

LEE IACOCCA • SPORTING COMMUNITIES • HOLIDAY GIFT GUIDE

STRATOS®

JOURNEY BEYOND FIRST CLASS

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LAPPING IN LUXURY Around Lake Como



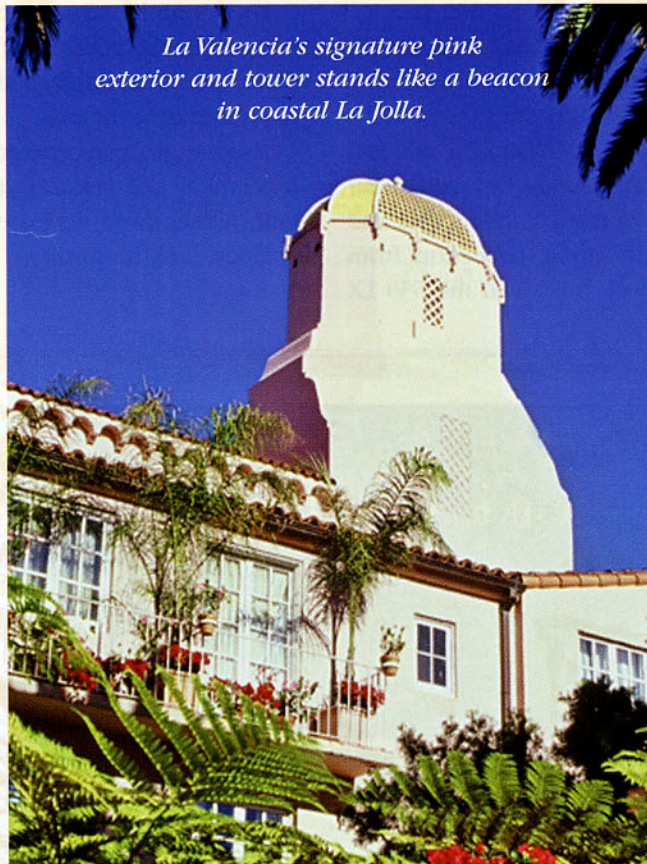
San Diego's 'Other' Landmark Properties

The beat at La Valencia Hotel in La Jolla and Rancho Valencia near Del Mar is decidedly more refined for the executive business traveler.

You've frequented all the business hotels in the San Diego: The Manchester Hyatt, Loews, Omni and Sheraton San Diego. Let STRATOS introduce you to two seductive sister properties: La Valencia Hotel in La Jolla and Rancho Valencia a bit further north near Del Mar.

Sure, they're removed from the convention and downtown bustle, but that is their allure. Your staffers can handle the convention floor; you're taking more important meetings behind the scenes al fresco on the terrace at La Valencia or in the Relais & Chateau dining room at Rancho Valencia. Or perhaps you're brainstorming a merger on the Palmer course at Aviara or Fazio's Grand Del Mar. Either way, the atmosphere is calm, cool and refined.

These two landmark properties are usually uttered in the same sentence as the storied Hotel del Coronado and Lodge at Torrey Pines — and for good reason. Both are picture-perfect in picture-perfect settings. Both have garnered a slew of awards: Each make *Conde Nast's* Gold List, while Rancho Valencia additionally scores high marks with the *Zagat Survey* and *Wine Spectator* for its food and beverage service. STRATOS loves these properties for their sumptuous accommodations, genteel spirit and close proximity to desirable sporting activities, such as diving at La Jolla cove, equestrian events at Del Mar and a world class tennis center with top USPTA pro Eduardo Sanchez at the helm. *Tennis Magazine* calls Rancho Valencia one of the Top 10 Tennis Resorts in North America.



La Valencia's signature pink exterior and tower stands like a beacon in coastal La Jolla.

On the heels of Roger Federer's four-peat at Wimbledon, we had to see what all the hoopla is about out here and hit a few balls. If it's good enough for Bill and Melinda Gates, we think the facilities must be pretty special. Here is what STRATOS found.

La Valencia Hotel

Intimate and charming, La Valencia has been the place to stay in La Jolla since it opened in 1926 for the then-staggering cost of \$300,000 (the land alone is probably worth 100-times that now). Just steps from the majestic Pacific Ocean, the hotel overlooks scenic La Jolla Cove and is fondly known among locals as the "Pink Lady of La Jolla" for its recognizable pink exterior and distinctive mosaic-tiled tower discernable for miles.

After 80 years, the hotel continues to attract and pamper the most celebrated entertainers, politicians and business leaders from around the country. Clint Eastwood, Oprah Winfrey, Billy Joel, Rush Limbaugh, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Martha Stewart are just a few notables to have checked in.

STRATOS admires its Mediterranean-inspired décor and architecture, which is enhanced by its exquisite Spanish mosaics, rare antique furnishings and hand-painted murals and ceilings.

