

TIME TOGETHER



GRAND PACIFIC RESORTS
Time Away...Time Together...

Explore The Best of Vacation Ownership With Us

Winter Fun in and
on the Water

beCause
Destination Matters

Introducing
Grand Pacific Vacation Services

Fall 2014 | Winter 2015

Welcome!

We're excited to share this inaugural issue with you.
For help navigating *Time Together*, please refer to this brief guide.

How to Navigate



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Community



Greetings from Grand Pacific Resorts



Time Away...Time Together...

For us, it is more than just a phrase. It is our commitment to provide memorable family vacations that leave you relaxed and rejuvenated! It is our heartfelt commitment to YOU, our valuable owner, as we live out our core purpose of "Enriching Lives through Extraordinary Experiences."

We recognize that in many ways your vacation starts the moment you begin dreaming of your getaway and lingers long after you return home. That is why we have been working hard to enhance your overall experience with Grand Pacific Resorts, including [redesigning our website](#) and creating a new [Grand Pacific Vacation Services](#) support team.

We have also transformed the Owner 411 newsletter into the biannual publication you are currently reading. As you can see, *Time Together* is a digital publication, in keeping with our sustainability commitment. It is more dynamic and experiential, with rich, multimedia content that we hope will enrich your Time Away...Time Together wherever you happen to be reading it.

Browse through the pages of our inaugural issue, which features Southern California, and you will find favorite holiday traditions and [recipes](#), the story behind [the breast cancer survivor](#) we recently sent on vacation, and tips for making the most of [your ownership](#). You already knew that Southern California was a year-round destination, but did you know that kayaks might just be the best way to go [whale watching](#)?

All this and more awaits you in the pages of *Time Together*. So grab a mug of hot apple cider, curl up in your favorite armchair (or perhaps an armchair at your favorite resort), and come experience the thrill of discovering new destinations with us while reminiscing about past vacations.

You'll receive your next issue of *Time Together* in April 2015. In the meantime, share your thoughts about the current issue by [clicking here](#).

Warm Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nigel Lobo".

Nigel Lobo, Chief Operating Officer



Fall & Winter In This Edition

LETTER FROM NIGEL

Nigel Lobo Kicks Off
Our Inaugural Issue

Ask GPVS

Nightly Rentals & Exchanges



Introducing Grand Pacific Vacation Services



Winter Fun in and on the Water

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Table Talk: Holiday Traditions



Resort Spotlight
Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort

Mark Your Calendar

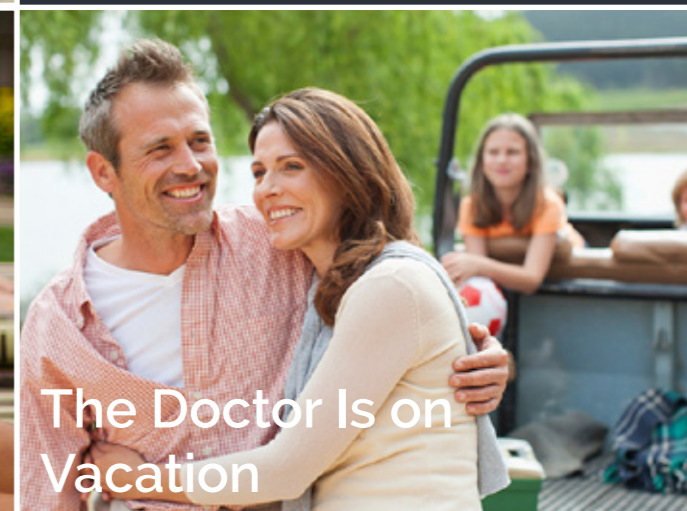
Discover What's Coming
Up in Your Favorite
Destination



Picture Perfect



beCause Destination Matters



The Doctor Is on
Vacation

"WE ARE OWNERS AT HANAIEI BAY RESORT, AND WE ALWAYS STAY NEAR KAPA'A WHEN WE FIRST ARRIVE. THIS WAS A TIME EXPOSURE ON A PARTLY CLOUDY FULL MOON NIGHT WHICH GAVE A SURREAL EFFECT."

Share Your Favorite

Did you take an incredible destination photo on your last vacation?

Share it with us on [Facebook](#) and you may see it in the next issue!



MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Find out what fun events are happening near your home resort.

Feb
14

Valentine's Day on the Wine Train

Napa, CA

Treat your significant other to a romantic evening.

Feb
14

San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition Public Tasting

Fort Mason Center, San Francisco, CA

Sip and savor some of the finest American wines.

Dec
31

Heavenly Holidays New Year's Eve Celebration

Heavenly Village, South Lake Tahoe, CA

Join the most epic New Year's party in Lake Tahoe

Dec
13

Caroling in the Cave

Moaning Cavern Adventure Park, Vallecito, CA

Buy your tickets early - this event sells out every year!

Nov
27

Christmas at the Castle

Heart Castle, San Simeon, CA

Guests are whisked away to a 1920s-style Christmas.

