

## SHERATON CARLSBAD OFFERS PERFECT SYMMETRY BETWEEN BUSINESS, PLEASURE

by Carolyn Burns Bass

In the heights above north county San Diego sits the **Sheraton Carlsbad**, one of the finest new family and business resorts in Southern California. It's extremely rare to find a hotel and resort with such perfect symmetry between business and pleasure, traveler and community.

Set only five miles from the beach at Carlsbad, and virtually next door to Legoland and the Crossings at Carlsbad for golf, the Sheraton is poised with purpose. A 180-degree view of the Pacific stretches across its westward face, offering a panorama unencumbered by construction. The Spanish Mediterranean design blends perfectly across 15 acres, which includes 250 rooms and suites, a conference center, a spa, tennis courts, and large courtyard with pool.

The main entrance to Legoland is just down the street, making the Carlsbad Sheraton a superb location for families wishing to enjoy the beach and the theme park. Sheraton guests have access to a private gate into Legoland, a feature families with small children will find most valuable. Sheraton's family friendly policy also allows for children under the age of 5 to eat free from the children's menu, while kids 6-12 may order at 50-percent-off from the adult menu. On top of all that, it's pet friendly.

Rooms are large, with ample space for families sharing a room. Most brand hotels now feature signature mattresses; Sheraton's is called the Sweet Sleeper®. Cushy and comfy, the bed is made with sleek linens and a plethora of pillows for extra posh. Bathrooms are spacious and have generous amenities, linens and thirsty terry robes. Each room is decked with a plasma TV, wireless Internet, and complimentary Starbucks coffee and tea service.

The expansive conference center faces the ocean, allowing the California sunshine free blaze within the foyers where business guests meet and mingle before entering the smart ballrooms and other flexible meeting spaces.

Adjacent to the pool you'll find the **Ocean Pearl Spa**. With a full menu of choices, including delicious facials and body rituals, massage therapy and salon treatments, the gentle setting and ambience of the spa has something for every guest. Nothing beats a massage after a long day of meetings, a foot massage after a trip with the kids to Legoland, or a body scrub and Jacuzzi soak after 18-holes of golf.

During my visit, I took in the **Ocean Pearl Spa's** Signature European Facial. Esthetician Albina, a sparky brunette originally from Russia, recognized my dry skin challenges immediately. With the detail of an artist, she cleansed, scrubbed, rubbed and buffed my face until it glowed. (At least it felt like it was glowing.) The facial included a scalp massage, shoulder and arm moisturizing and massage, and a foot massage while my face was in masque.



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The success of a new hotel, especially in tough economic times, relies on its relationship with the community around it. When you find locals frequenting the spa and restaurants, you know the place is doing something right. The **Sheraton Carlsbad's** done it right with its **Twenty/20** dining room.

At **Twenty/20** you'll find exceptional cuisine and camaraderie from everyone, including assistant restaurant manager Tim Segoviano who wanders through the restaurant greeting guests and stopping to chat with regulars. The menu includes a

tantalizing array of surf and turf selections inspired by the options available in coastal California. The dining room is casual and upbeat. Plate glass windows showcase the ocean view, while a large patio offers dining al fresco almost 365 days a year.

Even if you don't stay on property, if you like a raw bar, you must visit **Twenty/20** on Thursday night. **Twenty/20's** Thursday night crudo bar is worth the drive from anywhere in Southern California. Oyster selections, from half-shell to shooters, are served fresh from the sustainable Carlsbad Aqua Farms only a few miles away. Sashimi offerings are equally fresh, smooth and buttery, delightfully indulgent. Executive sous chef Reed Anderson smokes and cures a variety of meats right on the property, serving them in micro slices for the ultimate tongue fest.

During the colder months of the year it's the crudo bar that hops, but throughout spring and summer, **Twenty/20** takes the Thursday night fun outside with a tapas bar on the patio.

Also on Thursday nights throughout the year, you'll find Latin guitarist, David Maldonado strolling among guests, serenading them with smiles and nods and musical romance.

A new feature at **Twenty/20** is the flexible tasting menus offered on Tuesday and Friday night. Starting at \$20 for a two-course menu with wine pairing, or \$40 for a four-course menu with wine pairing. Select bottles of wine are priced at \$20.

**Twenty/20** also has a fun vodka menu with vodka flights beginning at \$12.50 for three tastes.

After all the wine tasting and vodka flights, you probably won't want to drive home. Accommodation pricing at the **Sheraton Carlsbad** can't be beat for what they offer—especially now in the off-season. Each room has a terrific view of the ocean, golf course and open land, or pool. The resort offers shuttles to the main gate at Legoland or down the road to the beach. Just call them when you're ready to return and they'll pick you up.

The resort is offering several special-rate packages right now, many of them including spa, golf, family, Legoland, and dining elements. When I say this is a resort for your whole family, I mean it. They even have a terrific pet package.



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