

# SBLS

*Santa Barbara Life & Style Magazine*

July/August 2020



SUMMER LIKE YOU MEAN IT





Written by Delaney Willet

This summer may not yield the same charms as summers past—obnoxiously crowded beaches, traffic clogging the span of Pacific Coast Highway, a shortage of lounge chairs at your favorite pool—but that does not mean you cannot indulge in its greatest luxuries. The Balboa Bay Resort, an extension of the forever posh and lively Balboa Bay Club, is a weekender's playground. Situated as the exclusive hotel on Balboa Bay, the resort and club offer every imaginable amenity—a world-class spa equipped with medicinal CBD massages, a sought-after happy hour around massive fire pits facing the bay, a fully-stocked pool bar—not to mention it is a stone's throw away from one of Southern California's shopping and dining hubs, Lido Marina Village. The village boasts high-end retailers, a Malibu Farm, and its own Nobu on the bay.

After whittling my day away in and out of stores, Balboa Bay Resort whisks me away on a personal Duffy boat ride around Newport Beach and Balboa Island. What better way to get a lay of the land than in the water with a charcuterie board and wine glass in hand?

If fun in the sun has filled your summer schedule and you just want some time to yourself, may I recommend the signature massage at the hotel's spa, which is housed inside the prestigious club across the way? Entering the spa's lobby, with its towering ceilings and stone pillars, I'm awed by the prestige the club communicates without saying a word. Through a series of two keycard-protected doors, I'm both soothed and surprised by a modern oasis. Lush furnishings dapple a cozy cream-colored room, the space's metaphorical warmth only emphasized by a lulling fire encased in dark marble. I begin thinking I would be happy to spend my afternoon in my robe simply enjoying the overstuffed chairs when my massage therapist summons me through yet another keycard-protected entrance.

# Bay Watch

*Country club prestige and Southern California charm  
commingle at the Balboa Bay Resort & Club*



Somehow bliss falls short of describing my thirty minutes on the massage table, the relaxation afforded by ocean waves lapping in the background accentuated by the CBD-infused oils soaking through my skin. A transformative sixty minutes is capped with a sauna and a dip in the pool, which feels all the more luxurious as happy hour looms around the corner.

The 5 o'clock light reflecting off of the bay into the patio of A&O Kitchen and Bar dances through the fire pits as though it were a celebratory occasion. That's the sense one gets when staying at Balboa Bay Resort: every day is a special occasion. The hotel's casual, pub style restaurant pulsates with locals and guests alike. A football game is broadcast on each of the many TVs circling the bar and all walks of life mingle under its glow, debating favorites and placing bets while making selections from the expertly crafted, California-sourced beverage menu. As the sun sets on an exquisite day by the bay, we chaperone our cucumber-mezzal and vodka-

grapefruit cocktails to the restaurant's interior for dinner.

Many would be reluctant to dub the often disregarded Brussels sprouts as a revelation, but at A+O Kitchen and Bar they are nothing short of such. The tapas menu does everything to tantalize the taste buds, complementing a lobster roll with blistered shishito peppers, all tied together by a crunchy, creamy, impossibly rich chocolate hazelnut parfait. Is your mouth watering yet? Throughout the course of a two hour meal the friendly staff has become nearly family, arming us with miniature bottles of Moët Chandon Rosé to indulge in upstairs.

The soaking tub calls my name as I swing open the door to my suite, marveling at the glittering lights of boats and homes reflected by the bay. A bubble bath and my miniature Champagne bottle practically spell luxury before my eyes, the quintessential end to an incredibly indulgent weekend on the bay. \* [balboabayresort.com](http://balboabayresort.com)