Ends December 31

Dec
6

Oxnard Tamale Festival

Plaza Park, Oxnard, CA

Come enjoy live entertainment, meet Santa, and eat tamales, of course!

Dec
5-6

December Nights

Balboa Park, San Diego, CA

This multicultural event includes free admission to participating museums.

Nov
27

Skating by the Sea

Hotel del Coronado, Coronado, CA

The Pacific provides a gorgeous backdrop for skating.

Ends January 4

Nov
29

Winterstart Festival

Banff National Park, BC, Canada

Enjoy a variety of events to get you in the winter spirit.

Ends December 21

Dec
12

Opening Day of Ski Season

Panorama Resort, Panorama, BC, Canada

Can't wait to hit the slopes? Head to Panorama for early season skiing.

Dec
5

Lights on Rice Parade

Rice Street, Lihue, Kauai, HI

Kauai welcomes the holiday season with its annual parade.

Dec
6

Opening Day of Ski Season

Whitefish Mountain, Whitefish, MT

Get an early start on ski season at Montana's Whitefish Mountain.



WHAT'S NEW?

By Kelly Brady-Snyder
*Senior Director of
Owner Loyalty*



Introducing GRAND PACIFIC VACATION SERVICES

You may have heard about some big changes at Grand Pacific Resorts. Perhaps you've even noticed that our services are more streamlined and you're getting more done in less time when you call in. If so, you've experienced firsthand the benefits of your new Grand Pacific Vacation Services team.

As we listened to you and our associates, we realized that everyone would benefit if you could speak with one vacation specialist about all of your needs. Inspired by your feedback, we combined Owner

Services, ResorTime, and Grand Pacific Exchange into one team, Grand Pacific Vacation Services, with the goal of creating a one-stop shop for owners.

Now, when you call in to reserve your use week, the same vacation specialist can help you book a bonus week through Grand Pacific Exchange or a weekend getaway through ResorTime. The transition is well underway, and we're already getting great feedback from you and our associates.



Check Out the New Grand Pacific Resorts Website

We recently launched our new Grand Pacific Resorts website. The fresh, mobile-friendly design and easier navigation options make managing your ownership simpler than ever. We've also added multimedia, including video testimonials, inspirational blog post, and news articles.

The [Owners Community](#) gives you the freedom to request your use week, enroll in the rental

program, and sign-up for ownership webinars, all with the click of a mouse. We're in the process of adding an interactive component to the Owners Community and other helpful features, so check back regularly for the latest updates.

As always, we welcome your feedback. Please take a few minutes to [explore the new website](#), or leave a [Kudos Card](#) for one of your favorite Grand Pacific Resorts associates.



TABLE TALK

The most memorable “time together” often takes place around the table. This is your place to share your favorite recipes, memories, and family traditions.



My Family's Holiday Traditions

My family looks forward to this cheesecake recipe at every holiday. My kids love cracking the eggs, measuring the ingredients, and running the food processor. We associate baking with the holidays. I love that I can make it the day before a big dinner and leave my kitchen free for all the other heavy holiday cooking. It refrigerates well so we can have it for a few days afterwards as

well. The house smells amazing when it bakes. It just makes your mouth water!

I love so many things about this recipe, which I've perfected over the years. I use Greek yogurt for its higher protein content and tartness. The consistency provides that richness associated with cheesecakes and significantly reduces the amount of sugar. While some sugar is

required for the baking process, a little bit of sugar substitute provides that sweetness often associated with holiday desserts but reduces the glucose load. Everything is processed in a food processor so there is much less clean up during the busy holiday season.

- Leilani H. from San Jose, California



Light New York-Style Cheesecake

Crust

9 whole graham crackers (5 ounces), broken into rough pieces and processed in a food processor to fine, even crumbs (about 1 1/4 cups)

4 tablespoons unsalted butter (1/2 stick), melted

1 tablespoon sugar

Filling

1 pound 1% cottage cheese

1 pound cream cheese, at room temperature (use light cream cheese for even less calories)

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup sugar alternative

11 ounces Greek yogurt

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/2 to 1 teaspoon grated zest from 1 lemon

1 tablespoon vanilla extract

3 large eggs, at room temperature

Vegetable cooking spray

Fresh strawberry topping (optional)



Step 1 FOR THE CRUST: Adjust an oven rack to the middle position and heat the oven to 325 degrees. In a medium bowl, stir together the graham cracker crumbs, melted butter, and sugar. Transfer the mixture to a 9-inch springform pan and press evenly into the bottom. Bake the crust until fragrant and beginning to brown, 10 to 15 minutes. Cool on a wire rack. Increase the temperature to 500 degrees.

Step 2 FOR THE FILLING: Process the cottage cheese in a food processor until smooth and no visible lumps remain, about 2 to 3 minutes. Add the cream cheese and yogurt and continue to process until smooth, 2 to 3 minutes, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed. Add the sugar, salt, lemon zest, and vanilla and continue to process until smooth, about 2 to 3 minutes, scraping down the sides of the bowl as needed. With the processor running, add the eggs one at a time and continue to process until smooth.

