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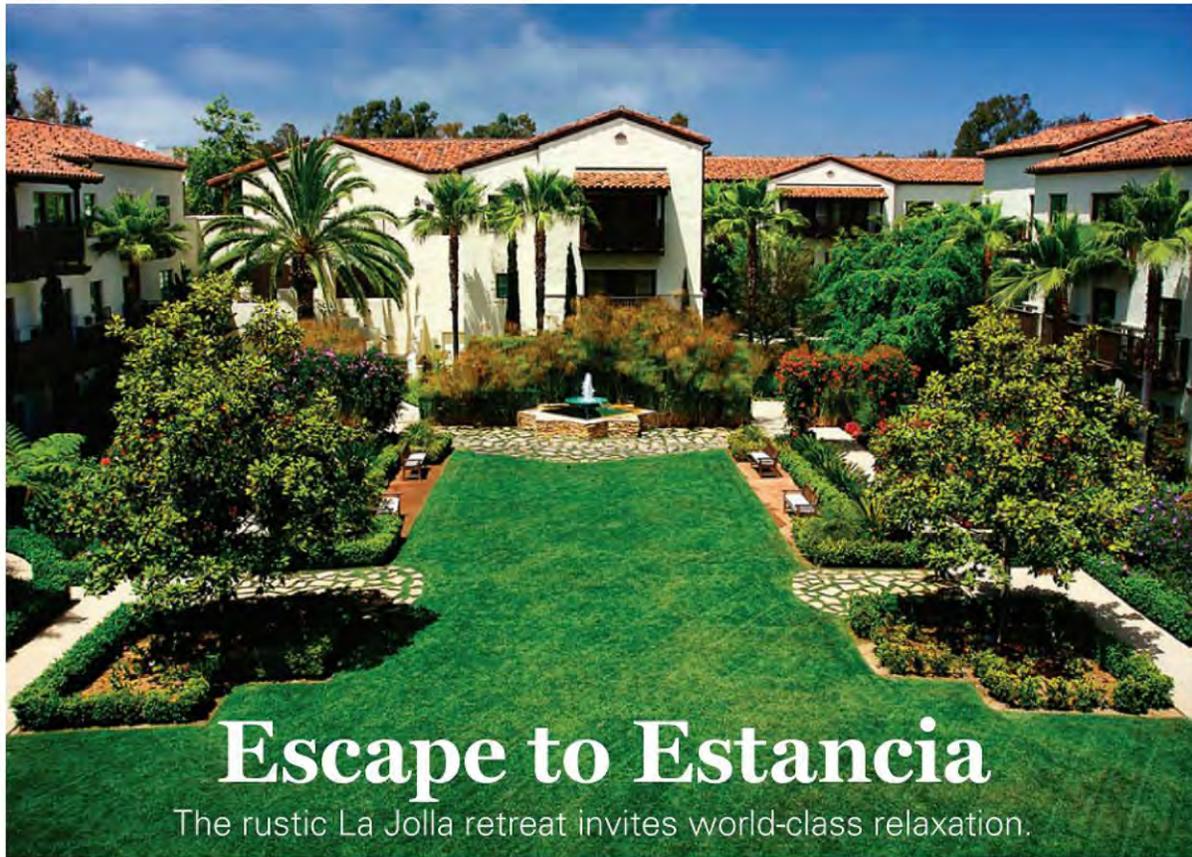


# 101

pieces  
of  
advice



Top tips, tricks  
& tidbits for  
Mom, Dad  
and the kids,  
from experts  
and others  
in the know



## Escape to Estancia

The rustic La Jolla retreat invites world-class relaxation.

*The hacienda-style hotel, located just north of San Diego, provides the perfect setting for relaxation.*

I can't remember the last time I slept in past 6 a.m., dove into a pool with careless regard for my locks or had a glass of wine while leisurely chit-chatting with a wine steward – as if I had all the time in the world. But I did, and I enjoyed every second of it during my week-end away at a serene Spanish oasis.

There is a lovely understated ease about Estancia La Jolla Hotel & Spa, situated on 9.5 acres in beautiful La Jolla. The coastal rancho-style retreat exudes elegance – without ever trying too hard. These days, this is a real talent in the hospitality business, which promotes properties that are bigger and more extravagant. At Estancia, everything about the property invites you to relax. It's ideal for couples, a girls'-only getaway or even time alone that's rich with escapism.

Formerly an 1880s equestrian estate, the property at Estancia La Jolla was



*Debbie enjoys a day at the pool and an afternoon at Estancia La Jolla's newly enhanced spa.*

built just 10 years ago with a vision to preserve its heritage. You'll see wonderfully charming barn doors throughout the hotel and cues to its past all around. In fact, the signature dining restaurant, appropriately dubbed Mustangs & Burros, was once a tack room. The white bricks built into it are actually from the original structure.

