



destinations by denise

By Denise Schriedel - North Laguna Living Freelance Writer

Alive & Well in

CATALINA ISLAND

Avalon

Arriving in Avalon is a magical experience... "Gem of the Sea" is the meaning of this historic and playful island, just 26 miles from Newport Beach! Our hotel bellman was waiting for us to take our luggage to the PAVILION HOTEL so we could enjoy the island festivities before check-in ... then we were whisked away to the WRIGLEY 125th ANNIVERSARY TOUR, an hour-long bus ride providing historical information, culture and scenic locations on CATALINA ISLAND. Many people I know have wonderful memories of visiting the Island since their childhood, coming on yachts, cruise ships and catamarans.

WHERE TO GO - WHAT TO SEE

Our scenic tour started with a visit to the Catalina Country Club, originally the Chicago Cubs clubhouse, also a fine-dining club for the Hollywood elite. We also visited the fabulous CATALINA GOLF COURSE featuring a nine-hole course nestled in the foothills, noted for being the oldest operating golf course West of the Mississippi, since 1892. A full Pro Shop rents clubs, electric and pull carts. Say hi to Golf Pro "Steve"... Many of my local friends in Newport Beach have many fond memories of playing that course!

The bus tour also takes visitors to the top of the Mt Ada, which is the original Wrigley home, now a bed and breakfast, with breath-taking views of Avalon and beyond! In 1919 WILLIAM WRIGLEY JR. (the chewing gum magnate) bought the controlling interest of the SANTA CATALINA ISLAND COMPANY and greatly improved the infrastructure. Wrigley owned the Chicago Cubs who practiced spring training on the island.

The CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY owns and operates 88% of Catalina Island, which was donated

in 1975 by Philip Wrigley, his wife Helen and his sister Dorothy Wrigley Offield, making it the oldest and largest private land trust in Southern California. The remaining land is privately owned and operated by the CATALINA ISLAND COMPANY, which owns and manages many of the tourist attractions. The DESCANSO BEACH CLUB is Catalina's only beachside restaurant and bar, which offers cabanas and chaise lounges, as you enjoy the warm sun, cool breeze and beautiful ocean views.

ISLAND SPA CATALINA, which opened in 2014, offers the "best and most relaxing view" on the Relaxation Deck, including heat lamps, chaise lounges and spa cuisine service. As I lounged on the deck watching the parasailers, cruise ship activity and luxurious yachts coming to the island, I realized that this is truly a five-star spa! The Spa Suites are uniquely decorated. I enjoyed the new Sea to Summit massage treatment, followed by the Eucalyptus Steam Room, then dry sauna, outdoor jacuzzi and private heated pool, all amidst the Spanish-style architecture and plant life. My guest Marie relaxed on the Warm Sand Quartz Table for the Catnap Sleep Therapy. In the evening, the public may seasonally

visit the Relaxation Deck with wine, beer and champagne and lite bites.

**WHERE TO STAY -
WHERE TO DINE**

Upon returning to the PAVILION HOTEL, guests are welcomed with a wine and cheese reception overlooking the lovely harbor and oceanfront views, comfortable seating in the covered, outdoor patio with firepit. Guests mingle sharing stories and years of memories of coming to the island. Also included in the room rate is a full breakfast, made-to-order omelettes, and in-room coffee service and mini-refrigerator. Guests also have access to fitness classes as ISLAND SPA CATALINA, use of bicycles, Glass Bottom Boat Voyage, Discover the Casino Tour, among other events. The staff is impeccably accommodating with the Assistant Manager "Danny" getting to the know the guests and greeting them by name!

The newly renovated HOTEL ATWATER, opening summer 2019 is located just a block from the beach in the heart of Avalon, "blending a casual Catalina aesthetic with contemporary island flair."

HOTEL ATWATER, 125
Summer Ave., Avalon,
CA (877) 778-8322





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That evening, we enjoyed a casual, yet elegant fine-dining experience at the AVALON GRILLE, centrally located overlooking the Avalon Bay, which also hosts a “Happy Hour” until 6pm. The ambiance and décor is accentuated with “warm wood accents, high ceiling, spacious patio and large window wall” to make our dining experience exquisite. The host cheerfully greeted us and our server, Robin, was truly passionate and accommodating to the guests. My SCALLOP entrée was superb, complemented by the many varietals of RUSACK WINES from Santa Barbara County. I sipped the 2017

Sauvignon Blanc with aromas of jasmine blossom and caramelized pineapple ... Seductive!