Step 3 Being careful not to disturb the baked crust, spray the insides of the springform pan with vegetable oil spray. Set the springform pan on a rimmed baking sheet. Pour the processed cheese mixture into the cooled crust.

Step 4 Bake for 10 minutes. Without opening the oven door, reduce the oven temperature to 200 degrees and continue to bake until an instant-read thermometer inserted into the center of the cheesecake reads 150 degrees, about 1 1/2 hours.

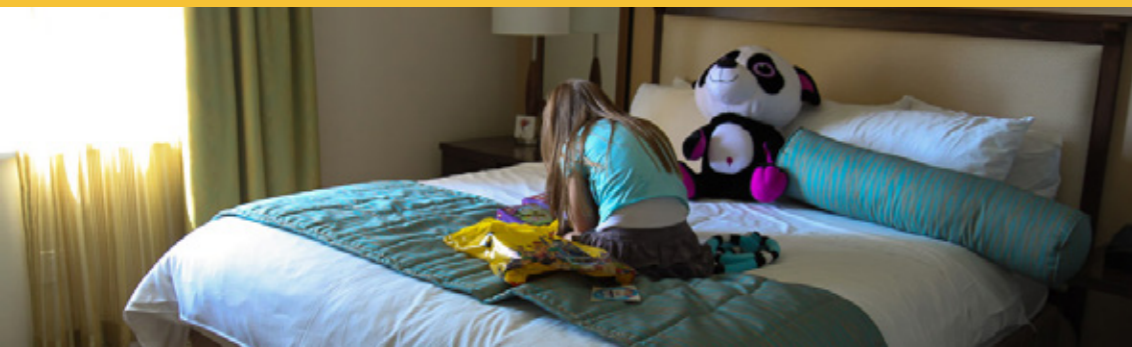
Step 5 Transfer the cake to a wire rack and run a paring knife around the edge of the cake to loosen. Cool the cake at room temperature until barely warm, 2 1/2 to 3 hours, running a paring knife around the edge of the cake every hour or so. Wrap the pan tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate until cold, at least 3 hours.

Step 6 To unmold the cheesecake, wrap a hot kitchen towel around the springform pan and let stand for 1 minute. Remove the sides of the pan and blot any excess moisture from the top of the cheesecake with paper towels. Let the cheesecake stand at room temperature about 30 minutes before slicing.



"We slept well in our plush, king-size bed despite the presence of a giant panda my daughter won at LEGOLAND."

-Katie D.



BE SEEN, BE HEARD

Your Top 5 Moments from Social Media

Our favorite moments turned out to be the hula dance lessons. Our little girls were entranced by Miss Cheyenne and were so intent on learning the steps.

-Kevin H.

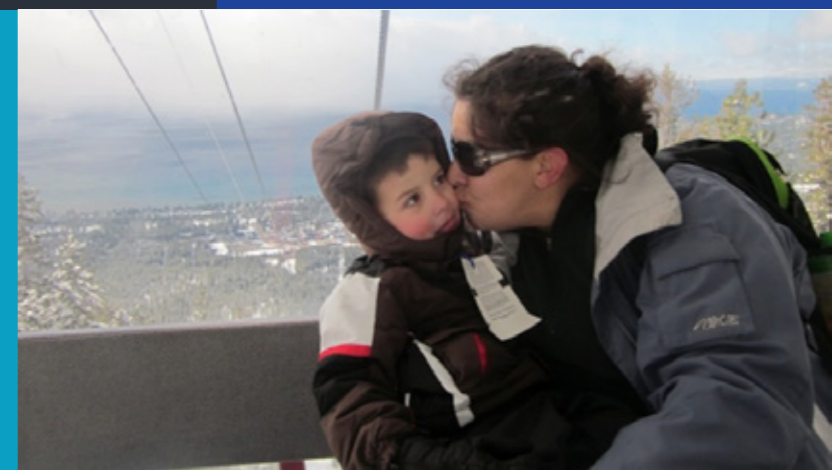
Boys will be boys!
-Liz C.

"Fifteen years ago I followed my heart to Montana and my first job at Meadow Lake Resort. I am still here and love that I can go back to the golf shop and feel the love from my first boss."

- Becca C.

My boys love Lake Tahoe in the winter or the summer. Sand or snow, they are ready for a good time. We can't wait to go back again and again, creating family memories that will last a lifetime!

-Carla H.



Join the conversation by posting to our Facebook page here!





beCause

DESTINATION MATTERS

Breast Cancer Survivors Find Hope and Healing with Send Me On Vacation and Grand Pacific Resorts

In June 2014, Grand Pacific Resorts forged a new partnership with Send Me On Vacation (SMOV) when it sent Teresa Ponce, a 34-year-old breast cancer survivor, on an all-expenses paid family vacation to Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort in Carlsbad, California. For Teresa, who grew up in California, returning home was the first step towards healing the emotional scars of breast cancer. Traveling with her mother Mary and daughter Danessa made the experience that much more special. As Teresa explains, "The trip gave me and my mother the chance to catch our breath,



"Danessa's dream is to some day visit a beach and more importantly play in the sand."

recharge our batteries, and create memories that will last longer than we do in the life of Danessa." Five-year-old Danessa saw the ocean for the first time, and together the family played in the waves, visited San Diego's theme parks, and simply lounged in the sun at Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort.

