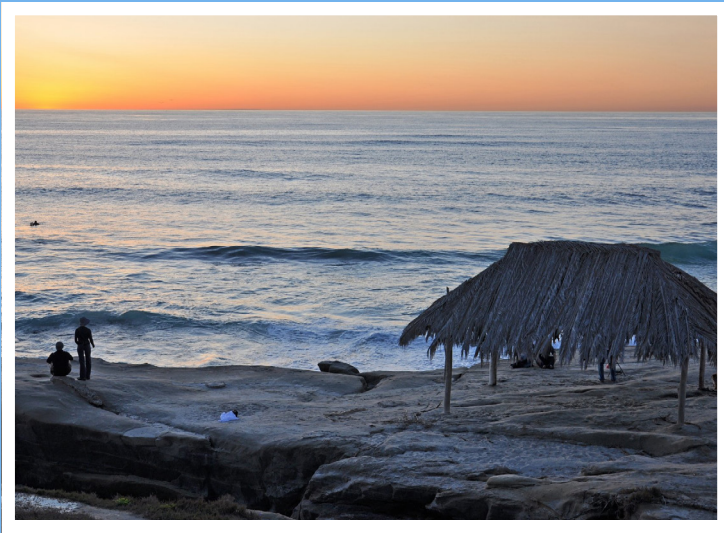


WEEKEND GETAWAY



COURTESY OF LISA FIELD — SANDIEGO.COM

ABOVE: Sunset at Windansea Beach in La Jolla is a magical time.

RIGHT: La Jolla Cove is part of a 6,000-acre ecological reserve north of San Diego that includes underwater caves, canyons, kelp beds and teeming marine life for visitors and residents to enjoy.

BELOW: The sandy beach at La Jolla Shores, which stretches north toward the Scripps Memorial Pier, is popular with sun and sea lovers.



GETTY IMAGES

QUIET SEASON

La Jolla's picturesque beaches make the perfect fall destination



GETTY IMAGES

IF YOU GO

La Jolla Shores Hotel: Rooms start at \$256. Find the hotel at 8110 Camino Del Oro in La Jolla; www.ljshoreshotel.com.

Brick & Bell Cafe: Opens at 5 a.m. weekdays and 6 a.m. weekends at 2216 Avenida De La Playa; 858-333-1673.

Caroline's Seaside Cafe: Open from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. daily at 8610 Charles F. Kennel Way; <https://carolinesseasidecafe.com>.

Cave Store: Open from 9 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 1325 Coast Blvd.; www.cavestore.com.

La Valencia Hotel: Rooms start at \$355. Find the hotel at 1132 Prospect Ave.; www.lavalencia.com.

The Grand Colonial: Rooms start at \$237. Find the hotel at 910 Prospect Ave.; <https://thegrandcolonial.com>

Bird Rock Coffee Roasters: Opens at 6 a.m. daily at 5627 La Jolla Blvd.; <https://birdrockcoffee.com>.

Seaside Surf Cafe: Opens at 7:30 a.m. daily at 5517 La Jolla Blvd., adjacent to the Bird Rock Surf Shop; <https://seaside-smoothie-and-juice-bar.square.site/>.

By **Georganne Brennan** » Correspondent

Just north of San Diego, the sunny beaches of La Jolla — La Jolla Shores, La Jolla Cove and Windansea — are iconic in the water world for kayakers, surfers, paddleboarders the snorkeling contingent. Locals and tourists alike swarm to the sandy stretches and rocky inlets, especially during the summer.

Fall brings the quiet season, when the beaches draw dedicated locals, of course, but far fewer tourists. And the pace is slower, more in tune with the rhythm of the tides and ever-present sound of the ocean's waves rising, breaking and receding.

LA JOLLA » PAGE 8

The List » Esquire's 'Best New Hotels' list includes 9 California gems

When Esquire magazine announced its splashy list of the 41 best new hotels in North America and Europe, we never expected to see California dominating the ranking so thoroughly. The Golden State lays claim to a third of the U.S. hotels on the list — nine out of 31 — with San Diego's eye-popping, luxurious The Lafayette Hotel & Club taking top billing as "Hotel of the Year."