While Estancia La Jolla Hotel & Spa is intimate and cozy, it boasts 210 deluxe guest rooms and suites, with balconies and patios that give most of the rooms a view of a lush courtyard and garden fountains. Each of the three brick buildings is modeled after structures from the former equestrian estate.

A particularly enchanting element of the hotel is an expanse of lush grounds that showcases mature plantings of eucalyptus, pineapple guava, fig and olive, as well as accents of thyme, rosemary, lavender and sage that add quaint character to the environment.

Estancia is a great place to get away, forget your worries and appreciate a slower pace. With artisan details – everything from an antique iron pendant chandelier and terra-cotta tile floors to exposed beam ceilings of Douglas fir and hand-troweled walls crafted in the Old Italian style – Estancia instantly returns you to simpler times.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF ESTANCIA LA JOLLA HOTEL & SPA, AND DEBBIE LAVDAS.

### **A spa sanctuary**

Be sure to visit Estancia Spa, recently remodeled this past year. The 7,000-square-foot space is an oasis with a Zen sand garden and a bevy of natural beauty. I experienced the Fountain of Youth Facial, a state-of-the-art red-LED light therapy that reduces aging, followed by a Nu-Face micro-current lift treatment. They call it the 5-Minute Facelift. It was a pleasure to turn back the clock.

The award-winning spa, recognized by Condé Nast Traveler as one of the best in the world in 2012, offers a full array of treatments, including an organic facial and a couples massage, administered in a new private bungalow, complete with a fireplace and a soaking tub for two.

For more invigorating relaxation, consider a Vichy Shower Treatment performed under a real rain bar. Additional rewards can be found in the heated saltwater pool with luxe poolside cabanas located just outside the spa.

### **Delightful dining**

Estancia offers several eateries



*Don't miss Torrey Pines Gliderport, America's most popular coastal-soaring site.*

that provide comfortable, exquisite dining. Offering seasonal Southern California cuisine with rancho influences, Adobe El Restaurante is perfect for breakfast and lunch.

The previously mentioned Mustangs & Burros offers a cozy dining room and features a spacious patio reminiscent of a Spanish hacienda; don't miss the house-made cocktails and innovative margaritas. Finally, the tasting room at Trinitas Cellars Wine Bar is splendid for a glass of vino before bed. ☞

### **FLY HIGH**

The hotel is a short walk to Torrey Pines Gliderport, overlooking the beach. Enjoy its breathtaking, beautifully perched spot and watch paragliders take off one after another. Instructional tandem flights are offered for \$150, hang-gliding for \$200. [flytorrey.com](http://flytorrey.com)

### **STROLL LA JOLLA**

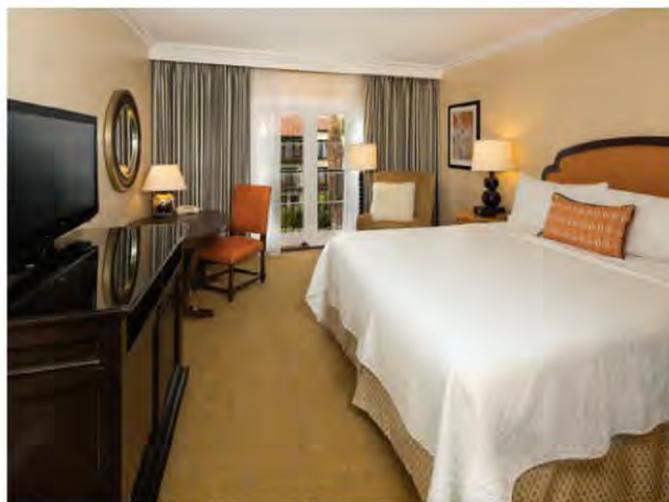
While there's little reason to leave the Estancia property, a quick trek into La Jolla can be a treat. Similar to the city of Laguna Beach, La Jolla is lined with unique boutiques and many on-trend restaurants. Cody's is a favorite dining spot with organic menu items, and it's popular with locals for breakfast and lunch. You can also walk to Ellen Browning Scripps Park, next to La Jolla Cove, and see seals and sea lions sunning themselves year-round along a seawall at the nearby Children's Pool. After a few hours seeing the sights, drive five minutes back to Estancia and once more settle back into the serene scene.

*Estancia La Jolla Hotel & Spa*  
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PHOTOS COURTESY OF ESTANCIA LA JOLLA HOTEL & SPA, AND DEBBIE LAUDAS



*The architectural design captures Southern California's past.*



*Slow down, relax and unwind in one of Estancia's serene rooms, all of which furnish luxurious cotton linens.*