1970s Redevelopment Plan. Where once dilapidated warehouses and run-down Victorian houses stood, and where no one dared to enter after dark, the Gaslamp District has now become the pulse of the city. The area even includes Balboa Theater, a historic venue that until recently was closed for reconstruction and now opens its doors for local plays, ballets and more.

Due west of downtown is the Embarcadero, a fun daytime location where visitors can take in leisurely views of the bay, hop aboard a harbor cruise (including the infamous "booze cruise" of the Bay, better known as the Bahia Belle) and enjoy

seafood at its finest. For shopping, visit Seaport Village, a 14-acre shopping and dining complex designed to emulate early California-style architecture.

## Balboa Park

No visit to San Diego would be complete without a trip to Balboa Park. Home to the world-famous San Diego Zoo, the park is much more than a beautiful place to see exotic animals. Gardens and grounds in Balboa Park were established as a city park for the people in 1868. In preparation for hosting the Panama-California Exposition of 1915, a celebration of the opening of the Panama Canal, founding fathers, architects and master gardeners collaborated to create the fine Spanish Colonial Revival-style buildings and gardens that still grace the grounds today. Additional buildings were raised on the site in the early 1930s, this time incorporating the look and feel of the Mayan civilization and California's early indigenous peoples. Within the confines of the park, visitors can enjoy scores of museums and art galleries including the Museum of Man, San Diego Museum of Art, Timken Museum of Art and Spreckel's Organ Pavilion (for a dollar saving Balboa Park experience, visit the park on the first Tuesday of any month, where admission to the museums are free).

## Old Town

For a taste of what San Diego was like in its earliest years, take in the sights and sounds of this colorful settlement now preserved as a state historic park. Famous as the first European settlement in California, this area is also well known for its glorious year-round gardens, mouth-watering Mexican dishes, lilting Mariachi music and free-flowing margarita; though typically touristy, there are some true tortilla souls that can be found amongst all the trendy trinkets. Be sure to spend a little time browsing through Bazaar del Mundo, truly a marketplace of the world. While it might be typical to dine on Mexican cuisine inspired by the San Diego history, for an extravagant just a block from all the "fiesta" rush, Harney Sushi is a local favorite that flavors fish in unheard of ways.

Within easy walking distance from the center of Old Town is the Presidio, a must-see while in San Diego. This structure, now a historic landmark, is where Junipero

Serra established the first of the Spanish missions in California.

## La Jolla

A short drive up the coast takes visitors to La Jolla, "the jewel" in Spanish. Despite its dense population, the people of this affluent city have somehow managed to maintain its natural beauty. Cliffs along the main streets overlook the beaches and coves along the Pacific Ocean; tropical vegetation creeps and climbs across red-tiled roofs and verandas; and sunsets at La Jolla Shores are simply spectacular. Enjoy the village's serene center, where fish restaurants, chic boutiques and La Jolla locals are in abundance, like George's at the Cove- famous for their modern, American ambiance and cuisine- as well as Warwick's Books, ideal for every school/project need.

Beyond breathtaking oceanfront scenery, which can be enjoyed on bike, by walking or just by driving along La Jolla Boulevard, this seaside community is also home to the Birch Aquarium, which features the largest oceanographic display in the United States. Just up the hill from the town center, the Aquarium is located just across the street from the University of California, San Diego, whose 25,000 university students make up the majority of the area.

## North County

Travel a few miles further north along the coastal drive to reach Del Mar, a smaller beach community that supports itself with farmer's markets, surfers and restaurants. Famous for its racetrack founded by Bing Crosby and fellow Hollywood cronies during the 1940s, this seaside town offers as much to families as it does to racing aficionados. Beaches here are clean and family friendly; boutiques and open-air restaurants line the main street, giving it a Riviera-like quality. The city even boasts the new L'Auberge, which took over the Hollywood favorite resort Stratford Inn and remains a residence for socialites and affluent guests year round in Del Mar's average 70 degree temperature.

Moving inland, the city of Escondido is a quieter, more rural version of San Diego, replete with avocado and livestock ranches, vineyards and granite-strewn hillsides. The community hosts the San Diego Zoo's 2,200-acre Wild Animal Park, an extension of the city's world-famous zoo providing

## San Diego Snapshot continued

visitors a look at animals in the wild. Bates Nut Farm is another rare feature for the area, where visitors from around the county enjoy the biggest pumpkin patch as well as hundreds of vast acres open to the public to enjoy while snacking on delicious nuts.

Just north of this city, visitors can find the renowned Carlsbad Flower Fields and LEGOLAND California, great for those with young children in tow. Carlsbad's beaches also offers big time surfers some of the best waves in the area, where locals are always welcome.

### South Bay

Visitors would be remiss if they never traveled south from the city proper into

the area referred to as the South Bay. The main city in this area is Chula Vista, home to one of San Diego's greatest music and entertainment venues, the Coors Amphitheatre. This entertainment complex provides state-of-the-art acoustics, VIP tables complete with cocktail table service, stadium seating and picnic seating on grassy knolls. Adjacent to the amphitheater, visitors (and especially their children) can cool off in the watery fun at Knott's Soak City U.S.A.

The most renaissance of the south bay cities has become North Park, a relatively untapped area that is now home to some of the area's most unique restaurants,

live music venues, bars/ nightclubs and more. Just a shuffle inland and you'll find a hubbub of activity on 30th Avenue that houses local bars- like the Bar Pink Cocktail Lounge- and the hidden Italian adventure Alexander's on 30th.

While each district of San Diego has an original flair, the various sections blend seamlessly into a thriving, cosmopolitan city. From the North County beaches to the downtown shopping districts, San Diego's first-class attractions consistently please tourists and locals alike.

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