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## Ready for a Spring Break?

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By Bekah Wright

Childhood memories of family trips to the beach often involve long stretches of pristine, white sand where hours of sandcastle building took place and breaking for a cold drink meant merely running a few steps away to beachfront accommodations. Such idyllic daydreams still exist. One place they're found in Southern California is the historic Hotel del Coronado (The Del).

It's easy to imagine families from years past making return visits every year to the 122-year-old, red-roofed, Victorian hotel. The Del's home – beautiful Coronado Island, California, just across the Coronado Bay Bridge from San Diego. Stepping things up for family convenience was a \$150-million renovation in January 2008 that included the unveiling of the property's new cottages and villas located within the private Beach Village.



Ideal for families, Beach Village accommodations graduate up from a guestroom to three-bedroom cottage and villas right on Coronado Beach. All have either terraces or balconies, many with a private day tub or fire pit. Inside larger units are gourmet kitchens decked out with a Wolf® cooktop and oven, Subzero® drawer-style refrigerator/freezer, Fisher-Paykel® dishwasher and cookware, dinnerware and silverware with which to load it.

A fireplace keeps things cozy in the great room while watching an after-dinner movie on the 42" flatscreen television. Once the tykes are tucked in bed, or cribs available from the resort, parents can slip into the decadent soaking tub for some twosome time. Afterwards, cuddling can be done in the master suite by the flicker of the bedroom fireplace. Of course, a 42" flatscreen television is here, too, for fans of late night talk shows.

The best way to start the day is with the complimentary buffet breakfast at the Windsor Club Cottage, an amenity available only to Beach Village visitors. Here's it possible to sip fresh orange juice and observe surf conditions from the patio, warmed by a fire pit.

Afterwards, little ones, ages four to 12, can check into Hotel Del's Kidtopia. Older siblings, ages 13 to 17, can sign up for the Vibz Teen Lounge. The year-round programs offer three-hour camps that cost \$50 per child and \$45 for each additional child, including meals.



On tap at Kidtopia are theme days like "Knights of the Round Table," that include creating crowns and shields before embarking on a scavenger hunt or "Explore the Map," during which kids tap into other cultures by painting boomerangs, making Chinese fans and playing with Native American rain sticks.

At Vibz, teens can play games like billiards, foosball and darts or show off their performance skills with karaoke or Dance Dance Revolution. The drop-by lounge is free to resort guests.

A camp that's ubiquitous with So Cal's beach scene is Hotel Del's Summer Surf Camp. Open to ages eight through 16, the program offers surf instruction Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and includes lunch and a t-shirt. Aside from the camp, 90-minute, group lessons are available for \$90 per person; 90-minute private lessons are \$120 for the first person and \$95 for each additional participant.

Spurring further creativity are the one-hour craft projects (\$20 per child) where memory boxes are constructed, tie-dye t-shirts designed and sun catchers decorated. Grownups can get in on the action, too, during "Deck Rec" at the main pool with necklace-making, henna tattoos and Bingo.

As for date nights, kids have their own through "Kid's Night Out" (\$70 per child) with dinner coupled with "Holiday Mix-Up" and "Hawaiian Luau" parties. Summer evenings bring with them family fun through "Dive-In Movies" viewed via inner tubes in the main resort pool or s'more-making on the beach (also available nightly for guests who have their own fire pit).

While in the San Diego, there's much to do that will appeal to all family members (see all the activities on the next page). On site at The Del are a plethora of outdoor activities to engage in as well. The boardwalk along the beach that stretches into a two-mile bike course into downtown Coronado is the place for cycling with a rental of a bike, surrey or deuce coup from PeDel's Bike Rentals.

A course popular with golfers is the 18-hole, par 72 Coronado Municipal Golf Course. The perfect post-golf game wind-down can be had through the Fitness Center at The Del with a yoga or Pilates class.

Hitting the "high seas" can be done via vessels that range from paddleboats and kayaks to jet skis and wakeboards rented from the resort's boathouse. This is also the spot to book a sunset sail aboard a 22' or 36' sailboat navigated by a seasoned captain. For beach action, equipment, like boogie boards and volleyballs can be obtained through the main pool or, during summer months, Cabana and Boardwalk Beach Rentals.

Speaking of swimming pools, Beach Village has its own private pool surrounded by cabanas from which adults can watch kids frolic with provided kickboards and water toys. The main pool is open as well to Beach Village guests looking for a cool spot to relax.

The ultimate in relaxation awaits in Spa at The Del with treatments like the signature Shell Coronado Massage using a heated tiger clamshell to release knotted muscles. The spa isn't restricted to adults-only. Ages 13 and up can partake in treatments created with them in mind like the Teen Spa Sampler and Teen Salon Sampler. Those looking to get a makeover should book time at Yamaguchi Salon for a famed Feng Shui consultation with celebrity hair stylist Billy Yamaguchi.



Glammed up for the evening, there are myriad on site dining venues that call for celebrating. Just right for families is Sheerwater restaurant with its California cuisine (kids 12 and under eat free) or Southland Coastal Cuisine in the elegant 1500 OCEAN. Over dinner is a good time to plan the days ahead with time allotted for visiting the The Del's shops, strolling through downtown Coronado and indulging in Sunday brunch in the resort's Crown Room.

Of course, topping the list of "must dos" while visiting The Hotel Del is hitting the 28 acres of seashore and completing the most important of tasks — building sandcastles on the beach."

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