

# SAN DIEGO

## WHAT STORY DID THE SEA LION TELL?

### OVER THE YEARS

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We have been visiting San Diego since 2004 for conferences and horse shows. San Diego has nice weather with temperatures in 70s during the daytime and cool in the morning and evening. For your trip, bring a sweater or sweatshirt along with your swimwear. If you are used to going into the water at the southeastern beaches, be ready to be shocked at how cold the water is. Californians like to point out how warm the water is in San Diego, but only if you compare it to northern California.

### OLD TOWN

Old Town San Diego is the first Spanish town in California. Father Junipero Serra built the first of 21 California missions here on July 16, 1769. (The last one was built in Sanoma on July 4, 1823.)

The Spanish, led by Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, were the first European explorers to land at the southern tip of Point Loma peninsula on September 28, 1542. On July 29, 1846, the American flag was raised in Old Town, after 52 years as



part of New Spain (1769 – 1821) and 25 years as part of the Independent Mexican Republic (1821-1846).

Old Town is easy to walk. it has shops, restaurants, and historical buildings. I walked through Old Town soaking in the history. The *Historic State Park San Diego* contains the first school in San Diego, shops, and historic buildings. La Casa de Estudillo, which was San Diego’s cultural and religious center until 1887, is also located in the State Park. Pictures on the right and below.



Entrance to Casa de Estudillo



Tree on side of Casa

A site that I didn’t have time to visit but is worth visiting is the Whaley Haunted House, as it is dubbed as America’s most haunted house.



Whaley House



Sign at Whaley House

I ate at [Case de Freds](#) restaurant in Old Town. As I was eating, I looked out the window and observed people walking up to a lady and buying something from her. After they would leave, she would roll tortilla dough out and make another batch of fresh tortillas. More pedestrians would stop and buy her wares, and she would start all over again. I found out that selling fresh tortillas is a common practice for Mexican restaurants in Old Town.



Tortilla making

Old Town likes to point out that this is the site where “California Began.”

### **STAR OF INDIA WHARF**

The wharf is home to the [Maritime Museum](#). I have visited the museum, but unfortunately, I didn't take lot of pictures. The museum is worth a visit, and I recommend setting aside a couple of hours. There are lot of ships in their collections. There is also a submarine in their collection; I like going inside the submarine and marveling how limited the space is in the submarine. One of the ships docked at the wharf is Star of India; it is the oldest iron-hulled merchant ship still sailing. Built in 1863 in Isle of Man, it was initially

named *Euterpe* from 1863 to 1906. The ship has been known as *Star of India* since 1906.



Star of India Plaque



Star of India at the Wharf



Star of India at the Wharf

The museum also has a replica of a San Salvador galleon from Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo's expedition that landed in Point Loma.



Replica of San Salvador, Cabrillo' flagship (2nd ship in picture)

### **MILITARY PRESENCE & USS MIDWAY MUSEUM**

San Diegans are very proud about their military heritage. There are four naval bases, a marine base, and a marine recruitment center. Besides the active bases, Midway Museum is also in San Diego. The museum is next to the Star of India Wharf. The Midway Museum is another favorite of mine to visit. The history of the aircraft is impressive, and the displays are very well done. I would recommend setting aside a couple of hours to see the museum. When you're finished visiting the Museum, make a right as you exit facing North Harbor Street and go down the alley (Tuna Harbor) to eat at [Fish Market Restaurant](#). Before you eat, I highly recommend checking out two of the features in this area. One of the most photographed sites is known as the "Unconditional Surrender Statute," also called the Kissing Statue. It's a World War II sailor



kissing a nurse. Adjacent to the Kissing Statute is the Bob Hope



Memorial that acknowledges Mr. Hope's contributions in entertaining and keeping the morale of our troops high. There are statues of service

men from every conflict listing to Mr. Hope's performance. (Source of statute pictures is roadsideamerica.com.)



USS Midway Museum



USS Midway Museum



Inside the USS Midway Museum

### **SEAPORT VILLAGE, CONVENTION CENTER, GASLAMP QUARTER**

**Seaport Village.** This area has hotels, a marina, shops, and restaurants. Also available is a seal tour in the bay. If you decide to take the seal tour, bring a jacket, sweater, or sweatshirt since you will be sailing in the bay, and it gets windy and cool. Two of the restaurants at which we have eaten are [Sally's Fish House & Bar](#) and [Edgewater Bar & Grill](#). I like walking around the marina, as there is a lot to see, and it is a very relaxing walk.



