



## A Complete Travel Guide to Newport Beach, California

### The Best Things to Do in Newport Beach

#### Ride Bikes on the Boardwalk

Our favorite thing to do in Newport Beach is ride bikes along the Newport Beach Boardwalk. You can rent beach cruisers, electric bikes, and surry bikes from several shops in Newport, including [Newport Beach Bike Rentals](#) and [20th Street Beach and Bikes](#).

The Newport Balboa Bike Trail extends about 2.5 miles along the Balboa Peninsula where you can stop and grab a bite to eat at one of the many oceanfront cafes. If you are looking for a longer route, the Huntington Beach-Newport Beach Bike Path follows along the coastline for 10.5 miles with beautiful ocean views.

#### Take the Ferry to Balboa Island

Taking the ferry to Balboa Island is one of the most iconic things to do in Newport Beach. This historic ferry has been shuttling visitors from the Balboa Peninsula to Balboa Island for the past 100 years.

The ride is short and inexpensive and offers a unique perspective of the Newport Harbor. Once you reach Balboa Island, you can explore darling shops, order the famous Balboa Bar from Dad's Donut & Bakery Shop, and admire the homes along the picturesque waterfront.

#### Check out the Balboa Fun Zone

The Balboa Fun Zone is a nostalgic seaside attraction featuring classic arcade games and rides. You can play a game of skeeball, grab a scoop of ice cream, and take a ride on the Ferris Wheel.

The Fun Zone is located by the ferry dock, so it's easy to spend an hour or so playing before hopping on the ferry to Balboa Island. This is one of our favorite [Things to Do in Orange County with Kids](#).

### Hang Out on the Balboa Pier

The Balboa Pier is a great spot to watch the surfers and catch the sunset. If you want to try your luck at fishing, you can rent fishing gear at [Balboa Pier Fish](#) and try hooking mackerel, perch, or even halibut.

Ruby's Diner is found at the end of Balboa Pier and is a fun spot to grab a burger and shake while taking in the ocean views.

### Rent a Duffy Electric Boat

For a unique way to experience Newport Harbor, try renting a [Duffy Boat](#)! These electric boats are easy to operate and can seat up to 12 passengers.

Spend the afternoon taking a relaxing cruise through the harbor admiring the stunning waterfront homes and ocean views. Pack a picnic to enjoy lunch on the water, or check out one of the several boat-in restaurants.

### Take a Celebrity Home Boat Tour

Get a glimpse of the glamorous side of Newport Beach with a [celebrity home boat tour](#). These 45-minute narrated tours take you around the harbor, where you'll see stunning waterfront mansions, many of which are owned by Hollywood stars and other celebrities.

The captain will share interesting stories and give you a glimpse into the history of the homes and the area. This is a popular tour, so book reservations in advance!

### Watch the Sunset at the Corona Del Mar Lookout Point

The Corona Del Mar lookout point is arguably the best place to watch the sunset in Newport Beach. A small grassy park sits high above the bluff overlooking Newport Harbor. It's the perfect place to pack a picnic dinner and watch the sun dip below the horizon.

You'll find a staircase leading from the lookout point down to Pirate's Cove. This picturesque sandy cove is tucked into the coastline and has shallow sea caves to explore. Parking is available at Corona del Mar State Beach where you'll find tide pools, a jetty, and a beach path.

### Go on a Whale Watching Tour

Newport Beach is one of the best places in Southern California for whale watching. There are several tour companies to choose from, but we like this [whale-watching tour](#). The tour is a

little over 2 hours and is reasonably priced.

You'll have a chance to get up close and personal with majestic whales, playful dolphins, and other marine life. Whale-watching tours are offered year-round with different species visible depending on the season. Gray whales can generally be seen January through March, Blue whales from mid-June through mid-September, and Humpback whales usually visit the California coast from June to September.

### Relax at Crystal Cove State Park

Crystal Cove State Park is located a few miles south of Newport Beach and is one of our favorite beaches in SoCal. You'll find miles of sandy beaches, tide pools, historic cottages, and the famous Crystal Cove Shake Shack where you can enjoy a burger with ocean views.

### Rent a Moke Car

One of the best ways to explore Newport Beach is with an electric Moke car! These little eco-friendly cars come in bright colors like Barbie pink and sunflower yellow. They seat 4 people and are so fun to cruise around in. You can even take them on the auto ferry to Balboa Island and cruise around the island!

### Take the Ferry to Catalina Island

Take the 75-minute [ferry ride](#) from Newport Beach Harbor to Catalina Island. The ferry docks at Avalon, a cute little seaside town where you can explore the shops along Crescent Avenue and rent a golf cart to cruise around the island.

