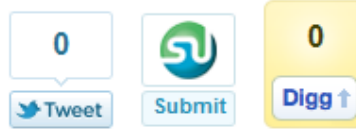


## True romance

*Looking for love? San Diego has all the right places*

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Honey, why don't we ever do anything romantic anymore?

If that phrase sounds familiar, you've probably either said it or heard it said to you. To fix this, all you need is a little time, a little money and a willingness to surrender yourself to the charms of a romantic day trip or weekend in San Diego.

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Here are 10 sure-fire suggestions for restoring some spark in your love life in San Diego.

1. Skip the driving and take the train. **Amtrak** ([www.amtrak.com](http://www.amtrak.com)) offers a scenic and relaxing way to get to San Diego and some of its most beautiful locations. From Union Station in downtown Los Angeles, Amtrak can get you to downtown San Diego in as little as 2½ hours. It stops at Old Town, downtown San Diego, Balboa Park, SeaWorld and the San Diego Zoo.
2. What's a more romantic excuse to snuggle with your honey than a harbor cruise around San Diego Bay? **Flagship Cruises & Events** ([www.flagshipsd.com](http://www.flagshipsd.com)) clearly has a soft spot for sweethearts: Besides regular dinner and brunch cruises, the company offers a Sweethearts Cruise and a Touch of Romance Cruise.  
  
Flagship also offers whale-watching excursions and an inexpensive (\$4.25) 15-minute ferry service to the Coronado Landing on Coronado Island.
3. Venetian gondolas are the height of romance, but you can skip the airfare to Italy and just visit the **Gondola Co.** ([www.gondolacompany.com](http://www.gondolacompany.com)). Located at the Loews Coronado Bay resort, Gondola Co. offers rides through the Coronado Cays canals around Coronado Island. Package prices begin at \$25 per person, with private couple excursions costing \$85 and up.
4. If wine makes your heart sing, try pairing it with handcrafted truffles and chocolates at the famous **Hotel del Coronado's Eno wine bar** ([www.hoteldel.com](http://www.hoteldel.com)). The attentive staff provides wines and chocolates in flights, ensuring a sensual progression of aromas and tastes.
5. If you're having trouble dreaming up the perfect trip, Timothy Schenck, known as **TourGuide Tim** (<http://tourguidetim.com>), has you covered. Schenk will work with you directly to suggest a fun and romantic tour itinerary, or you can use his comprehensive website to design your own

adventure.

Schenk recommends the San Diego Zoo Safari Park, perhaps because he proposed to his own wife in its secluded upper reaches.

6. Put together your own picnic at one of **San Diego's** many **farmers' markets**. Little Italy, just to the north of downtown, has a Saturday Mercato ([www.littleitalysd.com/mercato](http://www.littleitalysd.com/mercato)) from 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m., where you can buy oysters, breads, pastries and more. The eclectic Hillcrest area has a Sunday market, ([www.hillquest.com/hba/farmersmarket.htm](http://www.hillquest.com/hba/farmersmarket.htm)).

Once your basket is full, consider heading over to **Balboa Park** ([www.balboapark.org](http://www.balboapark.org)) to eat your meal.

7. If you want to rise above it all, take a short drive north to Del Mar for a **hot-air balloon ride** at **California Dreamin'** ([www.californiadreamin.com](http://www.californiadreamin.com)). The Del Mar Coastal Balloon Flight runs 45 minutes to one hour and offers spectacular views. Upon touchdown, passengers can toast their adventure with a glass of champagne or cider.

8. Get a massage. The family-owned **Beauty Kliniek Aromatherapy Day Spa and Wellness Center** ([www.beautykliniek.com](http://www.beautykliniek.com)) offers 50-minute couples massages that promote a deep sense of relaxation and comfort.

9. San Diego offers some spectacular venues from which to watch the sun go down. Try the **Sky Room** in the historic **La Valencia Hotel** ([www.lavalencia.com](http://www.lavalencia.com)), located high above La Jolla Cove.

The nearby **Georges at the Cove** ([www.georgesatthecove.com](http://www.georgesatthecove.com)), also in La Jolla, offers spectacular sunset views, as well as what is arguably some of San Diego's finest cuisine.

10. Finally, what is a romantic getaway without a luxurious hotel or quaint bed-and-breakfast to stay in?

If money is no object, stay at the **Andaz San Diego** ([www.sandiego.andaz.hyatt.com](http://www.sandiego.andaz.hyatt.com)) in the Gaslamp Quarter. The hotel also offers a special package for couples called "Love Goes Around" that includes a welcoming bottle of wine and an in-room breakfast for two.

If quaint is more your style, then pick the big, soft beds and comfy rooms at the **Hillcrest House Bed & Breakfast** ([www.hillcresthousebandb.com](http://www.hillcresthousebandb.com)).

However you choose to enjoy the romantic side of San Diego, the city's many charms will go a long way toward getting your love life back on track.