



# I♥ving La Jolla

Golfing, hiking, feasting at  
The Lodge at Torrey Pines

BY SUZANNE MORPHET

In places there are daubs of  
bright orange, yellow and lime  
green, as if an artist has just  
put his finishing touches on a  
landscape painting.

The pool at  
The Lodge at  
Torrey Pines.

BE THE BEST

*You...*



clinic805

COSMETIC SURGERY & SKINCARE CENTRE

805 Fairfield Rd  
Victoria, BC V8V 0A7  
T 250.595.3888  
W clinic805.ca





The lobby at The Lodge at Torrey Pines..

**How easy and luxurious it would be to spend three days without leaving this place; swimming in the outdoor pool with classical music playing underwater, joining a yoga class or two, enjoying treatments in the spa, even playing croquet on the expansive lawn.**



Torrey Pines Golf Course.

**F**LINGING OPEN the French doors to our balcony, my husband chuckles with delight. Our fifth floor room at The Lodge at Torrey Pines overlooks the 18th hole of the eponymous golf course next door. We're so close in fact, we can almost hear the two golfers who are setting up their final shots on the carefully manicured green.

For a golf enthusiast like Kit, a long weekend at the Lodge at Torrey Pines in La Jolla, California is a little bit of heaven on earth. Wake up, walk out and golf the same course the pros tackle when they meet for their annual PGA Tour's Farmers Insurance Open, and where Tiger Woods famously sunk a clutch birdie to win the 2008 US Open.

I'm not a golfer — at least not one good enough to pay \$250 to play 18 holes — but as we survey the scene before us, I almost wish I were. Lush green fairways slope gently to the blue horizon, dotted with iconic Torrey Pine trees and edged with winding pathways.

A wild ravine cleaves the course just to our right, hinting at the natural beauty of this plateau before much of it was developed. Thankfully, the philanthropist Ellen Browning Scripps — who made a fortune in her family's newspaper business — had the foresight to buy and donate a large chunk of the coastline for conservation. (You see her name a lot here, as she funded and/or founded many San Diego institutions including the Scripps Institute of Oceanography and the Scripps Research Institute.)

Today, Torrey Pines State Natural Reserve is one of the most magnificent protected areas in all of California, with myriad trails leading to spectacular cliffs overlooking a wide sandy beach. While Kit golfs, I'll be hiking the 1,500-acre reserve just up the road to my heart's content.

But as we explore the lodge the first evening, I'm tempted to toss my plans into the breeze. How easy and luxurious it would be to spend three days without leaving this place; swimming in the outdoor pool with classical music playing underwater, joining a yoga class or two, enjoying treatments in the spa, even playing croquet on the expansive lawn.

Of course, one would expect luxe accommodation and amenities at an AAA Five Diamond resort. What surprises me is how the lodge, completed at the turn of the 21st century, could easily be mistaken for something from the early 20th century.

The builder fastidiously followed two of the best examples of the California Craftsman style, which was an offshoot of the Arts and Crafts movement. Those are the Gamble House (of Proctor and Gamble fame) and the Blacker house, both in Pasadena and both designed by the Greene brother architects.

If they were alive today, the renowned design duo would immediately recognize the homey look and feel of The Lodge with its green shakes, clinker brick masonry, solid post and beam construction and, not least, its striking stained glass work of art depicting a tree in the porte cochère — in this case a Torrey pine tree framed in Brazilian cherry wood.

Yes, the Greenes might wonder why the doormen here dress

in green plaid kilts and stockings, but any golfer could tell them it's to pay tribute to Scotland, the birthplace of golf.

On Saturday, while Kit heads out to hit some balls and warm up for his big game the following day, I head to the park. As well as protecting the only wild Torrey pine forest on the mainland — indeed, the world (with the exception of one small grove offshore on Santa Rosa Island) — the nature reserve protects a rare community of smaller plants known as maritime chaparral. They include hard-leaved, drought-tolerant shrubs that absorb moisture from the coastal fog. Shaped by the wind, they provide a haven for mule deer, grey fox, coyotes and smaller mammals.

