

BEACHES & Beyond

A Southern California paradise home to more water than land, Newport Beach has a stretch of shore for everyone. It's a waterfront playground, with epic swells that attract attention from surfers around the globe and 10 miles of pristine coastline perfect for sunbathing, posh picnics and leisurely strolls on the sand. What's more, water-centric experiences extend well beyond the award-winning beaches. From the West Coast's largest recreational harbor to the biggest remaining estuary in Southern California, every corner of the sun-soaked destination offers a new way to luxuriate by the sea.

BEACHES

Dreamy beach days begin and end in Newport Beach, where miles of surf and sand beckon up and down the coast. Idyllic conditions make the waves near 56th Street perfect for year-round surfing, before the wide open waters give way to Little Corona's rocky reefs and protected coves. No two stretches are exactly alike and, with the exception of private residential islands in the harbor and a few enclaves in Corona del Mar, all of the city's beaches are accessible to the public. While there are dozens of sandy spots to relax and rejuvenate, follow this guide from north to south for the local landmarks all travelers will want to know.



BALBOA PENINSULA

This 3-mile scenic stretch is uniquely positioned with the harbor to the east and some of the destination's most popular beaches to the west. Youthful and fun, the peninsula offers beachgoers activities and amenities ranging from bike rentals to private surf lessons for the whole family. Two piers provide awe-inspiring views, as well as a place to skate, surf, bike and fish before catching a stunning sunset.

"Don't Miss"

Explore Newport Pier, Balboa Pier, waterfront restaurants and biking the boardwalk – a fusion of coastal charm and culinary excellence.



THE WEDGE

Monstrous swells define this famous surf spot at the tip of Balboa Peninsula. Waves as high as 30 feet are as captivating to watch as they are to ride, drawing experienced surfers, bodyboarders and bodysurfers from around the world.

"Don't Miss"

Come during the summer and fall to catch the highest surf.



CORONA del MAR

A family-friendly gem, Corona del Mar State Beach is located just south of the channel connecting Newport Harbor to the ocean. Known as Big Corona, the half-mile, crescent-shaped stretch between rugged cliffs and a rock jetty treats swimmers and sunbathers to sights of sailboats, yachts, sea lions and even dolphins. Nearby, Little Corona is a secluded corner of the coast down a steep, sweeping path. The crystal clear tide pools are a treat for families during the day, but couples will want to pack a picnic to enjoy views of the sun sinking below the horizon.

"Don't Miss"

Take the stairs down to Pirates Cove, a coastal hideaway where scenes from Gilligan's Island were filmed.



CRYSTAL COVE STATE BEACH

Rows of vintage cottages add nostalgic charm to this sliver of coastline where time stands still. Home to Moro, Reef Point, the Historic District and Pelican Point, this dynamic state beach offers a serene escape where visitors can delight in open space and 3.2 miles of coastline. Delight in an underwater world during a tide pool walk, take in breathtaking views of coastal bluffs, or step back to the 1940s with Crystal Cove's raising of the martini flag, a storied tradition that takes place every night as the clock strikes 5 p.m.

"Don't Miss"

Tide pools, dining above the sand at the Beachcomber Cafe, and a 11,140-acre underwater park for snorkelers and scuba divers just off-shore

NEWPORT HARBOR

Newport Beach has a rich nautical heritage, from the glamour of private yacht clubs and world-class sailboat races to a waterfront that was once home to shipbuilders, fishing fleets and canneries. Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall kept a boat berthed at a dock in Newport Harbor, sailing the bay that has since transformed into a luxury oasis with waterfront homes featuring private docks and chef-driven restaurants opened in converted warehouses. Formed in the early 1900s, Newport Harbor is now the largest recreational harbor on the West Coast, brimming with upscale boating experiences, artisanal cuisine and leisurely ways to luxuriate by the sea.



DOCK & DINE:

Soak in the splendor of the sea with a dining experience that honors Newport Beach's nautical founding. Visitors can set sail through the harbor and dock their vessel at one of the many waterfront restaurants serving fresh coastal cuisine. Meals can be savored onboard, or passengers can disembark to dine alfresco on a terrace overlooking the bay.



ON THE WATER:

From sunset cruises, gondola trips and Duffy electric boat rides to kayaks and stand-up paddleboards, there's no better way to experience the beauty and variety of this nautical wonder than on the water. For a uniquely Newport experience, sail into the past with a nostalgic ride on the Balboa Island Ferry, which has transported vehicles and pedestrians between Balboa Island and the peninsula for over 100 years.



WATERFRONT ACCOMMODATIONS:

Balboa Bay Resort is a Forbes four-star resort with luxury amenities including a private marina, relaxing spa treatments and signature dining at A+O Restaurant & Bar.

UPPER NEWPORT BAY NATURE PRESERVE

Known as "the Back Bay" to locals, Upper Newport Bay is one of the largest, most pristine coastal wetlands in Southern California. Spanning 1,000 acres north of the harbor, this natural oasis is a precious natural resource that's home to more than 200 endangered species and 35,000 migratory birds.



BACK BAY LOOP TRAIL:

A 10.5-mile hiking and biking path winds around the ecological reserve, where a world of wildlife awaits, from plants and birds to amphibians, reptiles and even bobcats. Among the scenic points of interest is the Muth Interpretive Center, an engaging stop for young children with interactive displays and self-guided activities.



ON THE WATER:

The calm surface of the Back Bay is a serene setting for luxuriating on the water. Guided kayak tours every weekend depart from Newport Aquatic Center, where visitors can also rent stand-up paddleboards to enjoy up-close views of birds and other wildlife. In the summer, take a moonlight ride with Pirate Coast Paddle to experience the bay under the stars, or soak up the sun while practicing yoga atop a floating board in the Newport Dunes swimming lagoon.



WATERFRONT ACCOMMODATIONS:

Newport Beach Marriott Bayview, Newport Dunes Waterfront Resort & Marina, Hyatt Regency Newport Beach