The vacation provided a welcome respite from the trials of breast cancer. "Due to the severe nausea and bone weakness that chemotherapy causes, some days I am unable to take care of myself, much less my daughter." Mary has provided invaluable support to Teresa during this time, in spite of the fact that she is herself a four-time cancer survivor and recently underwent chemotherapy and a double mastectomy. "My mother deserves a vacation more than anyone, including myself," Teresa wrote in her SMOV application.





Teresa is unable to work due to her illness, and she receives just enough disability income to pay for her family's basic needs. A vacation was out of the question before she applied for SMOV. With help from Grand Pacific Resorts, SMOV provided Teresa and her family with a seven-night stay at Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort, round-trip airfare, and spending money to cover meals and activities. Grand Pacific Resorts also stocked Teresa's condo with groceries, and our in-house photographer captured touching images of the three generations frolicking on the beach together.

beCause Destination Matters

Grand Pacific Resorts has a long history of giving back. In fact, we've been involved with Christel House, a global non-profit led by the founder of RCI, since it began in 1998. But this year Grand Pacific Resorts is expanding our giving program, BeCause Destination



Matters, to include additional organizations such as Send Me On Vacation, the Malie Foundation, and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. All three serve the communities where we have resorts, as part of our initiative to give back to the destinations we serve.

According to SMOV founder and president Cathy Backus, sending breast cancer survivors on vacation is a "win-win" for everyone involved. With SMOV, resorts donate their non-performing inventory to a good cause, and women who could never afford a





vacation enjoy some much-needed time away with their families. It's all part of Cathy's ingenious plan, which was spurred by her best friend Pam Horwitz's fight against breast cancer and Cathy's own connections in the timeshare industry.

"Pam is a two-time survivor," Cathy explains. "In 2010, after the second round of breast cancer, we went to my timeshare in Cabo. Pam came back a different person. It really helped her find her new normal. I decided I needed to make this something bigger." At the time, Cathy was the director of the timeshare division of a travel insurance company, and she drew on her personal relationships with developers, travel clubs, and exchange companies to provide the first trips to survivors in 2011. Since then, the organization has sent more than 100 women on vacation.

Today, Cathy is expanding her network

of supporters to include airlines, cruise lines, hotels, and tour companies. Her goal is to send 365 women on vacation next year, and she says that Grand Pacific Resorts has helped raise awareness of SMOV in the timeshare industry by providing vacations for survivors such as Teresa. SMOV is also partnering with The Tigerlily Foundation and The Why Foundation to provide complementary support and education for women at every stage of breast cancer treatment.

"A vacation is life changing for anyone," says Cathy. "But breast cancer or any kind of critical illness magnifies that by 1,000 percent." Grand Pacific Resorts has always been committed to enhancing lives through extraordinary experiences, and we look forward to doing exactly that for more breast cancer survivors through our new partnership with SMOV.

"From the bottom of my heart, I would like to extend a BIG THANK YOU for the wonderful trip that you so graciously provided us with. It was so therapeutic to be back home again and with my family!"

- Teresa





beCause

YOU MATTER

A Q&A with Renée Wagner, Director of Marketing, about the inspiration behind beCause Destination Matters, a new giving initiative with Grand Pacific Resorts.

How did beCause Destination Matters come about?

We're in the hospitality industry, so it's natural that each of us is passionate about improving lives. We do that every day through the experiences we give our guests and owners, but we wanted to take this further by also giving back. As we were deciding what cause to support, we asked our most loyal customers to tell us what Time Away... Time Together means to them.

One story that jumped out was about an owner who used her vacation to serve an impoverished community in Haiti. It instantly inspired us to make this about the community of people we serve, not about us as an organization. We decided to create a platform where our owners and guests could nominate

an organization and the community would vote to decide which cause we would support. What matters to our owners and guests, matters to us.

How does the program work?

Owners and guests can [submit](#) their favorite causes on the ResorTime website. Often, it's something they are personally involved with and there's an incredible story behind their passion.

The cause with the most votes at the end of each quarter receives a \$2,500 donation from Grand Pacific Resorts. We're also helping to get the word out about these deserving causes through our various blogs and even here in *Time Together*.



Tell me more about the owner that inspired this program.

Her name is Sharon, and she went to Haiti for a week to help build a school. Sharon described the experience to us as bittersweet—she loved spending time with the children, but she was also shocked by the level of poverty she encountered. Sharon wrote that she went to Haiti thinking she would help change someone else's life, but it was her life that was changed forever. She hopes to return soon with her husband.

Share your giving back story with us at
ResorTime.com/Giving.





