

A composite image featuring three runners on a track. The background is a photograph of a woman in a grey tank top and red shorts running on the left, a man in a red t-shirt with 'INDUSTRY THREADWORKS' on the front running in the center, and another woman in a white tank top with a blue 'P' logo and blue shorts running on the right. A semi-transparent red overlay covers the entire image. The text is overlaid on the red area.

THE  
**CrossFit** JOURNAL

# AS PRESCRIBED: SAN DIEGO

A guide to the best healthy eats, shops, bars and  
outside-the-gym workout spots in sunny San Diego.

BY HILARY ACHAUER

Point Loma Nazarene University Track: San Diego's best place to get outside the gym and sweat in the sun.



Adam Yudman

# San Diego

has the highest concentration of CrossFit boxes in any metro area, so finding a **CrossFit affiliate** in the Southern California city is easy. But at some point we need to leave the gym—or so we're told. If you find yourself in the sunny city just 18 miles from the Mexican border, we've got a guide to some of San Diego's best places for eating, drinking, shopping and outdoor fitness.

## When in Rome

San Diego is the eighth largest city in the United States and a mecca for craft beer, biotech and cutting-edge science, but it still retains a low-key beach-town vibe. For men, dressing up for dinner means wearing the fancy flip flops and your nicest pair of jeans. For women, sundresses and tank tops are acceptable attire almost everywhere. San Diego is a city of morning people, not night owls. Most people turn in early so they can get outside the next day to surf, cycle, hike or just enjoy the weather.

A word on weather: San Diegans have very little patience for less-than-perfect weather and will complain bitterly about two days of rain or a week of temperatures below 75 F. The metro area has one of the least affordable housing markets in the U.S., so San Diegans regard the weather as their reward for such steep prices.

When meeting a new person in San Diego, don't ask, "What do you do?" That question is for New York or Los Angeles. "What do you do for fun?" will be met with much more enthusiasm. Unless stationed here with the military, most people chose to live in San Diego because of the weather and laid-back lifestyle, often prioritizing location over climbing the corporate ladder. It's not that the city is filled with Spicoli-like slackers—successful entrepreneurs and brilliant scientists are everywhere. However, in this strong "work to live" culture, people make an effort to separate their work and home lives.

Even if the street is empty, wait for the light before crossing because police are very generous with their jaywalking tickets. Finally, be prepared to pick a favorite taco shop and defend its merits vigorously against all others.

## Sun's out, Guns Out-Side the Gym

The only thing San Diegans take as seriously as taco shops is surfing. Not everyone here surfs, but those who do spend hours discussing and pursuing the perfect wave. Great surfing spots dot the coast from North County to the border. If you surf, you know about them; if you don't, you don't care. Most residents have a surfer friend introduce them to their favorite break and teach them the basics of surfing, but if you're visiting, **San Diego Surf School** in



Richwell Correa/CrossFit Journal

**San Diego: Sun and surf guaranteed.**

Pacific Beach offers private and group lessons for kids and adults.

## POINT LOMA NAZARENE TRACK



Adam Yudman

**Pull-ups with a view at Point Loma.**

There comes a point when you can't hide your fitness indoors any more—especially if you live in a city with almost-perfect weather. There's not a more ideal spot in San Diego for outdoor fitness than the Point Loma Nazarene University track. Tucked away in Point Loma, a community of San Diego set on a peninsula separating the San Diego Bay from the Pacific Ocean, this Christian liberal-arts school is home to a recently renovated track and old-school pull-up rig perched high above Sunset Cliffs, which fall away to one of the best surf spots in Southern California. Why stare at the walls of your gym when you can practice bar muscle-ups with a killer ocean view?

3900 Lomaland Dr., San Diego, 92106  
[Pointloma.edu](http://Pointloma.edu)

## CONVENTION CENTER STAIRS

Sure, the primary purpose of the San Diego Convention Center is to host conferences and events such the world-famous Comic-Con,

Don't worry: It will be sunny and 80 F tomorrow in San Diego. And the day after that. And the one after that.



