

LOCALE

An Insider's Neighborhood Guide to San Diego's Top Spots



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San Diego isn't called "America's Finest City" for nothing. Between the city's picturesque coastline, its energetic nightlife, access to dozens of hiking trails, world-renowned zoo and parks and its diverse food scene, what's not to love? Oh, and did I mention the near-perfect summer weather year round?

Soak this all in with your insider's breakdown to the best neighborhood spots in San Diego.

North Park

Inland from the Pacific, North Park is home to the hipster. Visitors can find dozens of small bars and craft breweries, boutiques and coffee shops scattered amongst the suburban neighborhood.

Venture to Communal Coffee for a Lavender Honey Latte or Dark Horse Coffee for a Champ (espresso, honey, cinnamon) before thrifting and antiquing. Looking to catch up on your emails or journal on your vacay? Head to Young Hickory for a caffeine fix – and stay for a craft beer in the afternoon. Happy hour begins at 5 p.m. at Young Hickory where they serve up hot coffee and cold beer.

[Communal Coffee](#)
2335 University Ave

San Diego, CA 92104
619.363.7737

Dark Horse Coffee

3794 30th St
San Diego, CA 92104
619.955.7447

Young Hickory

4096 30th St
San Diego, CA 92104
619.795.6574

Balboa Park

New York's Central Park has nothing on the 1,200-acre Balboa Park. The park, known for its sprawling trails and Spanish-style architecture, is home to 15 museums.

Stop by the park's centrally-located Museum of Man on a Sunday afternoon to avoid road rage in crowded parking lots. The museum, which focuses on anthropology, hosts extended summer hours, and, for the first time in decades, now offers visitors a tour up the scenic, nine-story California Tower. Venture to Panama 66 to refuel with a snack and craft beer and check out the park's hidden sculpture garden between museum visits.

Museum of Man

1350 El Prado Rd
San Diego, CA 92101
619.239.2001

Panama 66

1450 El Prado Rd
San Diego, CA 92101

Point Loma

While Point Loma is one of San Diego's most historic neighborhoods, the new Liberty Public Market is a must-do. The 7-day a week market hosts local craft and food vendors along the harbor for a daily farmer's market experience. Must-visit vendors include Parana Empanadas, Stuffed, Bottlecraft and Wicked Maine Lobster. The market also offers 11 late night eat vendors for night-owl foodies. As poppin' as this place is, it is only the beginning. The Public Market is still expanding, especially with the announcement of their new \$20M project, The Barracks Hotel.

While weekends are great, pop by the market before 5 p.m. during the week to avoid any parking hassles!

Liberty Public Market

2820 Decatur Rd
San Diego, CA 92106
619.487.9346

Encinitas

San Diego staples include California burritos, fresh sushi and acai bowls. Sitting on the beach nomming on a burrito or bowl? That's the California dream – and a reality in Encinitas, the home and origin of San Diego's best fruity smoothie bowls.

Get your superfood bowl on at Sambazon or Swami's before plunging into the Pacific for a nice surf sesh. Word to the wise: always get all the toppings.

Sambazon Acai Café

2031 San Elijo Ave
Encinitas, CA 92007
760.230.2380

Swami's Café

1163 S. Coast Highway 101
Encinitas, CA 92024
760.944.0612

Carlsbad

If your sunburn is cancelling your paddleboarding plans, wander over to the Carlsbad Outlets. Just miles from the water, the Carlsbad Outlets offer 75 plus outlet stores for your shopping pleasure. While the outlets are always featuring discounted merchandise, head to the Outlets' website for daily discounts, coupons and information on special sales.

Carlsbad Outlets

5620 Paseo Del Norte
Carlsbad, CA 92008
760.804.900

La Jolla

La Jolla is well known for its glamorous real estate options and its high-end boutiques and restaurants. With San Diego's plentiful beach options scattered along the coast, La Jolla Cove is a real gem. While the beach is small, the wildlife is plentiful; sea lions and seals bask on the rocks and in the water and Garibaldi fish populate the calm waters amongst swimmers.

If you're a runner, frequent La Jolla Cove for great hill training – with unbeatable views.

La Jolla Cove

100 Coast Blvd
San Diego, CA 92037

Escondido

While San Diego is often noted for their zoo, head 30 minutes north and visit the Safari Park, where visitors feel transported to the African savannah and have multiple safari options (including a hot air balloon).

Visit the park during the week in the fall for a more personal experience with the animals – and bring lots of water; the temperature can increase to 20 degrees warmer than the coast.

San Diego Zoo Safari Park

15500 San Pasqual Valley Rd
Escondido, CA 92027
760.747.8702

Gaslamp Quarter

Downtown's Gaslamp Quarter is ritzy and glamorous – with dozens of food options. Visit on Tuesday evenings, when parking is a flat rate of \$2 – and come with an empty stomach. San Diego favorites? BIGA and Rustic Root.

Complete your downtown visit with a tour of Petco Park, home to the Padres. Eighty-minute trips are offered twice daily around the beautiful stadium, including a visit to the Press Box and Bullpen.

BIGA

950 Sixth Ave
San Diego, CA 92101
619.794.0444

Rustic Root

535 5th Ave
San Diego, CA 92101
619.232.1747

Petco Park

100 Park Blvd
San Diego, CA 92101
619.795.5555

Seaport Village

Just blocks from the busy streets of downtown, a stop to The Headquarters at Seaport makes visitors feel like they're in a small, Spanish beachy village – with upgraded shopping and food options.

Don't let the thought of downtown parking scare you – if you spend \$10 at any shop or restaurant, you get your ticket discounted and/or validated. So, head to Puesto on Taco Tuesday, Salsa Under the Stars' monthly Friday or Flour & Barley to grab a bite before Sunday's live courtyard entertainment.

Puesto

789 W. Harbor Dr
San Diego, CA 92101
619.233.8880

Flour & Barley

789 W. Harbor Dr
San Diego, CA

619.344.2900

The Headquarters at Seaport

789 W. Harbor Dr
San Diego, CA 92101
619.235.4013

Coronado

The quaint beach town with an island feel across the bridge from downtown San Diego is best seen with two wheels. While surrey bikes may look like a fun adventure, opt for a two-wheeler which is much lighter and easier to turn, allowing you to see more of the island. Pedal across Coronado's bike path to visit the scenic Hotel Del (stop by for a quick ice cream treat!), play on the beach and tour the cozy neighborhoods during the week when the town is quieter and less crowded.

Bikes & Beyond

1201 1st Street
Coronado, CA 92118
619.435.7180