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Romance in the Newport Beach Harbor

BY **MONIQUE REIDY**

Nothing says romance quite like an evening stroll along a Southland Beach as the sun slowly sinks into the sea. The air is crisp, and the warm summer breeze feels refreshing and soothing. These are the moments that make milestones. The ones where couples find themselves away from the everyday, in surroundings that feel new, yet comfortable. So much of those experiences hinge on the ambiance. A perfect setting with ideal surroundings. For starry-eyed lovers seeking that romantic getaway, Newport Beach is where those memories are made. 🍷



THE HOOD



© PC BALDEMAR



Balboa Bay Resort - Bayfront View

© PC BALDEMAR



Gondola Adventures



Balboa Bay Resort - Kayaking

© PC BALDEMAR

THE HOOD

Newport Beach



Balboa Bay Resort - Kayaking

© PC BALDEMAR



A+O Cocktail

© PC BALDEMAR



A+O Restaurant



A+O Signature Dishes

© PC BALDEMAR



Blend Cafe

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Balboa Bay Resort - Whiskey Cart



© PC BALDEMAR



Couples seeking a magnificent waterfront experience in Newport Beach will want to visit Balboa Bay Resort, where long strolls along the harbor, great food, and boatloads of fun are at every turn. Located over the Balboa Bay harbor, the hotel is ranked the Number One Resort in Newport Beach by U.S. News & World Report. There are 159 luxurious guestrooms and suites, and the Bayview rooms offer stunning panoramas of grand yachts and luxurious sailboats against a backdrop of people of all ages enjoying a variety of water sports.

Balboa Bay Resort features everything an active traveler wants from a luxury hotel: A full-service 10,000-sq. foot spa, a fitness studio, a heated outdoor swimming pool with poolside cabanas, and an adjacent pool bar. The private dock offers water sport rentals such as stand-up paddle boards, Duffy Boats and kayaks.

Waterfront dining is magical in the summertime and A+O Restaurant Y Bar, located in the hotel lobby, not only offers wonderful harbor views and live entertainment, but the dining menu is delectable. Dishes like Grilled Ancho Glazed Octopus, Shrimp + Grits, and Prosciutto + Stone Fruit Salad are mouthwatering, and the delicious experience is intensified by the upbeat atmosphere.

A smoked cocktail cart features a selection of signature mixed drinks that are both flavorful and visually enticing. A+O is open for breakfast, lunch and dinner and guests can enjoy drinks at the firepit on the patio all day.

Blend™, also in the lobby, provides fresh grab-and-go fare and an assortment of coffee drinks from which to choose. Couples who prefer to hang out in their stylish guest rooms can order in-room dining 24-7. ☛



Balboa Bay Resort Guest Room



Wedding

"For a dreamy evening every couple will cherish, the Duffy Experience is a must. It includes a one to 2-hour Duffy boat ride, a charcuterie board, bottle of wine and a Balboa Bay Resort blanket guests can keep as a souvenir."

The resort provides an array of opportunities for couples seeking a romantic escape to create a special experience through its new Recreation Center. A beach picnic at sunset in Crystal Cove is as romantic as a date can get. It includes transportation to and from the beach, two keepsake Balboa Bay blankets, chocolate-covered strawberries, two split bottles of champagne, two water bottles, throw pillows and a picnic basket. Later, a walk along the beach to see the Crystal Cove tidepools and visit the local shops rounds out a perfect evening.

For a dreamy evening every couple will cherish, the Duffy Experience is a must. It includes a one to 2-hour Duffy boat ride, a charcuterie board, bottle of wine and a Balboa Bay Resort blanket guests can keep as a souvenir.

Another romantic pastime is available at Gondola Adventures, a 4-minute drive from Balboa Bay Resort. This unique activity features a private cruise that can be customized according to a guest's preferences. A Dinner Cruise, Dessert Cruise, Casual Pizza or Lunch Cruise are available, and each comes with an expert gondolier, and an Italian serenade.

Gondola Adventures feature authentic Venetian gondolas imported from Venice, Italy, and they are maintained by hand with meticulous care. The hour-long cruise takes place in Newport Harbor, passing multi-million-dollar ocean vessels and harbor-front mansions. However, the best views are those of the spectacular fiery sunsets, so an evening sail is highly recommended. Gondola Adventures has the only operating wedding gondolas on the West Coast, and they offer a perfect setting for a unique and idyllic wedding proposal.



Gondola Cruise



More local recreation is available at nearby Balboa Island, a fun place to spend an afternoon shopping or lunching at sidewalk eateries or cafes. Shopping is also available at Fashion Island, an outdoor mall with upscale designer stores and boutiques, as well as Lido Marina Village and Cannery Village.

Nature lovers will enjoy the Upper Newport Bay Nature Preserve and Ecological Reserve. This 1,000-acre wetlands reserve is home to more than 200 endangered species and 35,000 migratory birds.

Special offsite activities throughout the Newport Beach area can be arranged with the concierge at Balboa Bay Resort.

And should a wedding be in the works, Balboa Bay Resort boasts a bayfront ceremony lawn and more than 32,000 square feet of indoor and outdoor meeting space. It's the ultimate site to experience a romance-filled ceremony. ❖

Balboa Bay Resort

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