Dave Re/CrossFit Journal

but health-conscious San Diegans have turned the wide set of 100 stairs into a year-round outdoor gym. Take the stair workout to the next level by combining it with a run along the quarter-mile Embarcadero loop, just a minute away from the Convention Center. The loop features seven exercise stations including rings, parallel bars, pull-up bars and a balance beam. If you want to go two-for-one, jog northwest along the boardwalk through Seaport Village until you get to the USS Midway. Once alongside the aircraft-carrier museum, you can hit the CrossFit Journal World of WODs challenge [Monster of the Midway](#).

111 W. Harbor Drive, San Diego, 92101  
[Embarcadero fitness trail map](#)

### SEVEN BRIDGES WALK



Hilary Achauer

**Spruce Street Suspension Bridge:** [Take a pic and try to get it on CrossFit.com.](#)

The city of San Diego is home to about 150 canyons, a topographical quirk that's saved it from endless concrete and high rises. Where urban canyons are found, you can also find bridges that allow cross-canyon access. Instead of heading east for a hike to [Potato Chip Rock](#) and standing in line for a photo, stay in the city for a 5-mile walk—or run for time—that explores seven of these bridges, many of them historic. The walk starts at the east side of Park Boulevard and Village Place. Detailed instructions for the entire walk can be found [here](#). Highlights include the Quince Street Footbridge, a 1905-vintage wooden trestle bridge over Maple Canyon, and the Spruce Street Suspension Bridge. Suspended 70 feet over Kate Sessions Canyon, the Spruce Street bridge bounces and sways as people walk across or if a stiff wind blows. Are you brave enough to try a pistol in the center?

Additional bridge info: [San Diego Cultural Heritage Alliance](#)

### SUNSET AND SAVASANA

Some people want a yoga class that's intense and challenging, but when I do yoga I'm looking for maximum relaxation. And nothing is more relaxing than holding a Warrior II pose while watching the

sun set over the Pacific and listening to the sounds of a live DJ. April through September, the WaveHouse in Mission Beach hosts Rhythm and Moves Yoga every first and third Wednesday of the month. The yoga class takes place on the Coaster Terrace, which sits in between the ocean and the Giant Dipper, a historic wooden roller coaster built in 1925. When the 75-minute class is finished, the party starts, with craft beer, wine and free samples from local coffee roasters and juice bars. The class and after-party cost \$20 per person.

3125 Ocean Front Walk, San Diego, 92109  
[Belmontpark.com](#)

## Going Pro

San Diego has two major professional sports teams. The National Football League's [San Diego Chargers](#) play from September to January at Qualcomm Stadium, although the team might soon move to Los Angeles in pursuit of a more modern, up-to-date stadium. Major League Baseball's [San Diego Padres](#) play from March to the beginning of October at Petco Park, which opened in 2004 and played a major role in the revitalization of the East Village neighborhood in downtown San Diego.

## How Many Blocks Is That?

### BARE BACK GRILL

A transformative experience at a New Zealand burger joint called Fergburger inspired the founders of Bare Back Grill to buy Fergburger's recipes and recreate the restaurant in San Diego. The first location opened in 2005 in Pacific Beach, and two others—Raglan Public House in Ocean Beach and Queenstown Public House in Little Italy—followed. The Pacific Beach restaurant has the perfect low-key beach vibe, and it's family friendly but filled with all ages and a mix of locals and tourists. All burgers are made from grass-fed organic beef and go beyond the typical meat, cheese and bun. Sheila's cracked comes with beets, a fried egg and sweet tomato chutney, and the kiwilango features blue-cheese crumbles, jalapeños and garlic aioli. Blow a few Zone blocks by pairing with sweet-potato fries and a selection from the well-curated craft beer menu.