The eclectic list celebrates splashy new hotels that are the very opposite of cookie cutter. You'll find everything from the modernist Sea Ranch Lodge on the rugged Sonoma coast to the Inn at Mattei's Tavern in Santa Barbara wine country and the Dillon Beach Resort with its seaside cottages.

Esquire's editors describe Guerneville's Dawn Ranch as having a "warm, summer-camp feel with an array of cabins, cottages, and glamping tents" — if, that is, your summer camp experience included outdoor soaking tubs, a spa with sound bath and a restaurant with an Argentine and Uruguayan-focused menu.

And then there's the Lodge at Marconi in Tomales Bay, whose checkered past — it was the headquarters of the Synanon cult back in the day — has given way to coastal-chic cottages and Adirondack chair-surrounded fire pits.

Find Esquire's full list, which includes new hotels in the United States, Mexico, Central America and Europe, at www.esquire.com.

Meanwhile, here's a peek at the California contenders.

THE BEST NEW HOTELS IN THE U.S. — CALIFORNIA EDITION

- 1 **The Lafayette**, San Diego
- 2 **Dillon Beach Resort**, Dillon Beach
- 3 **Dawn Ranch**, Guerneville
- 4 **The Inn at Mattei's Tavern**, Los Olivos
- 5 **Pendry Newport Beach**, Newport Beach
- 6 **Lodge at Marconi**, Tomales Bay
- 7 **Drift**, Palm Springs
- 8 **The Line**, San Francisco
- 9 **The Sea Ranch Lodge**, Sea Ranch



KASSIE BORRESON FOR DILLON BEACH RESORT

West Marin's Dillon Beach Resort opened in 2021, offering cozy seaside cabins that are popular with guests for weekend getaways.

TRAVEL TROUBLESHOOTER

Insurance company demands car repair invoice

DEAR TRAVEL TROUBLESHOOTER

» I need your help with an insurance claim. I recently damaged a car I had rented through Enterprise while I was in Germany. In a nutshell, my car insurance company has been requesting a repair invoice from Enterprise for the past two months in order to close the claim and determine how much to pay them.

Enterprise wrote that they will not share additional documentation as requested by my car insurance and instead demands immediate payment.

My insurance company is giving me two months to get those documents from Enterprise. If I don't, the claim will be closed, and the insurance company may not pay for it. Can you help me?

— Michael Roehrich,
Austin, Texas

ANSWER » I normally handle complaints from car rental customers who claim that they've been falsely accused of dam-



Christopher Elliott
Columnist

aging a rental car. It's nice to hear from someone who wants to own up to the damage and is trying to do the right thing.

And when I got your case, I wondered why Enterprise wasn't helping you. After all, isn't it in the company's best interests to get you to file a successful insurance claim? (I'll have the answer in a moment.)

Based on the claim information you sent me, it looks like you totaled your rental car. Enterprise originally wanted to bill you for the full value of the vehicle (\$31,309), but then agreed to settle for about half (\$15,654).

The offer was contingent on your paying quickly. In fact, by the time you reached out to me, Enterprise's offer had expired, and it had been extended for another 10 days. If you didn't pay, you would be liable for the full \$31,309.

Enterprise says it does not have to provide you with a repair invoice under German law. It says that it has the right to choose to receive the amount of money

that would be required to return the car to working order under the law. "This is also a case of restitution in kind, since the value of the money is also intended for the recreation of the hypothetical undamaged state," Enterprise said. In other words, it doesn't have to show your insurance company a repair invoice.

There's another twist: Your car insurance is actually covered under your travel insurance. Car insurance companies are well-versed in damage rules and regulations, but travel insurance companies answer to different underwriters and have different requirements. And I could see that your travel insurance company would not pay up without the necessary documentation.

So, why wouldn't Enterprise send you the invoice quickly? Reading between the lines, it looks as if the company negotiated a settlement with you and expected you to pay the claim out of pocket. Car rental companies often prefer to deal directly with customers because they're less likely to question charges like administrative fees, loss of use and diminu-

tion of value.

