





Photos: Courtesy of Hotel del Coronado

DESTINATIONS



HOTEL DEL CORONADO

Coronado, California

BY RENEE BRINCKS

San Diego's Hotel del Coronado sits on a swath of sun-kissed Pacific coastline famous for white sand and spectacular sunset views. That landscape, punctuated by the property's red rooftops and towering turrets, has attracted filmmakers since the early 1900s.

One of the most well-known movies shot here was "Some Like It Hot," a 1959 Oscar and Golden Globe winner starring Marilyn Monroe, Tony Curtis and Jack Lemmon. In one scene, Monroe sweeps up the resort's main stairway as men watch from a line of rocking chairs on the front porch.

Now, following a five-year, \$400 million renovation, Hotel Del Coronado guests can ascend the rebuilt stairs, cross the refurbished porch, and relax in rockers inspired by those in the film.

"When you look at that scene and view the chairs today, they're almost identical. And it's amazing to see how architects transformed the porch, bringing it back to its original Victorian-era configuration," says Kerian Martin, the hotel's assistant director of marketing.

Opened in 1888 and designated a National Historic Landmark in 1977, the Hotel del Coronado is both seaside time capsule and contemporary luxury resort. While outlining recent updates at the "Del," as it's commonly known, owners consulted late-1800s blueprints, purchase orders and photographs to ensure that new elements reflected the property's rich history. Many of those photos hang in hotel hallways and at the Ice House Museum, an exhibition gallery tucked in the property's former ice-production building.

Crews also revived the Del's Victorian grandeur in the lobby, where natural light filters through meticulously restored stained-glass panes like the 135-year-old, 6-foot-tall Coronation Window. Overhead, a chandelier made of hand-blown glass and cut crystal takes cues from an original hotel fixture.



Key rings with jade-colored tassels cover a wall behind the front desk, a nod to when guests received brass keys upon check-in. Hand-painted silk wallpaper by de Gournay features tropical birds, flowering plants, and animals that once graced the resort's garden patio.

Next door in the Views, where 217 beachfront tower rooms and suites were refreshed in 2021, guests find similar amenities plus floor-to-ceiling windows and glass balconies with ocean or resort views.



Martin calls the Del's lobby and porch updates the "crown jewel of the entire renovation." The extensive project also refreshed many existing resort rooms and added new residential-style accommodations. The Shore House at the Del, new in September 2022, introduced 75 one-, two- and three-bedroom suites with kitchens, living spaces, water-view balconies, and dedicated valet, entrance, and check-in services. The secluded, beach house-inspired neighborhood is centered on a zero-edge oceanfront pool.

"The Del is a coastal destination with multiple neighborhoods for different experiences. Accommodations cater to people who want the historic feeling, and to those who want a taste of that history, but prefer to stay in something more modern," Martin says.

In the popular Cabanas neighborhood, for example, guests choose from sleek beachfront rooms with private patios and firepits, or accommodations with terraces set adjacent to

Above: The recently updated Vista Terrace is an outdoor venue perfect for large gatherings. Below: The Shore House is a neighborhood of seaside residences.

The Hotel Del Coronado provides something for everyone, from fresh, contemporary residential-style accommodations, with up to three bedrooms, to elegant guestrooms and suites in the beautifully ornate original historic hotel building.