ALISON WRIGLEY RUSACK (great-great-granddaughter of William Wrigley Jr.) co-owns Rusack Vineyards with her husband GEOFF RUSACK. Alison serves as vice chairman and first vice president of the CATALINA ISLAND COMPANY, as well as a lifetime member of the SANTA CATALINA ISLAND CONSERVANCY. The 25th Anniversary Ball for the Conservancy will be held on April 25, 2020, at the AVALON CASINO BALLROOM. Contact: (310) 510-1445

HISTORY AND HOLLYWOOD

As many of us know, Catalina Island was a filming location for over 500 movies, TV and commercials

over the past 90 years, including Ten Commandments (1923) and Jaws (1974). Many celebrity sightings throughout the years including Charlie Chaplin, Clark Gable, James Cagney, Cecil B. De Mille ... the list goes on. During World War II, the island was closed to tourism and served as a military base during those years.

EXCLUSIVITY

The two most exclusive private members-only clubs are the CATALINA ISLAND YACHT CLUB which is one of the oldest and most unique clubs in Southern California. Only members and their



guests are allowed. No reciprocal members. The TUNA CLUB is equally as exclusive, to "elevate the sport of fishing to its highest possible standard and for the protection of So. Cal game fish." One must be invited to join.

Let us continue enjoying these outstanding experiences which are ALIVE AND WELL in AVALON!

GETTING THERE*

CATALINA FLYER Departs Newport Beach 9:00 a.m.
 Arrives Avalon 10:15 a.m.
 Departs Avalon 4:30 p.m. Arrives Newport Beach 5:45 p.m.
 CATALINA EXPRESS Daily departures from Long Beach, San Pedro and Dana Point
 Call for departure times
 *Also check out private boat charters and helicopter service!

Further information on some of the attractions featured in this article may be found at www.visitcatalinaisland.com.