Once an insurance company gets involved, there's often a negotiation that results in the car rental company being liable for more damage. Perhaps this is what Enterprise was trying to avoid in this case.

A brief, polite email to one of the Enterprise executives I list on my site might have cleared up the matter for you. Again, you were trying to do the right thing and own up to the damage. I think Enterprise would have appreciated the fact that you were taking responsibility for the car.

I contacted Enterprise on your behalf. Your insurance company contacted you shortly afterward and told you that it agreed to pay \$17,552, which is about half the claim. You are happy with this resolution, and Enterprise has accepted the insurance company's offer.

Christopher Elliott is the founder of Elliott Advocacy. Email him at chris@elliott.org or get help by contacting him at elliottadvocacy.org/help/.

Wish You Were Here



COURTESY OF THE GRAHAM FAMILY

Los Gatos residents Carol and Jim Graham took an 18-day trip from Argentina to Antarctica last February.

ANTARCTICA » In February, Los Gatos residents Carol and Jim Graham took an 18-day trip from Argentina to Antarctica that included landings on the Falkland Islands, South Georgia Island, South Orkney Islands and several stops, Jim says, "on the actual Antarctic continent. It was spectacular and awe inspiring to stand on the only (nearly) unoccupied continent in the world. Transfer to the different landings was via Zodiac, and you quickly realize why waterproof gear is essential! We saw penguin rookeries with thousands of penguins on the shoreline, whales, seals and an Albatross with a 10-foot wingspan!" It's a long haul — 20+ hours of travel time from the Bay Area — but "all in all, it was a once in a lifetime event, an amazing adventure filled with dramatic land vistas, views of rare wildlife, that was absolutely spectacular."

TRAVEL TIPS » "Don't over-

pack. A water-wicking base layer and a light overlay works just fine. But make sure your gloves are waterproof! The cruise line supplies you with boots, pants and gives you a really nice two-layer parka to keep." Temperatures were in the 24 to 33 degree range, Jim says, and travelers should be prepared for heavy seas, especially in the Drake Passage. "Being ocean sailors, this was no issue for us," he says, "but it made for a pretty empty dining hall some days! If you are susceptible to motion sickness, bring some 'seasick patches' for behind the ear."

Join the fun! Send a photo of yourself on your latest adventures — local, domestic or international — to jburrell@bayareanewsgroup.com. Tell us where you are, who everyone is and where they're from, and share a travel tip or two to help fellow readers go there, too.

Events

FROM PAGE 2

MOUNTAIN VIEW MONSTER BASH » 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 26, Rengstorff Park, 201 S. Rengstorff Ave., Mountain View. Don your favorite costume and enjoy a fall festival loaded with a treat trail, spooky games, enchanting performances, a stilt walker, inflatables, a creepy crawly gooey zone, a lil ghouls corral and a bike circus. Free admission. <https://tinyurl.com/MVmonsterbash>

DOWNTOWN MARTINEZ HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR » 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 26, Main Street, Downtown Martinez. Explore creatively themed and decorated car trunks lined up for a spooktacular Trunk-or-Treat experience, plus kid-friendly crafts and games. Free admission. <https://downtownmartinez.org/trick-or-treat>

HISTORY PARK'S HALLOWEEN HAUNT » 2 to 6:30 p.m. Oct. 26, 635 Phelan Ave. San Jose. History Park transforms into a haunted, family-friendly haven this Halloween with crafts, activities, trick-or-treating at historic houses and a spectacular light show. \$0 to \$11 admission. historysanjose.org/

DOWNTOWN SAN MATEO BOOS ON B STREET » 3 to 5 p.m. Oct. 26, B St., Downtown San Mateo. Take your family for a spooktacular stroll down B Street featuring carnival games, a live DJ and trick-or-treating. Free admission. [bit.ly/BoosOnBSt](http://boosonbst.com)