The glamour and history of the property lives on. Its owner of more than 50 years, Harry Collins, is committed to preserving and enhancing the La Jolla landmark. In 2002, \$10 million was

spent to build 15 new ocean villas, bringing the total number of rooms and suites to 115. Improvements were also made to the swimming pool and cabana. Sipping a cocktail as the sun sinks into the Pacific is favorite tradition here.

Ocean villas range in size from more than 400 square feet to 1,200 square feet and, of course, offer views of the ocean. They evoke a sense of open, airy and casual elegance imbued with fun hints of color in upholstery and furnishings. Private butler service and 24-hour room service are available. Rates range from \$700 to \$3,500 per night.

Hunker down for a power lunch in the Mediterranean Room and Tropical Patio with its inviting Spanish flair. The space is the hotel's all-meal restaurant that features light, flavorful cuisine. Or, kick it up a notch and sink into the dark and cozy décor of The Whaling Bar and Grill, which is reminiscent of a classic seaside pub with its eclectic mix of oceanic delicacies and juicy steaks. The room boasts authentic New Bedford harpoons and lanterns, pewter candle holders, antique wooden shutters and displays of carved ivory scrimshaw. On the wall behind the bar is the famous fighting whale mural created by Wing Howard. The most exclusive dining option on-site is the Sky Room, located on the 10th floor. Savor fine French cuisine at one of only 12 booths and tables and take in 180-degree views of the ocean. Bon appetit, indeed.

Rancho Valencia

With near-perfect weather, acres of lush grounds and canyon trails, 18 tennis courts, golf at several nearby clubs and a heated pool perfect for laps, this 40-acre resort features all the essentials for a diverse and action-packed getaway.

Built and developed by La Valencia owner Harry Collins in 1989, the property has created an ambiance of style and



La Sala and its adjacent terrace at La Valencia Hotel are the ideal place for sunset cocktails. Enjoy live music every evening.

class that is reflected in the beautiful landscape that surrounds the property. Rancho Valencia's tranquil and private environment has attracted the rich and famous including Michael Jordan, Bill Blass, Jenny Craig, Regis Philbin, former president Bill Clinton and the aforementioned Gates family.

Reminiscent of California haciendas with its low slung casitas that mesh into the landscape, the resort is highlighted by custom furnishings, hand-painted tiles, fireplaces and private

STRATOS Details

- **LA VALENCIA HOTEL**
1132 Prospect Street, La Jolla(800) 451-0772
www.lavalencia.com
- **RANCHO VALENCIA**
5921 Valencia Circle, Rancho Santa Fe(800) 548-3664
www.ranchovalencia.com
- FBO INFO.:**
- Carlsbad McClellan-Palomar**
- Western Flight Inc.**(800) 523-4038
- Jet Source Inc.**(888) 438-0877
- SAN DIEGO GILLESPIE FIELD**
- Jet Air Systems**(877) 442-6427
- SAN DIEGO BROWN FIELD**
- Lancair Jet Center**(866) 736-5382
- ✓ **SAN DIEGO INTERNATIONAL**
- Jimsair Aviation Services Inc.**(619) 298-7021



Rancho Valencia near Del Mar is widely considered one of the top tennis resorts in the nation.

garden patios. Accommodations include 26 casitas with 49 beautifully appointed one- and two-bedroom suites. Each suite is accented by exposed white-washed beams, ceiling fans, cathedral ceilings, earth-tone stucco walls, clay tile roofs, glazed tile bordered fireplaces, plantation shuttered windows and French doors leading to a private patio shaded by an array of exquisite flowers. You can hear the tennis balls in the distance as you dip into the plunge pool with a glass of Krug and a plate of fruit.

The most exclusive accommodation available is The Hacienda. This is where you'll want to bring the whole family once business is done. The magnificent yet intimate 5,000-square-foot adobe home includes three suites, a private swimming pool, spa, a lush garden patio and every amenity imaginable for \$5,000 per night.

Once you visit, you get it. In fact, you'll want more, which is why Rancho Valencia recently made 12 large, luxury vacation homes available for shared ownership interests. Construction is almost completed on each of these 3-bedroom, 3 1/2-bath villas that cover 3,500 square feet of idyllic indoor-outdoor living. Villa owners take title on a one-eighth fee-simple deeded interest in one of the 12 villas and request four pre-planned week-long vacation periods each calendar year. But nearly 40 percent of the year is unreserved. With just 96 total owners, and the rest of the time is accessible on a space-available basis you can visit as often as you wish at no additional cost. The current price per share is \$455,000. Sign us up.

Between these two glamorous sisters, the choice is clear next time in San Diego. Work your deals at Rancho Valencia or La Valencia Hotel. 