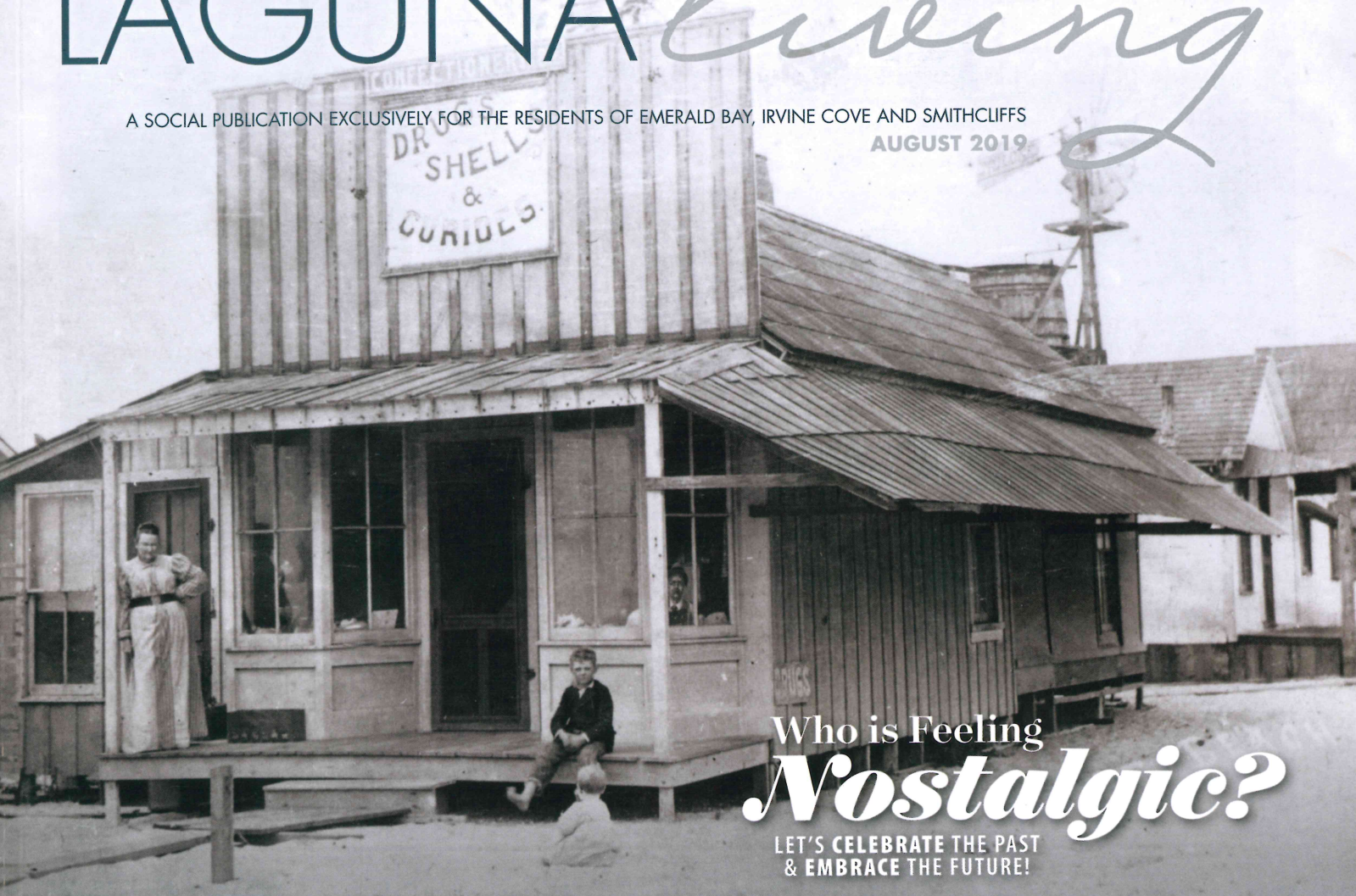


Denise Schriedel is an Orange County resident and freelance writer who specializes in wine, travel, resorts and spas.

NORTH LAGUNA *Living*

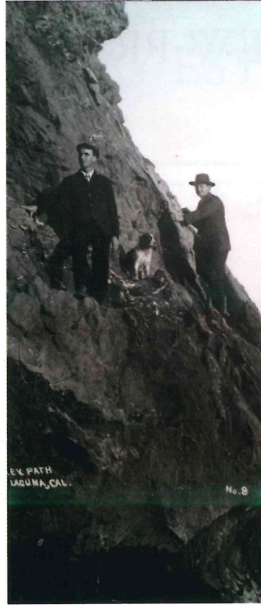
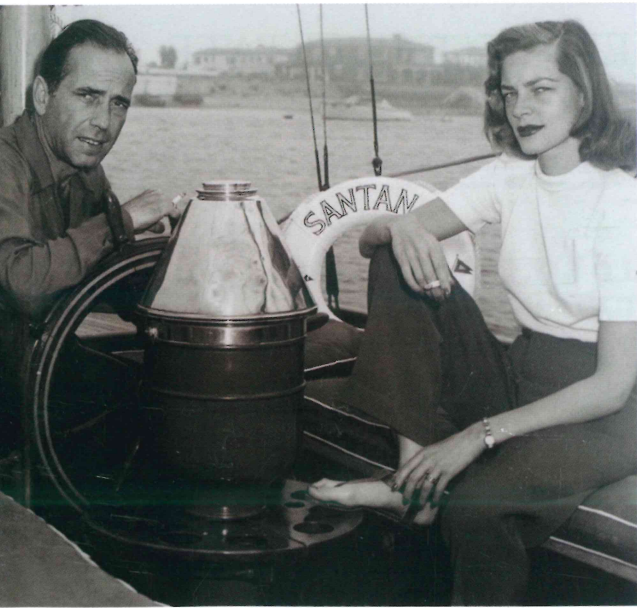
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AUGUST 2019



Who is Feeling *Nostalgic?*

LET'S CELEBRATE THE PAST & EMBRACE THE FUTURE!



YOUR PHOTOS YOUR STORIES YOUR COMMUNITY