



TRAVEL

# San Diego: California's birthplace

Die Metropole unweit der Grenze zu Mexiko nimmt den Mund nicht ganz so voll wie Los Angeles oder San Francisco. ELIZABETH ZACHS Reise in den südlichen Zipfel Kaliforniens beweist jedoch, dass diese Bescheidenheit vollkommen fehl am Platz ist.

ADVANCED US AUDIO ÜBUNGSHEFT



San Diego at sunrise, seen from  
Coronado, San Diego Bay



California has just about everything to offer visitors: a beautiful coastline, the Sierra Nevada Mountains, the Redwoods, nine national parks, nearly 300 state parks, skiing, hiking, the cosmopolitan flair of Los Angeles (L.A.), San Francisco, Disneyland, and Hollywood.

For many years, the city of San Diego didn't make it on to my list of places to visit. I grew up in Sacramento, the state capital, and we had relatives in San Diego. But I used to dread the drive to see them: It was unbearably long, going right across the state. We had to cross the dusty, flat Central Valley and then go through the Tehachapi Mountains. The mountains were frequently shrouded in fog, and we often got lost on the freeways.

### The biotech hub

Since those days, San Diego has become California's second-largest city after L.A., and is the eighth-largest in the U.S. It's an economic juggernaut, often performing better than other cities around the country in terms of wealth and advancement. It's home to the largest naval base on the West Coast – and also to the Pacific Fleet Surface Navy, with 56 U.S. Navy ships and some 50,000 military personnel. Many war veterans, civilians, and tourists come to San Diego harbor to visit the aircraft carrier USS Midway. It was the largest ship in the world when it set sail in 1945 – and became the longest-serving. Back then, it was even too big to pass through the Panama Canal.

Along with the defense industry, scientific research took off in San Diego in the 1950s. The Salk Institute for Biological Studies, Scripps Research, and the University of California at San Diego (UCSD) all recruited biologists and other experts in biomedical research and development. Patent attorneys, venture capitalists, PR companies – everything grew, alongside biotech.

It was hard to turn down the city's warm and sunny climate: The sun shines here on average more than 260 days per year. As more scientists became involved in the emerging technology and opportunities, San Diego gradually became known as "Biotech Beach." Today, it is among the world's leading biotech hubs, with more than 1,000 companies and research labs located here. Since 2000, the industry has grown five times faster than the local economy, producing more than \$130 billion in economic value and creating nearly 1.5 million jobs.

And because San Diego has the highest percentage of the population aged 18 to 34, the city is also known as the "Millennial Capital" of the United States.

### Parks and art

Last summer, my German husband and I spent some time in San Diego, in part to visit family, but also to explore. He especially loves the Mediterranean climate. On a previous visit, we had spent a few hours in the Japanese Friendship Garden in Balboa Park, and we wanted to see more of this



Now a museum, the USS Midway was once an aircraft carrier – and the largest ship in the world when it set sail in 1945

**dread sth.** [dred]  
- etw. fürchten, scheuen

**shroud sth.**  
- etw. verhüllen

**freeway** (N. Am.)  
- (gebührenfreie) Autobahn

**juggernaut** ['dʒʌgə'nɔ:t]  
- hier: Riese, Schwergewicht

**naval base**  
- Marinestützpunkt

**Pacific Fleet Surface Navy**  
- Pazifikflotte der Vereinigten Staaten

**recruit sb.** [ri'kru:t]  
- jmdn. anwerben, einstellen

**venture capitalist** ['ventʃə'kæpɪtəlɪst]  
- Risikokapitalanleger(in)

**hub**  
- Zentrum

The Casa del Prado buildings in Balboa Park: historic reconstructions of buildings from the 1915 Panama-California Exposition



cultural treasure. With nearly 20 gardens and more than 30 kilometers of hiking trails, as well as several museums and the world-famous San Diego Zoo, Balboa Park attracts many visitors to the city.

Balboa Park is the result of significant expositions: the 1915–16 Panama-California Exposition, which commemorated the Panama Canal's opening and San Diego as a seaport, and the 1935–36 California Pacific International Exposition, which promoted the local economy during the Depression. Both events were designed to reflect regional history, with a Spanish Renaissance style to evoke the era of conquest.

On this visit, my cousin John, a long-time San Diego resident, joined us at the El Prado promenade, which bisects the park. We admired the striking architecture before heading north to get a perfect view along the Lily Pond, where another visitor sat behind his easel, painting reflections and facades.

Around the corner is the San Diego Museum of Art, which dates from Balboa Park's first exposition days. Building started in 1924, with exterior motifs based on the Cathedral of Valladolid and the University of Salamanca in Spain, while the

interior design adapted features from the Hospital de la Santa Cruz in Toledo, Spain. Shortly before the U.S. entered World War II (after the bombing of Pearl Harbor), and with San Diego playing a major role in U.S. deployments throughout the Pacific, the museum was converted into a hospital with nearly 500 beds, X-ray facilities, and an operating room.

