



Disneyland & Orange County

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Best Places to Eat

- Walt's Wharf (p608)
- Napa Rose (p603)
- 242 Cafe Fusion Sushi (p621)
- Bear Flag Fish Company (p615)
- Ramos House Café (p623)

Best Places to Stay

- Shorebreak Hotel (p610)
- Disney's Grand Californian Hotel & Spa (p601)
- The Tides Inn (p620)
- Crystal Cove Beach Cottages (p617)
- Resort at Pelican Hill (p614)

Why Go?

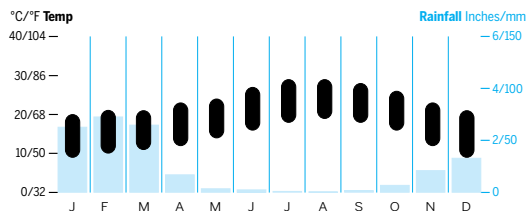
Chances are that Orange County, that stretch between Los Angeles and San Diego, has seeped into your consciousness even if you've never been here.

No doubt Mickey Mouse and friends have been a part of that (Disneyland is California's biggest attraction). So too have TV series from *Real Housewives* to MTV's *Laguna Beach*, from *The OC* to *Arrested Development*, which have all been set here, taking the county's image from humdrum to hip, a place of mythically (g)amorous teens, gorgeous beaches and socialite catfights.

While there's a whiff of truth to those stereotypes of life behind the 'Orange Curtain' – big, boxy mansions, fortress-like shopping malls, the overly entitled tossing Happy Meals out of their Humvees – this diverse county's 789 sq miles, 34 cities and three million people create deep pockets of individuality, beauty and different ways of thinking, keeping in' the OC 'real,' no matter one's reality.

When to Go

Anaheim



May Visitation dips after spring break until Memorial Day. Mostly sunny days, balmy temperatures.

Jul & Aug Summer vacation and beach season peak. Surfing and art festivals by the coast.

Sep Blue skies, cooler temperatures inland, fewer crowds. Tall Ships Festival at Dana Point.

SURFING WALK OF FAME

The OC's answer to Hollywood Boulevard immortalizes surf legends steps from the Huntington Beach Pier.

Top Shows & Parades at Disney Resort

- **World of Color** (DCA)
- **Fantasmic!** (Disneyland)
- **Mickey's Soundsational Parade** (Disneyland)
- **Pixar Play Parade** (DCA)

California Culture

Culture vultures: don't miss some of California's best-known cultural institutions: Segerstrom Center for the Arts (p616), South Coast Repertory (p616), Bowers Museum (p606) and Laguna Beach's Festival of Arts (p619) and Pageant of the Masters (p620).

For Local News

- **Coastline Pilot** (www.coastlinepilot.com) Laguna Beach.
- **Daily Pilot** (www.dailypilot.com) Newport Beach and Costa Mesa.
- **OC Weekly** (www.ocweekly.com) Alternative paper for arts and politics.
- **Orange County Register** (www.oregister.com) National and regional news, culture and sports.

Theme-Park Passes

Visiting a lot of SoCal theme parks? The **Southern California CityPass** (www.citypass.com/southern-california; adult/child 3-9yr from \$328/284) covers three-day 'Park Hopper' admission to Disneyland Resort, plus one-day admission to SeaWorld San Diego (p633) and Universal Studios Hollywood (p567). The CityPass price is at least \$100 less than the combined regular ticket prices. Otherwise, look online for specials (eg five-day Park Hopper passes for the three-day price) or seasonal discounts on annual passports for Southern California residents and their guests.

FEELING THE HEAT AT DISNEYLAND

When Walt Disney opened Disneyland on July 17, 1955, he declared it the 'Happiest Place on Earth.' However, its opening day was a disaster. Temperatures over 100°F (38°C) melted asphalt underfoot, leaving women's high heels stuck in the tar. There were plumbing problems: all of the drinking fountains quit working. Hollywood stars didn't show up on time, and more than twice the number of expected guests – some 28,000 by day's end – crowded through the gates, some holding counterfeit tickets. None of this kept eager Disney fans away for long; more than 50 million tourists visited in its first decade alone. Nowadays, more than 14 million kids, grandparents, honeymooners and international tourists come to Walt's playground every year.

Disneyland To-Do List

- Make hotel reservations or book a Disneyland package.
- Sign up online for Disney Fans Insider e-newsletters and resort updates.
- Check the parks' opening hours and live show and entertainment schedules online.
- Make dining reservations for sit-down restaurants or special meals with Disney characters.
- Buy print-at-home tickets and passes online.
- Recheck the park opening hours and Anaheim Resort Transportation (ART) or hotel-shuttle schedules.
- Pack a small day pack with sunscreen, hat, sunglasses, swimwear, change of clothes, jacket or hoodie, lightweight plastic rain poncho, and extra batteries and memory cards for digital and video cameras.
- Fully charge your electronic devices, including cameras and phones.
- Download a Disneyland app to your smartphone.