

24-Hours in Orange County: Where to Stay and What to Do

Written by Written by Jackie Stahl

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Orange County, once a hush-hush Southern California gem, has quickly become this coastal state's breath of fresh air with its clean and upscale charm at the foot of stunning white-sand beaches. Yes, Los Angeles may have the fame and San Diego may have the action, but Orange County is the new and upgraded Southern California.



Top Orange County Restaurant



Although there are many top quality dining hotspots popping up all over Orange County, if you want the full package head to the heart of **Laguna Beach** and book a table at **230 Forest Avenue** (yes the name is the address). This tiny restaurant with a big following is known for its tasty seafood items, but every dish is exquisitely made to perfection. Be sure to accompany your meal with a selection from its famed martini list and make reservations in advance – 230 is always a hotspot. 230forestavenue.com

Top Orange County Resorts



The palatial **St. Regis Resort** is the ultimate five-star retreat and leading luxury oasis in Dana Point. It's commanding presence overlooks Monarch Beach at the forefront of Pacific Coast Highway. Guests can enjoy the beach or its sparkling pool, a round of 18-holes at the Monarch Beach Golf Links, fine dining and cocktails, relaxation at Spa Gaucin and of course first-rate in-room accommodations. www.stregismb.com



Another coastline O.C treasure is the famous **Montage Laguna Beach**. Imagine a fabulous resort at the bluff of a white, sandy beach in Orange County's arts district and one-of-a-kind city -- Laguna Beach. On top of its beauty and unparalleled location, Montage also offers comfortably elegant accommodations, an ocean-inspired luxury spa, three sparkling swimming pools and distinctive regional restaurant dining. www.montagelagunabeach.com

Things to Do in Orange County



Disneyland

Bring the kids or take a loved one to the only place where magic and fantasy come to life – Disneyland! This all-day adventure is a must-do

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when traveling to Orange County and is a world-renowned epicenter for Walt Disney's fantastic big screen inventions. Ride the Matterhorn, spin in the Tea Cups, watch the fireworks and meet Mickey Mouse at the world's most famous theme park!



Laguna Beach Art Walk

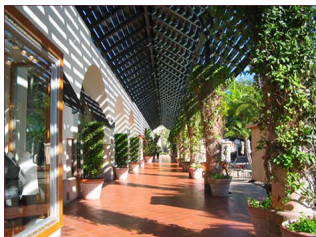
If you happen to travel to the O.C. on the first Thursday of the month, you must venture Laguna Beach's Art Walk for a glimpse into each gallery and complimentary wine. If you weren't so lucky as to travel on a first Thursday, perusing Laguna Beach's art world is a must. Plus you are amidst fine dining and gorgeous beaches.



Surf Lessons

Be a true Californian and attempt to ride the waves beside a trained surfer. **Dana Point's Doheny Beach** is a perfect place to start. The waves are calm and the sets travel a long distance to the shore, making it easy for beginners to catch a wave. Surf's up!

Shopping in Orange County



Fashion Island in Newport Beach may not be the largest mall in Orange County, but its location and glamorous outdoor ambiance makes it a SoCal favorite. Peruse the boutiques or head into Bloomingdale's for the top names in fashion design. www.shopfashionisland.com