The museum is widely recognized for its collection of both German Expressionism and Spanish Old Masters, including El Greco, Goya, and Zurbarán. We stood for a long time in front of an enormous ceramic wall installation that dated from 13th-century Persia. This was just one exhibit among a vast collection of Persian art that includes bowls with gilded motifs, watercolor paintings, as well as pen boxes made in 18th-century Iran and decorated with European figures and landscapes. Afterwards, we spent some time

**exposition**

- Ausstellung

**Depression: the (Great) ~**

- die (Welt)Wirtschaftskrise nach dem Börsenkrach 1929

**evoke sth.**

- etw. wachrufen

**conquest**

- ['kɑ:nkwɛst]
- Eroberung

**bisect sth.** ['bɪsɛkt]

- etw. zweiteilen

**easel** ['i:zəl]

- Staffelei

**deployment**

- Einsatz, Aufmarsch

**X-ray facility**

- [fə'ɹɪləti]
- Röntgenabteilung

**vast** [væst]

- riesig, hier: umfassend

**gilded**

- vergoldet

At Balboa Park, you'll find the world-famous San Diego Zoo, as well as art galleries, studios, museums, peaceful ponds, and gardens





Mexican tacos: something for everyone

in the Alcázar Garden. Set against ornate tile work, the Moorish mosaics evoke the gardens of Alcázar Castle in Seville, Spain. There were butterflies everywhere among the flowers.

### Eat, drink, and dance

San Diego is rated as one of the top food cities in the U.S. John suggested Mexican food for lunch – the border is less than 30 kilometers from San Diego – and was keen to show us his favorite locale for traditional tacos. City Tacos is among the region’s top sellers of this Mexican standard food. Although it’s one of a chain of restaurants, with locations up and down the coast, the recipes are traditional. We ordered several kinds of taco – fish, shrimp, chicken breast with salsa, cilantro, guacamole, avocado, and cotija cheese.

The Secret San Diego website ([www.secretsan-diego.com](http://www.secretsan-diego.com)) includes some unusual activities around town, such as dining in the dark and candlelit concerts. Unfortunately, we missed the Gator by the Bay festival during this visit. The four-day outdoor event features live zydeco and blues performances, lots of dancing, and delicious food – but there’s always the next visit for that.

The popular Little Italy district offers seemingly countless shops, restaurants, and bars, and a lively farmers’ market on Wednesdays and Saturdays. Best foodie stops – and ones that have inviting bars and local beers on tap – are Nolita Hall for dining and drinks, and Kettner Exchange for progressive cuisine and special cocktails. Afterwards, try False Idol for a very cool tiki bar with an extensive list of exotic cocktails.

Real estate agent Jamie Lennon, who knows San Diego well, recommends visiting North Park, an appealing neighborhood of compact, Spanish-style bungalows and colorful front yards. *Forbes* magazine once named it one of America’s best



Font’s Point in the Anza Borrego Desert State Park: nicknamed “California’s Grand Canyon”

hipster neighborhoods. The intersection around 30th Street and University Avenue is full of smart cafes, boutiques, cocktail bars, and more breweries than you can count. Nearby, Hillcrest is a hub of LGBTQ-focused businesses, where weekend drag shows attract hundreds of people.

For festivals, Lennon tells me that “the biggest one is the San Diego County Fair at the Del Mar Fairgrounds in June and July, or maybe the Oktoberfest in Ocean Beach. And there’s San Diego Comic-Con at the SD Convention Center in July – a huge and fun event.”

### Deep into the desert

Talking of beaches, there are more than 80 to choose from, including some with city skyline views, pretty piers, or cliffs. On one visit, we headed to Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve. This San Diego park includes a golf course, a lagoon that is important for migratory birds, as well as eight trails overlooking the beach. Most conspicuous, of course, are the Torrey pines themselves. These are the rarest pine trees in North America, and this is the only place in the world where the trees grow.

#### ornate

• kunstvoll

#### tile work

• Fliesen

#### Moorish [ˈmɔːrɪʃ]

• maurisch

#### cilantro [sɪˈlɑːntroʊ] (N. Am.)

• Koriander

#### cotija cheese

[koʊˈtɪːhə]

• fester mexikanischer Kuhmilchkäse

#### foodie stop (ifml.)

• Feinschmecker-lokal

#### tap: on ~

• vom Fass

#### real estate agent

[ˈriːɪl ɪsteɪt

,eɪdʒənt] (N. Am.)

• Immobilienmakler(in)

#### intersection

• Kreuzung

#### brewery [ˈbruːəri]

• Brauerei

### INFO TO GO

Zydeco is a genre of music that evolved in southwest Louisiana. It’s a mix of blues, rhythm and blues, and music that’s indigenous to the Native Americans of Louisiana and the Louisiana Creoles.