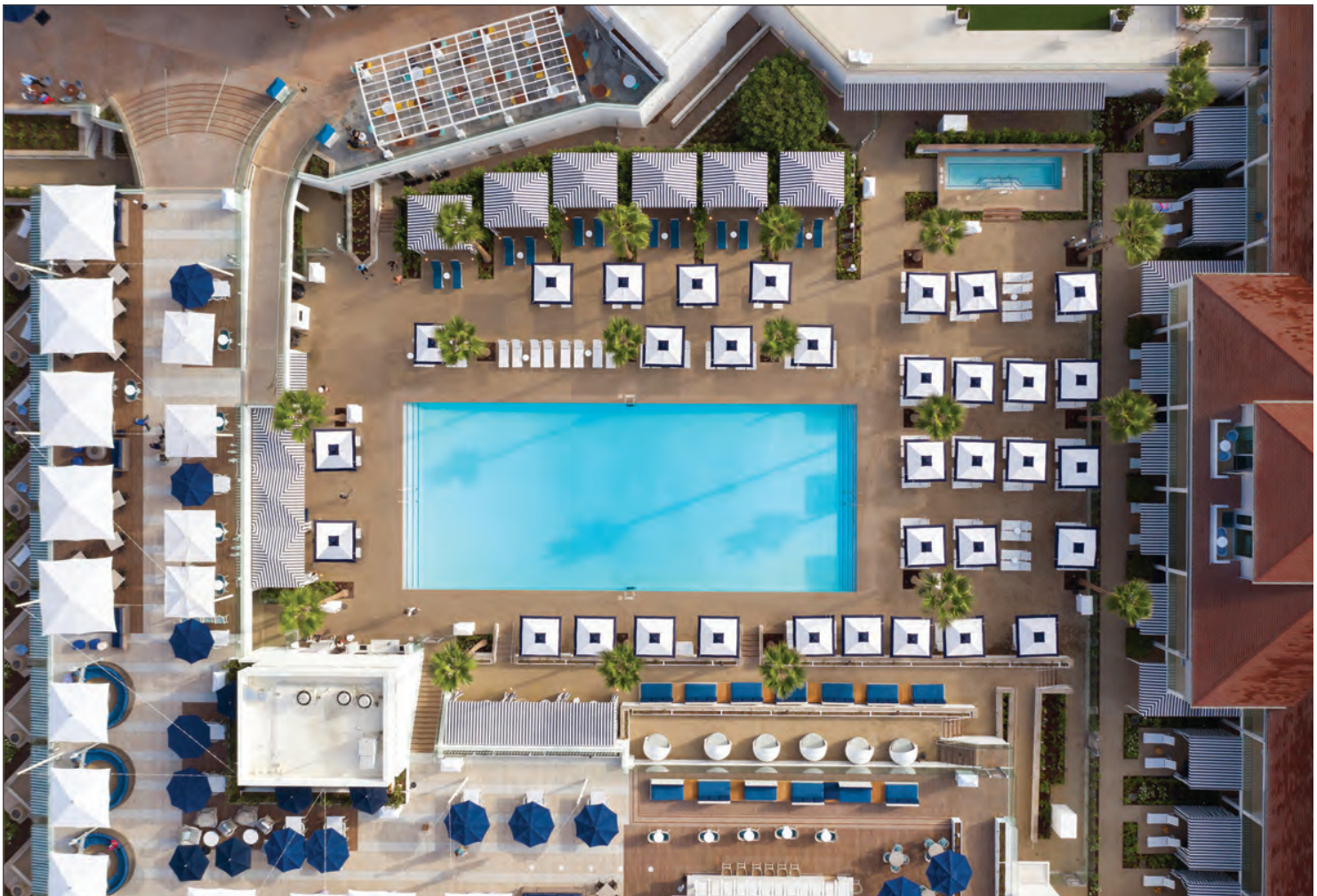


Above: The Cabanas feature guestrooms with private patios, firepits and ocean views. Below: An ocean view king guestroom in the historic Victorian features a spacious balcony.

Opposite above: The Beach and Taco Shack is a popular spot for a casual lunch, dinner or cocktails. Below: The pool is a popular family destination.

the resort's main pool. Reimagined in 2020, the Cabanas sleep up to four and feature walk-in showers, 65-inch televisions, Wi-Fi access, Keurig coffeemakers and chic coastal decor.

Next door in the Views, where 217 beachfront tower rooms and suites were refreshed in 2021, guests find similar amenities plus floor-to-ceiling windows and glass balconies with ocean or resort views. The exclusive Beach Village, a gated neighborhood of oceanfront cottages, will be updated in stages throughout 2023. Once that's complete, teams will turn their attention to accommodations in the Del's iconic 1888 Victorian building.



The Victorian also houses a refurbished spa, salon, fitness facility and retail shops, plus several resort restaurants that were reintroduced during recent renovations. Serēa, a sea-to-table fine dining venue, has a seasonal, sustainable focus. ENO Market & Pizzeria offers coffee and pastries, grab-and-go picnic fare, and an open-air pizzeria with wine and beer. Babcock & Story Bar, a cocktail lounge named for the Del's founders, also unveiled a new look while retaining original architectural features like a grand 50-foot mahogany bar. Large glass doors now connect indoor and outdoor seating areas while inviting in fresh air and San Diego sunshine.

The revamped Sun Deck sits nearby, above the Del's refreshed main pool. A popular spot for watching Pacific sunsets, Sun Deck has glass

railings, table and fire pit seats, and a menu that blends Mediterranean, Asian and coastal California influences. New terraces and access points connect the rooftop bar and restaurant with the pool, which is now surrounded by spacious cabanas, day beds and pretty palms.

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Families love the pool, of course, as well as the Ocean Explorers program that launched in 2022. Organizers at the Del partnered with educators from the Birch Aquarium at Scripps Institution of Oceanography to outline children's activities that explore tide pools, seashells, sharks and other aquatic life while also teaching participants to protect the planet's

waters. Ocean Explorers proceeds support the institution's ocean preservation efforts.

Whether they're checking in for a spa weekend, a romantic getaway, or some family fun—complete with ocean adventures and s'mores roasts on the beach—new generations of guests

continue to find engaging experiences at the updated Hotel del Coronado.

"We are in the business of making memories. We have people who grew up coming

here for the summer, and then bring their own kids here because they want to continue that tradition," Martin says. "Our programming focus is to try and make special memories for all the wonderful guests who visit us year after year."

Hotel del Coronado is located at 1500 Orange Avenue in Coronado, California. For more information, visit www.hoteldel.com or call 619/435-6611. ■



When the Crown Room was built, it was considered an architectural feat, as the 160x60 foot room with an impressive 33 foot ceiling required no pillars or center supports. Today, the room can be visited for a fabulous Sunday brunch.