RESORT SPOTLIGHT

Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort

By Georgi Bohrod Gordon

Standing on the grassy lawn and looking out over the seeming infinity of the Pacific Ocean during a California sunset, any visitor to the Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort might be forgiven for living totally in the moment, thinking neither of the past nor the present. There is the rhythmic heartbeat of the waves as they come to shore, fresh breath of the sea borne breeze, and passion of the fiery sun sinking beyond the watery horizon, amid striated bands of fuchsia, cerulean, and amber, until all that is left is a fleeting green flash. But there's a history in the here and now, and this grassy lawn is an integral part of it.

Since 1985, the Carlsbad Inn has commanded one of

the most picturesque views the coast of North San Diego has to offer. For nearly 30 years, guests have strolled the gardens, played in the pool, exercised in the gym, married on the lawns, relaxed in the hotel rooms, and called a piece of this idyllic locale their own through vacation ownership.

The history of the Inn's location, however, stretches back much further than these three decades, and is deeply entwined with the history of Carlsbad. This was the site of the lush estate of Albert Cohn, an early city benefactor, whose historic home, built in 1927, still stands as the on-site restaurant, Norte. This was where Bing Crosby and friends built an earlier hotel and café, stopping to relax or party on their way between Hollywood and the Del Mar racetrack. This was also the site of a quaint chapel that provided the



perfect venue for the weddings of countless couples who said their “I do’s” to the music of the sea.

The history of Carlsbad has always revolved around water. In the 1800s, the town grew as a popular railroad stop and tourist destination known for its mineral spring waters, which were found to have a similar chemical composition to the famous German spa in Karlsbad and promised to cure all manner of ills. As is typical in a desert climate, however, the fortunes and development of Carlsbad alternately waxed and waned according to the availability of water for household, commercial, and agricultural uses until 1914, when a water pipeline from the San Luis Rey Valley was constructed to provide a permanent solution. It was then that Carlsbad began to grow in earnest, becoming a viable residential center and drawing vacationers from San Diego, Los Angeles, and beyond. With a ready supply of

FOR NEARLY 30 YEARS, GUESTS HAVE STROLLED THE GARDENS, PLAYED IN THE POOL, EXERCISED IN THE GYM, MARRIED ON THE LAWNS, RELAXED IN THE HOTEL ROOMS, AND CALLED A PIECE OF THIS IDYLIC LOCALE THEIR OWN THROUGH VACATION OWNERSHIP.

water, agriculture also boomed in the surrounding areas, and avocado groves, flower fields, ranches, and produce farms prospered.

Today, visitors are still lured by the water, but now it's the waters of the Pacific Ocean that provide the attraction of this seaside town with the old-timey feel and modern-day amenities.

Starting in the 1920s and continuing beyond the war years, Carlsbad became a welcome respite for many Hollywood celebrities, who found the town and its

beaches to be an enticing, uncrowded stopover on their jaunts down to Del Mar and Baja California. The town also served as their home away from home while filming at Camp Pendleton. These glitterati stayed at the Carlsbad Hotel and the Twin Inns, lending their glamour to the restaurants and newly constructed area golf courses. Some in Hollywood saw investment potential in Carlsbad, including Bing Crosby who, together with his business associates, bought the beautiful Cohn estate on the corner of Carlsbad Boulevard and Elm Avenue (now called Carlsbad Village Drive) in 1944. By the end of the war, they had built the Royal Palms Hotel and Sea Side Café there.

With its swimming pool, wedding chapel, and commanding ocean views, the Royal Palms became a much sought after vacation destination, and the transformation of the Cohn family's former house into the Sea Side Café provided an ambience of historical continuity to the property.





Eventually, after falling into disrepair, the Royal Palms and its charming wedding chapel were demolished. In 1985, resort developer James Watkins, CEO of Winners Circle Resorts International, bought the prime piece of real estate and built the Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort on the site. Appreciating the uniqueness of the property's location and history, Watkins had the vision to try something different with the Carlsbad Inn, and it became the first ever mixed-use resort property with a portion of the units sold as vacation ownership condos and the rest operating as traditional hotel rooms. With much fanfare, the Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort was heralded as the 1,000th resort to become a part of the worldwide RCI timeshare exchange network and was awarded year-round prime time status, based on the high desirability of the location and the resort's amenities.

The Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort carries on the tradition of luxurious excellence in the heart of Carlsbad Village with amenities that include a heated outdoor pool, hot tub, fitness center, sauna, children's play area, and two multi-use meetings rooms. The Albert Cohn house continues to add historical presence to the property and today is home to Norte, a Mexican restaurant with an old-world ambience reminiscent of peaceful days at a gracious hacienda. Several other independent retail shops and food purveyors are also found on the resort property.

The resort is also paving the way for **future generations** to enjoy Carlsbad through its **sustainable practices**. Every unit has glass and paper recycling bins, which together reclaim about 50 tons of waste per year. The resort is now converting all fluorescent lights to LEDs, and ceiling fans provide an environmentally-friendly alternative to air conditioning. Energy-efficient appliances, low VOC paint, citric acid-based cleaning products, and low-flow fixtures are standard throughout the resort, which also buys recycled materials from local producers whenever possible. In addition, the resort supports periodic beach cleanups, purchases organic, fair trade coffee, and encourages its employees to reduce their carbon monoxide emissions by providing free bus passes.