#### pier [pɪr]

• Kai

#### migratory bird

• Zugvogel

#### conspicuous

[kənˈspɪkjʊəs]

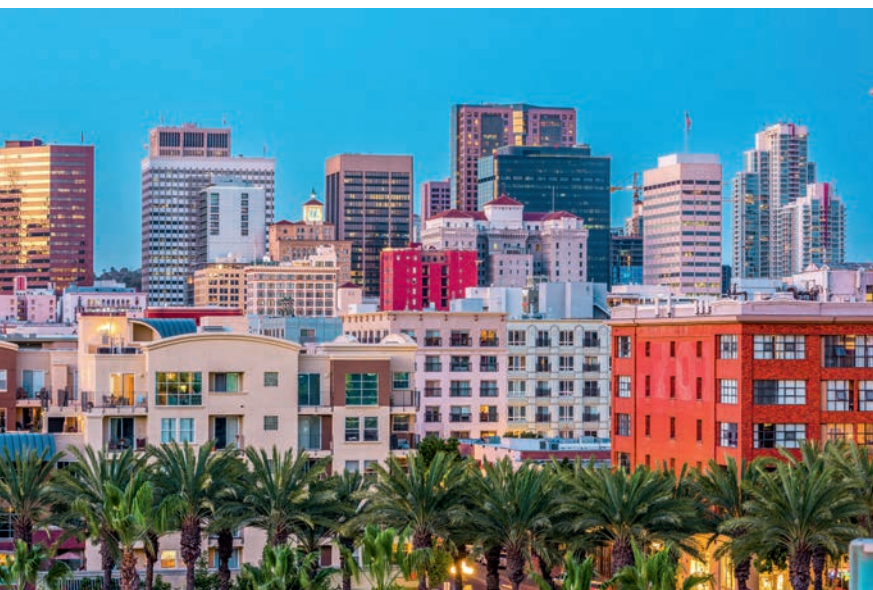
• bedeutend

#### pine tree

• Kiefer



Desert California fan palm trees in the Anza Borrego Desert



Downtown at twilight: sunset-watching is popular in San Diego, so make sure you get a good spot



The Geisel Library: the main library building of the University of California, San Diego

On another visit, John took me deep into the desert to the Anza Borrego Desert State Park, which explodes into a riot of wildflowers every spring, drawing visitors from around the world. Named after the 18th-century Spanish explorer Juan Bautista de Anza, California's largest state park seems especially appealing to European travelers, unaccustomed to so much untouched desert and mountain landscape. From Borrego Palm Canyon, you can see art created by the Cahuilla, Cupeño, and Kumeyaay Native American tribes. It's best to go there in the cooler months, as the temperature can exceed 40 degrees in summer.

If it's really hot, you can cool off at the Borrego Art Institute in Borrego Springs. Housed in a mid-century modern gallery that showcases local talent, the institute is an admirable and impressive effort in an area with so few residents. I was drawn especially to the rich and careful paintings that really capture the spirit of this remote, light-filled space. Regional artists exhibit vibrant pottery on the institute's exterior, and the installations have

turned into a mural, complete with cactus blossoms and palms.

The Mission Basilica San Diego de Alcalá should also be part of your visit to the city. Founded in 1769, the Mission today is an oasis in modern San Diego's bustle. The first of California's 21 Spanish missions that stretch north along the 970-kilometer El Camino Real to Sonoma, the mission in San Diego is noticeable for its bright white facade and a pyramid of five bells.

On our recent visit, I was particularly attracted to the gardens, which are full of the herbs and plants that fed the Native Americans – and eventually the missionaries – and which were plentiful at the time, such as acorns, chia seeds, the yucca plant, pine nuts, and juniper berries.

Without question, colonialism affected and afflicted Native American life here and elsewhere around the U.S. A visit to San Diego's mission is a good way to begin to understand the city's history and to see why it's often called "California's birthplace."

**riot** ['raɪət]

► hier: Feuerwerk

**exceed** [ɪk'si:d]

► übersteigen

**remote**

► abgelegen

**pottery**

► Keramik

**mural** ['mjʊərə]

► Wand, Wandgemälde

**cactus blossom**

[ˈkæktəs]

► Kaktusblüte

**herb** [ɜ:b]

► (Küchen)Kraut

**acorn** ['eɪkɔ:rn]

► Eichel

**chia seeds** ['tʃi:ə]

► Chia-Samen

**pine nut**

► Pinienkern

**juniper berry**

[ˈdʒu:nɪpəri]

► Wacholderbeere

**affect**

► beeinflussen

**afflict**

► belasten, zusetzen



Feel like paragliding over the Pacific? San Diego is one of the top destinations in the U.S. for outdoor recreation



Sunset at the Broken Hill Overlook, on the rugged San Diego coastline