LAFAYETTE'S SPOOKY WALK » Oct. 26-27, Lafayette Community Park, 500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette. Celebrate Halloween with this outdoor haunted house experience, available in "Not Too Scary" and "Very Scary" options. \$3 to \$5. bit.ly/LafayetteSpookyWalk

PACIFIC COMMONS HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR » 4 to 6 p.m. Oct. 30, Pacific Commons Shopping Center, 43440 Boscell Road, Fremont. Enjoy live entertainment, a face painter, a balloon artist, seasonal decor and free goodie bags. Free admission. <https://tinyurl.com/PCspooktacular>

DOWNTOWN PLEASANT HILL HALLOWEEN SPOOKTACULAR » 4 to 6 p.m. Oct. 31, plaza near Jack's Restaurant, Downtown Pleasant Hill. This Spooktacular fest includes face painting and balloon twisting, plus free goodie bags with treats (while supplies last). Free admission. <https://shopdowntownpleasant-hill.com/events/>

— Brittany Delay

La Jolla

FROM PAGE 7

A recent weekend found us at the La Jolla Shores Hotel, the beachside hotel at the southern end of the sandy crescent that curves from Scripps Pier down to the popular Marine Room restaurant. The hotel provides umbrellas, chairs and towels for beachgoing guests. Its restaurant is open all day. And there's a van on tap to take guests anywhere within a five-mile radius between 8 a.m. and 9 p.m. — to La Jolla Cove beach for snorkeling, perhaps, Windansea for surfing and spectating, Scripps Aquarium or nearby eateries.

The eminently walkable, beachy neighborhood of La Jolla Shores is peopled with sun-bronzed sea enthusiasts of all ages. Restaurants, coffee shops, and boutiques share curb space here with surf shops and kayak schools. Start your day with a coffee and pastry — perhaps from the nearby Brick & Bell Cafe — to enjoy from a perch on the sea wall. Then hit the shore for a swim, a stroll or beach read.

The patio at the hotel's The Shores Restaurant is a good lunchtime option for grilled fish tacos, salads and other fare. I thoroughly enjoyed a ceviche tostada, loaded with shellfish, avocado and salsa — and it's hard to say no to a beachside margarita.

Or stroll up the beach to Caroline's Seaside Cafe near UC San Diego's Scripps Pier. Place your order, take a number and settle in at a table overlooking the surfers below. Everything on the menu is good, from the chopped salad (\$15) with quinoa, avocado, arugula and butternut squash to The Cove Burger (\$17.50).

A couple of miles in the other direction is La Jolla Cove, part of the 6,000-acre San Diego-La Jolla Underwater Park ecological reserve, which includes underwater caves, canyons, kelp beds and teeming marine life.

Head for the nearby Cave Store first, where \$10 (\$6 for kids and teens) gets you access to a bootleggers' tunnel that dates back to 1905. Clamber down the 145 steps to Sunny Jim's sea cave, where the ocean churns just below a viewing platform. You'll likely see kayakers just beyond, looking at the cave from the outside in.

Then head back up to browse the store's historic photos and beach-related merchandise, before exploring the cove itself. The beach here is small and sheltered with gentle waves, making it ideal for swimming, snorkeling and scuba. It's a good spot for sunbathing, too, as you sit on the rocks, lulled by the sound of the ocean and the sight of the seals who make this their home.

It's a short walk from there to La Jolla Village, where swanky restaurants, hotels, shops and galleries line the streets. The historic, bougainvillea-draped La Valencia Hotel has a secluded patio for lunch or dinner, as well as guest rooms, suites

INN-ESCAPABLE



HALEY HILL PHOTOGRAPHY FOR THE LAFAYETTE

The Lafayette Hotel evokes the glamorous heyday of midcentury San Diego, when celebrities such as Bob Hope and Marilyn Monroe visited its lounges and bars.