**Bare Back Grill:** 4640 Mission Blvd., San Diego, 92109  
[Barebackgrill.com](#)

**Queenstown Public House:**  
1557 Columbia St., San Diego, 92101  
[Queenstownpublichouse.com](#)

**Raglan Public House:** 1851 Bacon St., San Diego, 92107  
[Raglanpublichouse.wordpress.com](#)

## QUARTYARD

There's something very "Portlandia" about an urban park made from repurposed shipping containers. As irritatingly hipster as it may sound, Quartyard in the East Village neighborhood of downtown San Diego is a delight. This 25,000-square-foot once-vacant lot is now home to a coffee shop, dog park, restaurant, beer garden, music venue and rotating list of food trucks. The on-site restaurant, S&M Sausage & Meat, is a "meatery" serving exotic game meats, homemade sausage and bacon, and a delicious Cubano sandwich with house-brine-roasted pork shoulder. Check the calendar on the website for a list of events, including farmers markets and outdoor concerts.

1102 Market St., San Diego, 92101  
[Quartyardsd.com](http://Quartyardsd.com)

## AMPLIFIED ALE WORKS

Burgers and fries dominate the typical menu for an ocean-view beer garden, but Amplified Ale Works offers an unexpected twist on bar food with its Mediterranean-style menu. The grilled kebab plates—choose sirloin, chicken, local vegetables, salmon or shrimp—are surprisingly healthy, especially if you choose a side salad instead of the house-cut fries. The in-house brewery turns out hoppy, West Coast-style ales, lagers and experimental batches, and the assistant brewer has celiac disease, so every beer brewed on site is gluten-reduced.

4150 Mission Blvd., Mission Beach, 92109  
[Amplifiedales.com](http://Amplifiedales.com)

## THE MISSION

The best way to follow up a Saturday-morning workout is with a filling, nutritious breakfast. With three locations (Mission Beach, North Park and East Village), The Mission has San Diego's breakfast and lunch needs covered. Serving a cuisine dubbed "Chino-Latino" for lunch, the restaurant really shines with its breakfast food. Go full cheat meal with blackberry pancakes, or stay in the Zone with power plato breakfast, which includes scrambled egg whites, chicken apple sausage and black beans.

**Mission Beach:** 3795 Mission Blvd., San Diego, 92109  
**North Park:** 2801 University Ave., San Diego, 92104  
**East Village:** 1250 J St., San Diego, 92101  
[Themissonsd.com](http://Themissonsd.com)



# Shop for Time

## THE HEART & TROTTER



The Heart & Trotter: Where protein is plentiful.

The only local, sustainable butcher shop in San Diego, **The Heart & Trotter** is the city's best source of locally raised, hormone- and antibiotic-free meat. Its whole-animal, hand-butchered approach means the shop can sell cuts not found at most counters, and The Heart & Trotter also uses every part of the animal to make a variety of products including bone broth and raw dog food. What's more, Trey Nichols, one of the owners of this North Park shop, is a CrossFit athlete. In addition to grass-fed and finished beef, heritage pork, and chicken, duck and eggs, the store also sells locally sourced honey, beef jerky and hot sauce. If all the delicious-looking meat whets your appetite, stay for a meal and enjoy artisan sandwiches, grass-fed burgers and house-made sausages along with a selection of some of San Diego's finest craft beers.

2855 El Cajon Blvd., San Diego, 92104  
[Theheartandtrotter.com](http://Theheartandtrotter.com)

## PARADOWSKI'S SWIM AND SPORT

Swim workouts have been part of the CrossFit Games since 2011, and CrossFit Founder and CEO Greg Glassman included this important directive in "World Class Fitness in 100 Words": "Regularly learn and play new sports." All this means swim workouts should be part of your repertoire. The place to go in San Diego for swimming gear—from suits to goggles—is family-owned Paradowski's Swim and Sport. The knowledgeable staff will help you find the right gear for your water-based workouts.

7962 Convoy Court, San Diego, CA, 92111  
[Paradowskiswim.com](http://Paradowskiswim.com)

## BIRD'S SURF SHED

San Diego's best surf shop is miles away from the ocean. Bird, a San

Diego surfing legend, opened this massive Quonset hut filled with more than 1,400 boards in 2011. Bird's sells boards, wetsuits, clothes and bathing suits, but it also hosts surf-film premieres and hands-on board-shaping clinics. The staff is knowledgeable and friendly—none of the cooler-than-thou attitude found at many of San Diego's surf shops. The shop is worth a visit even just to marvel at the boards lining the arched ceiling. And if you have a ding in your board, bring it along to get fixed up at nearby Joe Roper's Surfboard Repair.

