



# San Diego & Around

POP 1,394,928

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## Best Places to Eat

- ▶ Clayton's Coffee Shop (p475)
- ▶ The Patio on Lamont (p476)
- ▶ Pacific Beach Fish Shop (p476)
- ▶ Big Kitchen (p471)

## Best Places to Sleep

- ▶ Hotel del Coronado (p469)
- ▶ La Valencia (p484)
- ▶ USA Hostels San Diego (p468)
- ▶ US Grant Hotel (p468)

## Why Go?

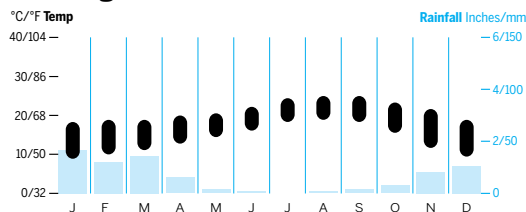
New York has its cabbie, Chicago its bluesman and Seattle its coffee-drinking boho. San Diego has its surfer dude, with his tousled hair, great tan and gentle enthusiasm; he looks like he's on a perennial vacation, and when he wishes you welcome, he really means it.

San Diego calls itself 'America's Finest City' and its breezy confidence and sunny countenance filter down even to folks you encounter every day on the street. It feels like a collection of villages each with their own personality, but it's the nation's eighth-largest city and we're hard-pressed to think of a place of any size that's more laid-back.

What's not to love? San Diego bursts with world-famous attractions for the entire family, including the zoo, Legoland and the museums of Balboa Park, plus a bubbling Downtown, beautiful hikes for all, more than 60 beaches and America's most perfect weather.

## When to Go

### San Diego



**Jun–Aug** High season; temperatures and hotel rates are highest, watch out for cloudy skies in June.

**Sep–Oct, Mar–May** Shoulder seasons; moderate rates, warm with blue skies.

**Nov–Feb** Low season but far from cold, and your chance to spot whales off the coastline.

## CENTRAL & COASTAL SAN DIEGO

Whoosh – here comes a skateboarder. And there goes a wet-suited surfer toting his board to the break, while a Chanel-clad lady lifts a coffee cup off a porcelain saucer. Downtown San Diego and its nearby coastal communities offer all that and more.

San Diego's Downtown is the region's main business, financial and convention district. Whatever intense urban energy Downtown generally lacks, it makes up in spirited shopping, dining and nightlife in the historic Gaslamp Quarter, while the East Village and North Park are hipster havens. The waterfront Embarcadero is good for a stroll,



### San Diego & Around Highlights

- 1 Cooing at koalas and pandering to pandas at **San Diego Zoo** (p460).
- 2 Museum hopping in **Balboa Park** (p460), then sampling fish tacos or the next great taste in Hillcrest and North Park.
- 3 Sunning and skating on the **Pacific Beach** (p464)

boardwalk and catching an epic sunset on the pier.

- 4 Eating tortillas and swilling margaritas in a legendary the **Old Town Mexican Café** (p473).
- 5 Downtown pub-crawling and a dueling piano show at **Shout House** (p479) in the Gaslamp Quarter.

- 6 Marveling at the history and architecture at one of San Diego's prominent landmarks, **Hotel del Coronado** (p464).
- 7 Kayaking with **Everyday California** (p484) at La Jolla.
- 8 Mingling with Southern California's hoi polloi at **Del Mar Racetrack** (p487).