Deeply connected to the past yet wholeheartedly committed to the future, Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort offers guests a welcome respite in the heart of Carlsbad Village. As you relax in the hot tub overlooking the sea, it's impossible not to get caught up in the beauty of this picture-perfect resort. Come experience it for yourself and enjoy a taste of Carlsbad's storied history.





Winter Fun in & on the Water

Southern California

THE MORNING SUN DANCED ON THE GLASSY LAGOON. A MULLET SPLASHED AS IT NABBED A FLYING INSECT SEVERAL FEET ABOVE THE WATER. NONE OF THIS QUELLED MY ANXIETY.

Winter Fun in and on the Water

A few weeks ago, Rita Root at [West Coast Stand Up Paddle](#) invited me to go for an early morning paddle at Agua Hedionda, a sparkling lagoon just north of Grand Pacific Palisades Resort & Hotel in Carlsbad, California.

Earlier this year, I tried stand up paddle boarding (SUP) for the first time in Maui, and the experience was nothing short of awful. My husband and I rented two boards from a local surfer who gave us a five-minute SUP lesson in front of our condo. We lugged the boards down to the beach, where a breeze was already kicking up swells. Again and again, I tried to move from lying flat on the board

to standing, but each time I rose to my feet, I wobbled and slipped off the side. After about 20 minutes, I swore off SUP for good and retired to a cabana by the pool.

Now here I was, carrying a paddle down to the water for what I assumed would be yet another humiliating experience. There were already several paddle boarders on the lagoon looking as tranquil as can be, including one man who appeared to be in his 80s. When I asked Rita about this, she explained that as long as conditions are right, SUP can be adapted to virtually every fitness and skill level. When taking out an older individual or someone



who is new to the sport, Rita makes sure to schedule the lesson for first thing in the morning, when the lagoon is relatively calm.

Seagulls drifted overhead. The morning sun danced on the glassy lagoon. A mullet splashed as it nabbed a flying insect several feet above the water. None of this quelled my anxiety. “A lot of people just rent a board or try to go out with friends,” Rita said as we slipped off our sandals in the sand. “Yes, you can try to SUP this way, but it usually ends with more time in the water than on the water. When this happens, people become frustrated and defeated. They tend to curse the sport or, even worse, beat themselves up.” I told Rita about my mishaps in Maui, and she smiled knowingly. “It sounds like you may not have had the right board. And I provide instruction not just on land, but out on the water where it really counts.”

Rita explained that the board I used in Maui was probably too small for a beginner of my size and that I was going to use her “Cadillac” board for extra stability. She also said that one of the biggest mistakes people make is looking down instead of at the horizon. “A lot of your balance comes from where you look. If you look down when you’re standing up or wobbling, you’re going to fall.” And after just a few more minutes of instruction, we waded into the water with our boards.

Rita had me paddle on my knees for a few minutes, just to get



AS I PULLED MYSELF BACK ON THE BOARD, I EMERGED WITH A SENSE OF CALM AND DETERMINATION. I HAD ALREADY GOTTEN WET, AND THAT WAS THE WORST THAT COULD HAPPEN.

used to the feel of the board and paddle. Then it was time to stand up. My first attempt was unsuccessful. I looked down at the board, flailed around, and promptly landed in the lagoon. But as I pulled myself back on the board, I emerged with a sense of calm and determination. I had already gotten wet, and that was the worst that could happen.

The next time I stood up, I focused on my line of sight. Instead



of staring straight down at my feet or at the water around me, I looked at the hills surrounding the lagoon, the distant shoreline, and the other paddle boarders on the water. To my amazement, it made all the difference. I was still a little shaky, but I caught my balance as I began to paddle, the forward motion adding to my stability.

We paddled around the lagoon with ease, chatting the whole time and even tackling some boat wakes. We practiced yoga poses on our boards in a quiet cove and saw a sea lion sunbathing on a dock. It felt as natural and effortless as breathing. I couldn't believe what a difference it made to have a professional instructor and the right board—or the fact

that we were there enjoying the water on a morning in late autumn.

That's the beauty of Southern California. Everyone flocks to the beach in summer for the sunshine, but there's something about the low season that shouldn't be missed. Perhaps it's the mild and moody weather or the slightly slower pace of life. Whatever the reason, fall and winter are ideal for exploring the coast by paddle board, even if the water is a little chilly.

Kayaking with Whales

Winter is a great season for kayaking off the coast. Our friends at [Everyday California](#) offer year-round kayak tours of La Jolla Cove, an ecological reserve that's also known for its snorkeling. Expert guides will lead your group through La Jolla's natural caves and around the reserve. You're likely to spot sea lions, friendly leopard sharks, and numerous fish swimming beneath the water's surface.