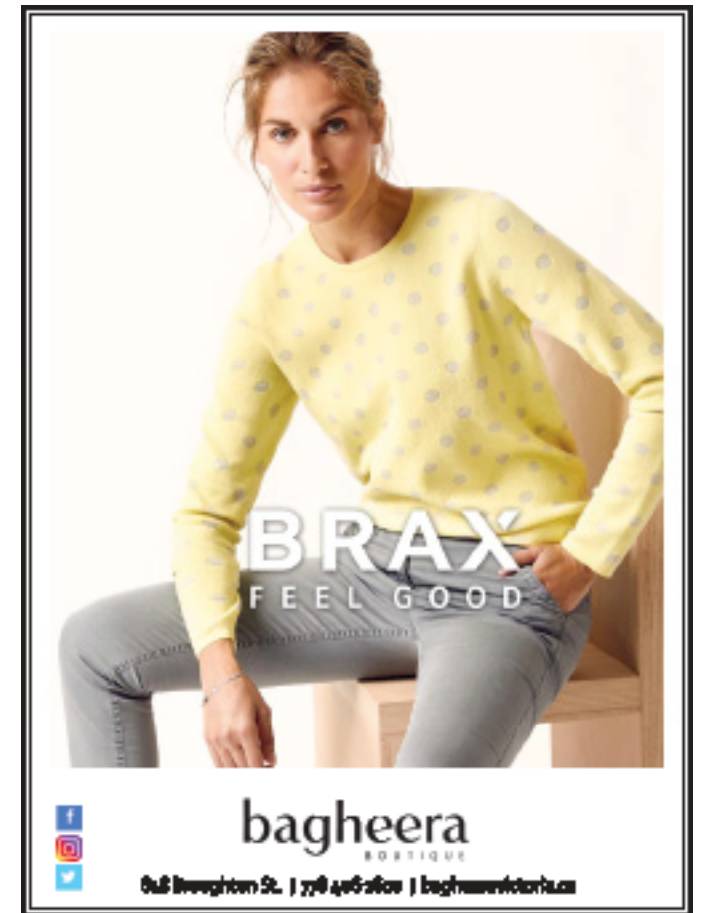
As I make my way along the sandy Razor Point Trail towards

the Pacific, I'm struck by just how rugged this place is: deep ravines, wind-chiselled sandstone cliffs and gnarled pine trees attest to its wildness. In places, there are daubs of bright orange, yellow and lime green, as if an artist has just put his finishing touches on a landscape painting.

At the end of the trail I meet retired twin sisters from San Diego who walk in this park every week and never tire of it.

"We see whales swimming; we see dolphins leaping," one tells me enthusiastically before they take off up the trail.

When I return to the lodge, Kit is also in good spirits. He's been sitting in the outdoor hot tub and watching golfers at the 18th hole.



BUILT FOR LIFE,  
BUILT FOR BEAUTY  
ESTABLISHED IN 1980



MAC RENOVATIONS  
DESIGN | BUILD

250.412.8012 | 5285 WEST SAANICH ROAD  
VICTORIA, BC | WWW.MACRENO.COM



A CONTRACTOR YOU CAN TRUST



“Two in a row — bam, bam — into the pond,” he laughs, mimicking their failed attempts to hit their balls over the large water hazard just before the finish.

“Do you feel better,” I tease, “knowing there are others here in your league?”

Our final two days roll by all too quickly, with each of us doing our thing. Kit enjoys a good round of golf and is pleased to tell me his ball does not end up in the drink.

And in between golfing and hiking we even find time for a short kayak tour of La Jolla Cove, where black cormorants and sea lions noisily share the cliffs and caves. We also explore a small part of Balboa Park, considered the jewel of San Diego with 15 museums, half a dozen performing arts venues and gardens galore. The ornately designed California Tower — which you can climb — and adjoining blue-and-gold domed California Building are reason enough to visit.

All weekend we enjoy good meals wherever we go (El Pescador Fish Market in the village of La Jolla is particularly memorable), but we’ve saved the best for the last. Our final evening we savour exquisite food and wine at A.R. Valentien, the lodge’s signature restaurant.

Executive Chef Jeff Jackson, who was mentored by legendary French chef Paul Bocuse, is known as the godfather of the farm-to-table movement in San Diego. That means there are ever-changing choices depending on the season. (The restaurant also holds a monthly Artisan Table event with a seasonal menu and wine pairings by select California winemakers.)

Sitting on the terrace in the balmy evening air we enjoy house-made chicken liver paté, a citrusy salad, roast duck breast and confit leg of duck and coriander-crusted Ahi tuna. But what I really want the recipe for is the Crispy Brussels Sprouts. Oh, to make these bitter nuggets this tasty! (Our server confides they’re sautéed in a vinaigrette of fish sauce, rice wine vinegar, lime juice, garlic and ginger, then topped with torn fresh herbs: mint, cilantro and basil.)

Lingering over dessert (salted caramel chocolate tart with orange marmalade and bourbon espresso ice cream), we learn about the man who lends his name to this restaurant. A.R. Valentien was a successful artist from Ohio who holidayed in La Jolla for several months in the early 1900s. He moved here permanently a few years later for health reasons. That’s when Ellen Browning Scripps commissioned him to paint California’s wild flowers, some of which grace the walls of this restaurant today.

Like Valentien, our little vacation has persuaded us that La Jolla, and especially The Lodge at Torrey Pines, deserve a return visit, even if we can’t plead poor health or stay for good. **1**

For more information [www.lodgetorreypines.com](http://www.lodgetorreypines.com) and [sandiego.org/lajolla](http://sandiego.org/lajolla)

HEAT UP YOUR STYLE  
COOL DOWN YOUR HOME



VICTORIA  
601 Boleskine Rd.  
250-384-9359

NANAIMO  
201-4300 Wellington Rd.  
250-756-3614

ILLUMINATIONSBC.COM



The Brighter Side of Lighting