1091 W. Morena Blvd., San Diego, 92110  
[Birdssurfshed.com](http://Birdssurfshed.com)  
Joe Roper's Surfboard Repair  
7760 Vickers Dr., San Diego, 92111  
[joeropersurfboardrepair.com](http://joeropersurfboardrepair.com)

## SPROUTS FARMERS MARKET

Savvy San Diegans who want high-quality organic produce skip Whole Foods in favor of a more affordable choice: Sprouts Farmers Market. The chain, which now operates more than 220 stores in 13 states, started out as a San Diego fruit stand in 1943, and the stores still retain a down-home, humble vibe. In addition to great deals on organic produce, the barrels of bulk items are a wonderful source of bargains, and the vitamin and supplement section includes almost every natural remedy or herb under the sun. For eight locations in and around San Diego, visit the website below.

[Sprouts.com](http://Sprouts.com)

## GRAFFITI BEACH

Sometimes life calls for something other than workout clothes. If you've spent most of your clothing budget on fitness attire, the South Park clothing boutique Graffiti Beach can outfit you stylishly and affordably. The store sells men's, women's and kid's clothes with a hipster SoCal flair. You'll also find accessories, décor and gifts, such as lovely white-and-gold ceramic flower pots and The Compendious Coffee Chart Print, with drawings of the various ways to make coffee—from Chemex to automatic drip.

2220 Fern St., San Diego, 92104  
[graffitibeach.com](http://graffitibeach.com)

# Cheat Days

## PARK AND REC

Think of it as a house party without the next-day cleanup or irritated neighbors. Park and Rec is a three-bungalow hangout in University Heights where you can sip craft cocktails while playing

ping pong, shuffleboard, darts or cornhole. One of the bungalows is devoted to dancing to either live music or a DJ. The oak-tree-shaded courtyard with an outside bar, original stained-glass windows and ornate wooden doors reinforces the house-party vibe. The bar specializes in craft cocktails (go to nearby Small Bar for craft beer) including the Cabrillo, made with green chili vodka, mezcal, pineapple-gum syrup and spiced rum.

4612 Park Blvd., San Diego, 92116  
[Parkandrecsd.com](http://Parkandrecsd.com)

## POOL PARTIES: LAFAYETTE HOTEL AND HARD ROCK HOTEL

Your hard-earned abs shouldn't stay hidden away in the gym. Show them off at one of San Diego's summer pool parties. Those with an appreciation for history will enjoy the 70-year-old Lafayette Hotel's Swim Club in North Park, which hosts pool parties with live music Saturday and Sunday all summer long around a pool designed by actor and five-time Olympic gold medal winner Johnny Weissmuller. For a bigger party scene, hit up Hard Rock Hotel's FLOAT, with daybeds, cabanas, flat-screen TVs and live DJs at night.

Lafayette Hotel: 2223 El Cajon Blvd., San Diego, 92104  
[Lafayettehotelsd.com](http://Lafayettehotelsd.com)  
Hard Rock Hotel San Diego: 207 5th Ave., San Diego, 92101  
[Hardrockhotelsd.com](http://Hardrockhotelsd.com)

## NOBLE EXPERIMENT

The opposite of loud see-and-be-seen pool parties, Noble Experiment is a somewhat-secret speakeasy hidden within a restaurant. The sense of mystery begins when you make a reservation, which is by text only. Send a message to the number on the website, and someone will respond to let you know if there's room at your requested date and time. The space only holds 32 people, so reservations are a must. The bar is tucked away inside Neighborhood, a wonderful little gastropub featuring craft beer and locally sourced food. To get to the speakeasy, walk into Neighborhood and head straight toward the bathrooms. Push on the wall of kegs (it's actually a door), and you're in. Inside you'll find no food, just top-shelf liquor and a very small drink menu, which is merely a suggestion. For a real treat, tell the bartender the type of liquor and flavors you prefer and enjoy a cocktail created just for you. ■

777 G St., San Diego, 92101  
[Nobleexperimentsc.com](http://Nobleexperimentsc.com)

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