THERE'S SOMETHING ABOUT THE LOW SEASON THAT SHOULDN'T BE MISSED.

But for a truly unique experience, try one of Everyday California's whale watching tours, which bring you within arm's reach of the majestic creatures about two miles off the coast. The tours are offered from mid-November through the end of February, when the grey whales migrate south to Mexico's warm waters. There's nothing quite like seeing a whale surface right next to you, thoughtfully considering your presence with its wide, intelligent eyes.

Young children can ride with an adult, and the tour can be broken up into legs in order to accommodate all skill levels. Wet suits are provided to reduce wind chill, although you're likely to peel yours off once you warm up from paddling. You'll get much closer to the whales than you would by boat, literally close enough to touch them.



Surf's Up

No vacation to San Diego would be complete without a little surfing, and Rusty Friesen at [SoCal Surf Lessons](#) guarantees that you'll be standing at the end of your first two-hour lesson or your second one is on him. Rusty and his team of instructors grew up surfing in Carlsbad, California, at the very same beaches where they now teach others the sport.

SoCal Surf Lessons works with children as young as four and adults well into their

70s. The beach where the company sets up shop is sandy, with year-round breaks and mellow waves that are perfect for beginners. The hardest part is getting past the surf and learning to time the waves, but with SoCal Surf Lessons you'll have the benefit of an expert surfer by your side. All you have to do is stand up and ride the wave into shore.

As with SUP, having the right equipment is critical to your success. A lot of inexperienced surfers try to start with smaller boards, because that's what they

see out on the water. But a bigger board offers greater stability. Even with a wet suit, you'll notice a slight chill when you first enter the water in winter, but within minutes you'll be so engrossed in the lesson you won't even notice the cold.

Come Sail Away

Sailing with [Pacific Coast Sail Charters](#) is the perfect winter activity if you want to guarantee that you won't end up wet. Captain Les George, a U.S. Coast Guard-licensed captain with over 30 years of



experience, will take you up and down the Pacific Coast in style on his 39-foot yacht, Obsession.

The beauty of Les' tours is that they are completely customizable. Sit back and enjoy the ride or take the wheel and learn how to sail the boat. Listen to music on the yacht's sound system or simply enjoy the sound of water lapping against the hull. Whatever you choose, it's sure to be a memorable trip for you and your loved ones.

Preferred Vendors of Grand Pacific Resorts



**Pacific Coast Sail
Charters**





annual tradition."

Deborah's story describes an unusually dramatic transformation, but most of us have experienced the positive power of vacations in some way. We know intuitively that vacations are necessary to recharge our world-weary selves and reconnect with the people and things we love. At Grand Pacific Resorts, our vacation specialists have heard time and again from families who reunited over a shared vacation and owners who made Grand Pacific Resorts an annual tradition after finding an uncommon sense of rejuvenation at their home resort.

Studies show that Time Away...Time Together may be the best Rx for improved mood, greater productivity, and longer life.

Carlsbad, California, has always been a special place for Deborah S., a longtime owner at Carlsbad Inn Beach Resort. But the destination took on even greater significance last year, when Deborah gifted her ailing sister a week at the resort. To everyone's surprise, Deborah's sister walked all over Carlsbad Village, ate with

a normal appetite, and spent more time out of bed than in it—things that would never happen at home. "It brought life back to her," Deborah says. "It was so incredibly special that my brother-in-law wants to buy. They're coming in again next week to share another week with us, and they're looking to make this an

in particular—can boost your productivity, enhance your creativity, improve your sleep patterns, and reduce your risk of coronary heart disease and heart attack. Some of the benefits appear to come from just anticipating a vacation, while the vacation itself gives your body a much-needed opportunity to rest and reset, potentially leading to long-term



Time off, and vacations in particular, can boost your productivity, enhance your creativity, improve your sleep patterns, and reduce your risk of coronary heart disease and heart attack.

improvements in your physical health and overall well-being.

Pre-Trip Anticipation

If you're looking for an emotional high, a vacation may be just thing, but not in the way you likely expect. In 2010, researchers conducted a 32-week study of 1,530 Dutch adults to determine the relationship between vacations and happiness. The results were published in the journal *Applied Research in Quality of Life*. Interestingly, vacationers did report a higher degree of happiness than non-vacationers—during the time leading up to their trips. Generally, vacationers' happiness quickly dropped after returning home. The only people who experienced a happiness boost afterward were the ones who described their vacation as especially relaxing.

The researchers can only speculate as to why happiness

drops to baseline levels after a vacation. Perhaps it's the stress of returning to work or the reality that you don't live in paradise 365 days of the year. Whatever the case, it's clear that anticipation is an important part of the vacation experience. Perhaps you read destination guides in advance of traveling or chat about your plans with coworkers. The very act of dreaming boosts your happiness, a major reason many people become vacation owners. Owning a week gives you something to look forward to when work seems monotonous or family life is hectic.