View from the Marina



View from the Marina



View from E. Harbor Street



[Kansas City BBQ](#) also home to filming location for Top Gun

**Convention Center** –We have attended conferences at the San Diego Convention Center as well as the hotels nearby. The area around the convention center can be busy. We recommend a visit to the convention center area, the marina facing the bay, and the Gaslamp Quarter across the street.



Front Entrance to San Diego Convention Center



San Diego Convention Center

### **Gaslamp Quarter**

Gaslight Quarter is across from the convention center and adjacent to Petco Park, home of San Diego Padres. Some interesting facts of Gaslamp: The area has had different nicknames over time such as “New Town” and “Stingaree District.” This district had been home to gambling halls, adult entertainment and once was called “Sailor Entertainment District.” Wyatt Earp operated a gambling hall in the old Stingaree District in the late 1880’s. Earp lived for a while at the Horton Grand Hotel, the oldest hotel in San Diego, located on 4<sup>th</sup> and



Island Avenues. The building has a Victorian architecture and worth visiting. The current Gaslamp District has lot of restaurants, bars, and hotels. We thought the prices for eating out at Gaslamp are high; check the prices on the menus outside before committing. There are many historic buildings in Gaslamp. (For our East Coast friends, we know “historic” is all relative; historic in California is anything from the late 1800s and early 1900s.



Entrance Sign to Gaslamp Quarter

## PADRES GAME

We attended a baseball game at Petco Park. It was lot of fun. The San Diego Padres beat the San Francisco Giants that evening.



Petco sign on the ballpark



Ballpark view from East Harbor Drive



Views of the ball game and stadium



Ballpark View

The Padres originally were called the Hollywood Stars when the team was based in Los Angeles. When the team moved to San Diego in 1935, the team's name was changed to the Padres. The Padres used to play at **Lane Field** from 1936 - 1957 as member of the Pacific Coast League. The old ballpark was torn down in 1957, and the grounds have since been redeveloped. To honor the old baseball stadium, the baseball diamond has been saved and is located at its original location. There are plaques describing the history and honoring Ted Williams, who played for the Padres. I have included pictures of the plaques; they need maintenance. As I was taking pictures, a gentlemen came by for maintenance of the plaques. An interesting character, he told me that the longest home run in baseball history was hit here. The ball cleared the stands and

landed in a railroad car bound for Los Angeles. (The area behind right field used to be a train depot, and active train tracks remain in the area.) The Los Angeles maintenance crew later found the baseball as they were maintaining the railcar. I wanted to ask him if he was a fisherman ... but he was helping in maintaining history, so I said, "wow, I didn't know that! and thanked him for the trivia. The smile on his face was priceless.



Plaque (needs cleaning)



View from Home plate



View from the pitcher's mound



Picture of Lane Field

Union Station (pictured below), also called Santa Fe Depot, is a couple of blocks northeast of USS Midway Museum on W. Broadway and a block east from the old site of Lane Field.



Santa Fe Depot

## CORONADO

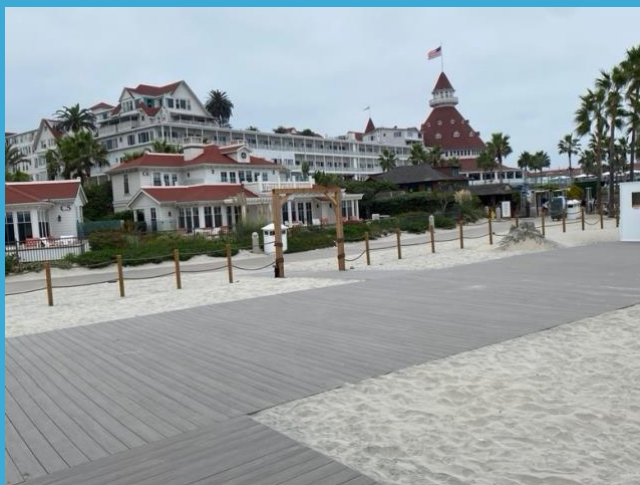
Coronado is a beach town located on Coronado Island west of San Diego. Coronado can be accessed via the Coronado Bridge. The main road on the Island is Orange Avenue (picture to the right), which has restaurants, shops, and hotels. Coronado is also home to the Hotel Del Coronado, an iconic hotel. I spent some time strolling the grounds of the Del, the restaurants, shops, and the beach around it. I really like the Del.