San Diego's over-the-top, swanky Lafayette Hotel

By Jackie Burrell

jburrell@bayareanewsgroup.com

Waltzing up to The Lafayette Hotel & Club, the newest splashy project from San Diego's Consortium Holdings, is like entering a retro, Wes Anderson fever dream. Waltzing is the appropriate word here — although "swanning" works too. It's that kind of place, one that oozes midcentury, Marilyn Monroe-esque glamour, mixed with wit and modern flair.

Celebrities from Bob Hope to Katherine Hepburn flicked here in the hotel's 1940s and '50s heyday. "Tarzan" star and Olympic gold medalist Johnny Weissmuller designed the lounge. But business plummeted when Highway 8 came through, and the hotel eventually went under.

Now, post-renovation, the Lafayette is attracting an entirely new set of fans — San Diegans who come to play, tourists who come to sleep and play, and Esquire magazine travel editors, who named it "Hotel of the Year" when they anointed the best new hotels in North America and Europe this summer.

CH — Consortium Holdings — is the brains behind a slew of wildly creative San Diego eateries, from the tiki-centric False Idol to the stylish Raised by Wolves and seafood-focused Ironside. This is their first hotel project, and they've filled the establishment with all their signature moves, from luxe finishes to animal prints. Bejeweled little lamps glow on every surface. Even the tassels have fringe.

The guest rooms are an over-the-top fantasy, with deep red toile wallpaper — with wild animals and other Lafayette motifs in lieu of the usual shepherdesses — as the backdrop for a velvet-draped, four-poster bed. An enormous antique dresser covered in full-size bottles serves the role of "mini bar."

When we awakened from our Coleridgean dreams of Kubla Khan, we discovered that the pampering even extends to the hotel stationery. There on the desk: hotel letterhead printed with our names.

What makes this such a destina-



KIMBERLY MOTOS PHOTOGRAPHY FOR THE LAFAYETTE

Over-the-top decor is a hallmark at The Lafayette in San Diego's North Park neighborhood.

tion for locals, as well as out-of-towners like us, are the pool — hello, day passes — and this being CH, the restaurants and bars.

Why yes, that is indeed a retro diner just off the lobby, gleaming with chrome and neon and cherry-red banquettes. You can order pancakes, of course, at the Beginner's Diner, and scrambled eggs. But you can also order dishes like a Latkestrami Benedict (\$18), with hollandaise draped over poached eggs, pastrami and latkes.

The dark, atmospheric Quixote boasts a Oaxacan menu, an impressive mezcal and cocktail lineup, tile-topped tables and wood salvaged from an abandoned Mexican church. Sip a Sudden Death (\$16) cocktail, made with sotol, elderflower, amaro and absinthe, as you ponder whether to order the Crab Corn Doughnuts (\$21) topped with caviar or the Chili Garlic Shrimp Tacos (\$18). (Psst, both.)

Then head down to The Gutter, a sleek, clubby bar with a two-lane bowling alley, pool tables and a witty cocktail list — bourbon-based Corner Pocket, anyone? Or head for the Lobby Bar, where throwback cocktails are shaken and stirred under a soaring glass atrium, and a massive Earth is held up by ... is that Atlas? Of course it is.

DETAILS » Rooms start at \$277. 2223 El Cajon Blvd., San Diego; <https://lafayettehotels.com/>

and villas. And the nearby Grande Colonial hotel, built in 1913, is home to chef Jason Knibb's Nine-Ten restaurant, whose coastal-influenced menu has drawn Michelin attention. (And sandy, seawater-dampened visitors will want to get cleaned up before venturing inside. This is a white tablecloth spot.)

Windansea, at the southernmost end of La Jolla, is one of the best-known surf spots along the SoCal coast. With its rocky beach, steep drop-off, large waves and strong currents, it's not recommended for swimmers, but it's a great place to watch accomplished surfers ride the waves.

Grab a drink from one

of the coffee spots, juice bars or cafes in the adjacent Bird Rock neighborhood — a hazelnut latte Sandpiper, perhaps, at Bird Rock Coffee Roasters or a cold-pressed juice at the Seaside Surf Cafe, which is adjacent to the Bird Rock Surf Shop.

Then take that sip down to the beach and enjoy the spectacle.