

Travel

CALIFORNIA

San Diego: All the way to the bay

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Contributing Writer

I'm staying at the Catamaran Hotel in the southern part of the city facing Mission Bay on one side, the pounding surf of the Pacific only a few short blocks away on the other.

There are live carp swimming around in the pool in the lobby under cascading waterfalls and outside in the 80-degree heat, the kayaks, paddle boards and small sailboats line the hotel dock. There is a noon-hour breeze in The Bay, enough to tack a sailboat idly back and forth as joggers and cyclists frequent the path that runs around its rim.

It is the 25th anniversary of the Pacific Symposium on Traditional Chinese Medicine, and my brother is a speaker at the event. The symposium is the largest of its kind in the world and there are more than 600 attendees milling about, displaying nametags, meeting suppliers.

We walk the half mile or so along the edge of The

Bay to The Mission Café, a trendy local breakfast hang-out, and there is a line-up outside. Famed for their home-made chicken and apple sausages, the menu offers everything from Mexican-style wraps and salsa to traditional cinnamon French toast, big round pancakes topped with fresh fruit, or eggs any style garnished with rosemary hash browns — a breakfast sure to last you through lunch.

Afterwards, we rent bikes and cycle north along Pacific Beach past the Mission Beach lifeguard station whose notice board informs us that today's H2O temperature is 61 degrees (16 degrees C) and the surf is one to two feet (half a metre) fair. Further along, there is a motorized surf pool generating a giant wave where surfers practise standing on their boards and riding the tunnel. We know we're in California now! Beachfront cafés line the path, and across the sands, the hardcore surfers are out, bobbing on the wave, waiting for their next ride.

We drive the rented red



The Cosmopolitan Hotel in Old Town San Diego where travellers can enjoy traditional margaritas and Mexican music.

BCFerries				WEEKLY TIDE TABLE			
Horseshoe Bay/Langdale: In effect from Oct 15 - Dec 19, 2013				Reference: Pt. Atkinson – PDT			
Earls Cove/Salter Bay: In effect from Oct 15 - Dec 19, 2013							
LEAVE HORSESHOE BAY		LEAVE LANGDALE		DATE	TIME	FEET	METRES
SAILINGS DAILY AT:		SAILINGS DAILY AT:		29-Nov	3:14 AM	12.5	3.8
7:20 am	3:30 pm	6:20 am	2:30 pm		7:54 AM	9.8	3
9:20 am	5:30 pm	8:20 am	4:30 pm		1:38 PM	14.4	4.4
11:20 am	7:25 pm	10:20 am	6:30 pm		9:01 PM	3.9	1.2
1:20 pm	9:15 pm	12:20 pm	8:20 pm	30-Nov	4:06 AM	13.5	4.1
Langdale:					8:56 AM	10.5	3.2
Ticket sales & loading end 5 minutes before sailing time for vehicles & walk-on passengers.					2:17 PM	14.8	4.5
Horseshoe Bay:					9:39 PM	3.0	0.9
Ticket sales for vehicles & walk-on passengers end 10 minutes before sailing time.				01-Dec	4:53 AM	14.4	4.4
Visit http://www.bcferrries.com/schedules for alternate schedules:					9:51 AM	10.8	3.3
Oct 15 - Dec 19 2013; Dec 20 - 29, 2013; Dec 30, 2013 - Mar 31, 2014.					2:57 PM	14.8	4.5
LEAVE EARLS COVE		LEAVE SALTER BAY			10:20 PM	2.0	0.6
SAILINGS DAILY AT:		SAILINGS DAILY AT:		02-Dec	5:38 AM	15.1	4.6
*5:20 am	4:00 pm	*4:15 am	2:40 pm		10:42 AM	11.2	3.4
7:50 am	6:25 pm	6:35 am	5:15 pm		3:40 PM	14.8	4.5
10:15 am	8:50 pm	9:05 am	7:40 pm		11:01 PM	1.0	0.3
12:45 pm	11:00 pm	11:30 am	9:55 pm	03-Dec	6:22 AM	15.7	4.8
*Daily except Sundays and January 1					11:33 AM	11.2	3.4
Ticket sales & loading end 5 minutes before scheduled sailing time for vehicles & walk-on passengers.					4:25 PM	14.8	4.5
Visit http://www.bcferrries.com/schedules for alternate schedule for:					11:45 PM	0.7	0.2
Oct 11, 14, Nov 11, Dec 20-29, 2013 & Feb 10, 2014				04-Dec	7:07 AM	16.1	4.9
For up to the minute info go to www.bcferrries.com					12:26 PM	11.2	3.4
or call 1-888-BC-Ferry					5:13 PM	14.4	4.4
				05-Dec	12:29 AM	1.0	0.3
					7:52 AM	16.4	5
					1:23 PM	10.8	3.3
					6:05 PM	14.1	4.3

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Mustang convertible down to La Jolle, enjoying the breeze on our faces, until we arrive at the seafront and are met by the overwhelming stench of the seal colony below. Time enough to watch the hoards of kayakers and swimmers venturing out amongst the frolicking seals that breach and dive close-up, hundreds of them all barking in unison.

We find a little sushi place behind the front and then take a walk through this pleasant little town with its palm trees, pretty hanging baskets and chi-chi boutiques.

We drive, roof down, to Old Town San Diego, an historic park since 1968 where the Kumeyaay Native Americans lived for thousands of years before the arrival of the Spaniards whose colonization of Alta, California began in 1769.

In 1822 a Mexican military command arrived in San Diego, having gained independence from Spain the previous year. Soldiers

began building traditional sun-dried adobe brick residences, forming a street pattern around an open plaza. San Diego's Mexican era ended abruptly in 1846, when the United States declared war on Mexico. The town was occupied and won back several times, and the war ended in 1848 with the signing of the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo, establishing a new boundary between the two countries. In the same year, James Marshall's gold discovery at Coloma lured adventurers from around the world, and San Diego became an important stopover for miners.

We visit other buildings in the historic park — the old courthouse, Rust General Store, Racine & Laramie Tobacco, Toler's Leather Depot — and return to the courtyard of the Cosmopolitan Hotel where we relax and enjoy a real margarita mixed with fresh lime juice and listen to the Mexican band playing softly as the sun sets.



Do you have a great travel story?

For information on how to submit, contact Ian Jacques: editor@coastreporter.net