Other popular activities at Catalina Island include kayak tours, snorkeling, jet skiing, parasailing, ziplining, jeep tours and dolphin tours. If you feel like relaxing, Descanso Beach Club is a beautiful private beach with cabanas and beachfront dining. For more information and recommendations, see our guide [How to Spend One Day on Catalina Island](#).

## The Best Places to Eat in Newport Beach

### 22nd Street Pizza

22nd Street Pizza is our favorite pizza shop on the peninsula. The small open-air restaurant is just steps from the beach and serves hand-tossed pizza, juicy wings, hearty calzones, and fresh salads. We also love the garlic cheese bread!

### Dory Deli

This ocean-front deli is a favorite spot on the boardwalk. They are known for their bomb breakfast burritos, fresh sandwiches, salads, poke bowls, burgers, fish & chips, and more. They are named for the historic Dory Fleet Fish Market that dates back to 1891.

### Sanchos Tacos

Sanchos Tacos is a favorite taco shop among locals and tourists alike. There is usually a line wrapped around the building, but it's worth the wait for their mouthwatering tacos and burritos. This is always our first stop when we're in Newport Beach!

### Handel's Homemade Ice Cream

Nothing says summer like eating homemade ice cream on the beach at sunset! And the best place to get ice cream in Newport Beach is at Handel's on the boardwalk. You don't have to take my word for it, National Geographic even named Handel's the #1 Best Ice Cream in the World!

They have created over 100 different flavor creations using fresh high quality ingredients. The single-scoop actually comes piled high with 3 scoops of ice-cream, so you can easily share!

### Milk & Cookies

Milk & Cookies is another favorite spot to satisfy your sweet tooth. You can choose from a variety of different homemade cookies warm out of the oven and top it with a scoop of ice cream.

The melted ice cream and gooey cookie is the perfect combination that will have your eyes rolling into the back of your head!

A few more of the best places to eat in Newport Beach:

- **Stag Bar & Kitchen:** The Yelp reviews at this trendy bar and restaurant speak for themselves! Must be 21 or older to dine here.
- **Shorebird:** The dishes at this favorite Newport Channel restaurant are made from scratch daily with locally sourced ingredients. Their specialty is fresh seafood and wood-fired steaks.
- **Saigon Beach Restaurant:** This casual Vietnamese cafe gets rave reviews for its flavorful dishes like the Pork Belly Bao Sliders, Banh Mi Grilled Pork Sandwich, Nam Nam Wings, Shrimp Spring Rolls, and Pho Baguette Dip.
- **Seaside Donuts:** A beloved donut shop right on the boardwalk. The donuts are made fresh daily with dozens of flavors to choose from.
- **The Cannery:** A historic waterfront restaurant offering fresh seafood and stunning harbor views.

- **Bear Flag Fish Co.:** A local favorite known for its fresh fish tacos and poke bowls.
- **Nobu Newport Beach:** A high-end dining experience featuring Japanese-Peruvian cuisine with a focus on sushi and seafood.
- **Harborside Restaurant:** Located in the historic Balboa Pavilion, this restaurant offers classic American and seafood dishes.

## The Best Places to Stay in Newport Beach

### Vacation Rental

We have found that [vacation rentals](#) will give you the best bang for your buck! There are a lot of listings available which help to keep the rates reasonable.

It is easy to find a rental right on the boardwalk, or within a block or two of the beach. We usually like to stay around 31st Street Beach, but anywhere along the peninsula is a great location with easy access to the beach and restaurants.

Try to find one with [private parking](#), it will save you time and money since finding parking at Newport Beach can be a nightmare! I would also look for a rental with air conditioning as that is not always standard.

A few more of the best places to stay in Newport Beach:

- [VEA Marriott Newport Beach](#): Watch the sunset from the beautiful pool overlooking the ocean at this stunning and sophisticated resort.
- [Newport Beach Hotel](#): This stylish boutique hotel is right on the boardwalk and only steps from the sand!
- [Balboa Bay Resort](#): A luxurious waterfront resort offering elegant rooms, a full-service spa, and stunning views of Newport Harbor.
- [The Resort at Pelican Hill](#): A five-star resort located nearby at Crystal Cove. It features spacious villas, a world-class golf course, and breathtaking coastal views.
- [Lido House Autograph Hotel](#): A chic boutique hotel located near the Lido Marina Village, offering stylish accommodations and a rooftop bar.

I hope this guide will help you discover the best things to do in Newport Beach, enjoy your trip!