Enhance Your Productivity

We say we value vacations, but many of us consider ourselves too busy to actually take time off from work. According to a July 2014 study by the U.S. Travel Association, 96 percent of American workers believe that taking paid time off is important, and more than a quarter of workers say their companies have a "Use It or Lose It" vacation policy. Yet 40 percent of workers don't use all of their paid time off, leaving an average of 4.9 days on the table. The same study reveals that many of these workers are afraid they will return to a mountain of work, or that taking a vacation will reflect negatively on their careers.





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Ironically, taking regular vacations may actually enhance your job performance. In 2006, Ernst & Young conducted an internal study of its employees. The accounting firm found that for each additional ten hours of vacation, employees' performance reviews were eight percent higher the following year. A 2011 study by Expedia gives us a possible explanation for these surprising results. According to the survey, 45 percent of participants came back to work feeling "rested, rejuvenated, and reconnected to their personal life," and 35 percent said they felt better about their job and more productive after a vacation.

No doubt you've experienced a sense of increased creativity and motivation after coming back from vacation or even on a day-to-day basis from taking breaks. As a writer, I regularly find myself hitting walls with the content I'm drafting (this article included). In many cases, all I need to do is step away. Sometimes the answer comes to me while I'm eating lunch, stretching at my desk, or even at home relaxing with my family and friends. Other times, I return to a particularly difficult piece after a weekend away, and I'm able to jump right in and finish it in record time.

We may think we're too busy for vacations,

but the research tells us that we're actually undermining our work performance when we refuse to take a break. Time off can fuel our creativity and motivation, increasing our productivity and ultimately enhancing our careers rather than hurting them.

The Heart of the Matter

We've explored how vacations can boost your mood and your productivity. But did you know vacations are also good for your body and your heart in particular? According to the Framingham Heart Study, women who took a vacation once every six years or less were eight times more likely to develop coronary heart disease or have a heart attack than those who took at least two vacations per year. Likewise, men who failed to take annual vacations had a 21 percent higher risk of death from all causes and were 32 percent more likely to die of a heart attack.

Why is there a correlation between vacations and heart health? It's hard to say. The study is silent on that question. But other research has shown a similar link between sleep and heart health. In fact, a 2011 *European Heart Journal* review of 15 medical studies found that short sleepers had a 48 percent increased risk of developing or dying from





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coronary heart disease. I can't help but wonder if rest is the common factor. Perhaps time off—whether in the form of sleep or vacations or both—gives our bodies a greater gift than we recognize. (If you have trouble sleeping, vacations may help there, too. A study by consulting firm Alertness Solutions found that upon returning from vacation, most people slept close to an hour more each night than prior to their vacation.)

Time to Go

You've always enjoyed spending Time Away...Time Together. Now you can go on vacation knowing that it's more than a fun indulgence—it's good and necessary for your emotions, your work, and your body. So go ahead and plan your next trip. Even if the vacation isn't for some time, you'll get a pre-trip happiness boost, and you'll experience the long-term benefits when you return home relaxed and rejuvenated. Now pardon me, I need to go book my own getaway!

Fun Fact

Unlimited Vacation Days?

Virgin founder Richard Branson recently declared that the company's employees can take as many vacation days as they want, provided that their absence will not hurt the business or their careers. Branson was inspired by Netflix, which adopted an unlimited vacation policy in 2012.

While some experts fear the move will usher in too many choices and unclear expectations, Virgin and Netflix believe that giving their employees more control over their PTO will lead to higher productivity and job satisfaction, in addition to giving them another carrot to offer when recruiting top talent.





Ask

Grand Pacific Vacation Services

Have a question? We have answers!

Q: If I book a trip to Las Vegas through ResorTime, will I have to give up my use week in Oxnard?

Answer from a Vacation Specialist

We know you value your vacations, so we're always looking for ways to give you more Time Away...Time Together.

ResorTime is a complimentary owner benefit that gives you access to more than 1,000 resorts worldwide at special owner-only rates. **Traveling with ResorTime does not affect your use week.** Many owners use ResorTime for weekend getaways. Others see it as an opportunity to explore new resorts and destinations. Check your email inbox for the latest deals, or visit [ResorTime.com](https://www.resortime.com) to browse all of your resort options.

Q: I'm a new owner and have never used Grand Pacific Exchange. What does "look before you book" mean?

Answer from a Vacation Specialist

Many exchange companies require you to deposit your use week in their exchange program prior to seeing what other weeks are available. The downside is that if you don't see anything appealing, it's too late to take your week out of the program.

With Grand Pacific Exchange, our "look before you book" feature gives you the option to search available weeks before you deposit yours. This flexibility is one of the unique features of GPX and one of the reasons some of our owners use GPX as their primary exchange program. Visit [GPXVacations.com](https://www.gpxvacations.com) for more information.

*Still have questions about your owner benefits? Use **#AskGPVS** to reach out to us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/AskGPVS), or call (888) 477-6967.*





This season is all about family, and we'd like to take this opportunity to thank you for being an important part of ours.

May the holidays be a joyful time for you and your loved ones.





GRAND PACIFIC RESORTS

Time Away...Time Together...



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