Entrance to the Del



View of Del from Orange Avenue



Del from the Beach



View of the Beach



Entrance to the Del

## DEL MAR

Del Mar is located about 20 miles north of downtown San Diego off I-5. Del Mar is home to the Del Mar Racetrack, beaches, horse shows, and of course shopping and restaurants. We enjoy visiting Del Mar, and one of our all-time favorite restaurants here is [Jake's](#). If you get a chance to dine, ask for the tables closest to the retractable windows; the beach is practically a couple of yards away, and the ocean views are great. On one of my visits, Priscilla Presley was dining here. Other area restaurants we like include [Pacifica Del](#)



Mar (great ocean views) and Brigantine (great views of the Del Mar racetrack). Ask the host or hostess if you can have a table that has a view of the racetrack.



Del Mar Racetrack



Thoroughbred racing at Del Mar



View from a table at Jake's



Del Mar Beach



Del Mar Train Station

Solana Beach is north of Del Mar, and we like getting a bite to eat at Tidewater Tavern, which is a sports pub. The atmosphere is very laid back.

## TORREY PINES

Torrey Pines is south of Del Mar. The golf course is beautiful, and views of the ocean are spectacular. This is a public golf course, and if you like to golf, this is a great golf course. The PGA Farmers Insurance Open is held at this course every January, and the U.S. Open was played here in 2021. Their golf pro shop is a good place to shop for clothing.



Fairway



Golf Course Information

## LA JOLLA

La Jolla is about 12 miles north of downtown San Diego and is one of the most visited beach towns in the area. The restaurants are good, and, of course, the shopping is equally good. Parking by the beach is almost impossible in the summer months, but there is public parking, just be ready to walk. For the adventurous types, you can visit the Seven Sea Caves and you can see sea lions and seals. Please don't chase them – this is their home. We saw some youngsters chasing them with their parents taking pictures of the chase. Thankfully, some good Samaritans took care of the parents. When you visit give yourself couple of hours to roam the area, go shopping, and get a meal. We would highly recommend getting a reservation in a restaurant. Most of the restaurants have great views of the water. We like [Eddie V's Prime Seafood](#). Ask for



rooftop seating, the views are spectacular, and a bonus is you can see the sea lions and seals.



View from Point La Jolla



What story is the Sea Lion telling?

## LITTLE ITALY, BALBOA PARK, AND BANKERS HILL

**Little Italy** is an absolute must stop if you are visiting San Diego. Little Italy has a lot of good restaurants. A restaurant that I went to is [Fillipi's Pizza Grotto](#). I like their pizza, and they serve wine in the traditional stemless glasses as they do in Italy. I had to purchase two stemless glasses (Picture on right). There are Piazzas in Little Italy that tell the story of the inhabitants of Little Italy. A recent addition is Piazza della Famiglia, which is a mixed used commercial development. I liked walking through it and would like to come back to Piazza and have lunch or dinner here with a view of the bay.



I have attended several official functions in **Balboa Park** and enjoyed the setting that the park offers for these functions. I have not had the opportunity to explore the Park. It is on our list to spend time in the park to explore the park, spend time in the gardens, museums, and Sparkles Organ Pavilion.

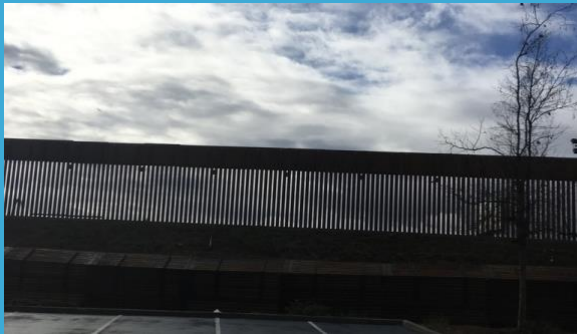
**Bankers Hill** has a great view of the bay.

This was a preferred spot for the wealthy in San Diego to live. They picked this location for the view of the bay and the cool breezes that come off the bay. Some of the old Victorian homes are still standing in Bankers Hill. Now, as a bonus, you get a view of the airport and can watch planes take off and land.



## SAN YSIDRO INTERNATIONAL BORDER

San Ysidro International Border Crossing is about 17 miles south of downtown San Diego on I-5. San Ysidro border crossing is the fourth busiest land entry point in the world. On the other side of the border is Tijuana, Mexico. The picture to the right is downtown San Ysidro. The border has a Premium Outlet Mall for people on both sides of the border to shop. Here are couple of pictures from the border.



Border wall at Las Americas Premium Outlets



Bridge at San Ysidro

## FINAL THOUGHTS

We always visit San Diego for work or horse shows. Though we have done a lot in the San Diego area, we haven't enjoyed a specific area

for a long time. We want to come back and spend some more time at the different places that San Diego offers. San Diego always seems to be under construction, tearing buildings down and replacing them with new development. I wonder what new things we will see on our next visit.

