

5 Must-Visit Southwest Vacation Destinations

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Photo Courtesy of www.ResortKonaKai.com

Whether for a stress-relieving holiday getaway or vacation in the New Year, or for experiential gift-giving targeted to those on your “nice list,” travel is top of mind for many this time of year. With that in mind, I wanted to share a collection of my top travel picks of late in the American southwest that are all tried-and-true...by yours truly. I can personally attest that these are five locales you’re sure to love.

Kona Kai Resort & Spa (ResortKonaKai.com)

First, I hope you can make it over to San Diego, as America’s Finest City boasts some extraordinary properties. This most certainly includes the recently-expanded Kona Kai Resort and Spa, a Noble House resort that I recently experienced. Located on the tip of San Diego’s Shelter Island, it offers a range of amenities and experiences unique to its beautiful waterfront location and rich history. The property has 170 luxurious guest rooms, including 41 brand new suites that feature contemporary island-inspired decor, deep soaking tubs and oversized balconies. The new suite I stayed in had an elegant and dramatic glass fireplace with lighting that can be set to the color of your choice. I love Kona Kai because it’s intimate, especially with décor touches like this, yet all-encompassing.

The resort boasts its very own private beach replete with multiple cozy gas fire pits where you can make s'mores each evening (with kits the hotel offers) as well as multiple swimming pools, waterfront restaurants, an award-winning spa, a superbly picturesque 500-slip marina and the renowned private Kona Kai club. For groups, there are 55,000 square feet of versatile indoor and outdoor event space.

You can sip and savor at the Paloma pool and bar, Kona Kai's new and exclusive adults-only pool area allowing guests to enjoy poolside craft cocktails and California coastal cuisine while overlooking the marina and some of the region's most breathtaking sunsets just beyond. Take advantage of their bicycle program and take a refreshing cruise along the sparkling bay in front of the resort, which is replete with impressive sea craft.

The property is also extremely well-situated in the city, located just minutes away from San Diego International Airport, the historic downtown Gaslamp Quarter and all of the area's top attractions. In all, Kona Kai Resort and Spa is a prime destination for both locals and visitors, and a perfect choice for families and couples looking for a convenient getaway.