Jill and Hank Chambers’
San Diego Favorites

We’ve personally eaten at all of these restaurants and recommend them to you. We’ve left off countless ones that weren’t so great and may not have visited some new great ones.

There is a great map of San Diego in the Restaurant section of the Yellow Pages. (Kind of Old School, but if you’re in a hotel, you can find one) Of course there is Google and Yahoo as well. Also there is a map and itinerary at the end of this list. (The numbers next to the restaurants refer to that map)

Most of these will require reservations at least a few days in advance. However, if you use www.opentable.com, there are often reservations available even when the restaurant says that they don’t have any.
Another great website for restaurants and other activities with review is: [http://www.tripadvisor.com/Tourism-g60750-San_Diego_California-Vacations.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Tourism-g60750-San_Diego_California-Vacations.html)

Pick up the “Reader” at any supermarket or convenience store. It has the best list of what’s happening in San Diego or go online to [http://www.sandiegoreader.com/home/](http://www.sandiegoreader.com/home/)
**Our City San Diego Magazine Favorites**  
June 2009

Best Place to find your inner solitude: Mount Soledad
Best Bookstore for Hour Long Lounging: Upstart Crow in Horton Plaza
Best Place to Buy Healthy Food: Whole Foods
Best Place to See the Sunset: La Jolla Shores Beach
Best Place for a Solo Meal: Zenbu in La Jolla and Cardiff by the Sea
Best Healthy Restaurant: Tender Greens in Point Loma Liberty Station
Best Place to Pamper Yourself: The Spa at Rancho Bernardo Inn
Best Salon: MODA Hair Design 3754 Sixth Ave.  619-299-MODA
Best Gym: The Sporting Club   8930 University Center Lane  858-202-7920
Best Beach for Relaxation: Coronado Beach
Best Romantic Drive: Coast Highway 101
Best Place for a Romantic Candlelit Dinner: Bertrand at Mr A’s  2550 Fifth
Best Place for Antiquing: Downtown La Mesa, Cedros Street in Encinitas
Best Pier for a Stroll: Ocean Beach Municipal Pier
Best Library for Kids: Central Library  820 E Street
Best Beach for Kids: La Jolla Shores or Mission Bay
Best Spot for a Picnic: Balboa Park near the Fig Tree.  By Natural History Museum
Best Place to Fly a Kite: Mission Bay Park
Best Places to eat for Kids and Parents Together: Hodads  5010 Newport Ave.
Best Place to shop with Kids: University Town Center
Best Place for Kids to Experience Nature: Torrey Pines State Park
Best Place to hear good Jazz Music: Anthology
Best Shopping Mall to Spend a Day at: Fashion Valley
Best Place to Watch a Game with your Buddies: PB Bar and Grill
Best Place for a Picnic with Friends: La Jolla Shores
Best Restaurants within 10 miles of the Hilton Bayfront

Urban Solace (4.7 miles)
3823 30th Street, San Diego 92104  619-295-6464
[www.urbansolace.net](http://www.urbansolace.net)

Island Prime (4.2 miles)
880 Harbor Island Drive, San Diego, CA 619-298-6802
Great Food, One of the **best views of the city** possible!
Seafood and Steak.  Upscale comfort food
Near the Airport on Harbor Island

Cucina Urbana (2.4 miles)
505 Laurel Street (619-239-2222)
Great quirky food.  Great prices for wine with corkage fee. There isn’t the huge markup.
Excellent food and wine list (Area 8)

Blue Point Coastal Cuisine (0.6 miles)
565 Fifth Avenue  (619-233-6623), Downtown
Romantic dining with great food, service and martini bar. Great seafood and lobster.

The Oceannaire Sea Food Room (0.6 miles)
400 J Street  (619)858-BASS
Great downtown sea food. Most flown in or caught fresh daily. It’s a very upscale chain restaurant. More food than you can eat with great waitstaff (Area 8)

Indigo Grill (1.7 miles)
1536 India St (Old Italy area) 619-234-6802
Very interesting décor and food spanning the Pacific Coast of North America (from Alaska to Mexico) Highly recommended (Area 5 or close to it)
*The Prado in Balboa Park (2.9 miles)*  
Great Restaurant right in the Park in the Museum area.  
Excellent food and wine selection. Great ambiance.  
One of Jill's favorites. In an historic building.

Wine Vault and Bistro (3.3 miles)  
3731-A India Street (619) 295-3939  
Great local food menu with wine parings. Usually the wines are accompanied by the distributor or the vintner, so it's educational as well. Great deals on Fridays.  
Great prices. A very nice evening. In Little Italy area (Area 5 but closer to downtown)

BO-Beau (7.8 miles)  
4996 West Point Loma Blvd (619)224-2884  
Point Loma/Ocean Beach Area (Area 4)  
Country French Inn feel with wood burning stoves. Actually a bit smokey (gets on your clothes). Great interesting entrées.  
They don't take reservations for some reason

You can't go wrong with any of the Cohn Family Restaurants  
[www.cohnrestaurants.com](http://www.cohnrestaurants.com)
Best View with Great Food

* Island Prime/C Level Lounge (4.2 miles)
  880 Harbor Island Drive (858-298-6802)
Top of the Market (1.2 miles)
  750 North Harbor Drive (619) 232-3474
Peohe’s (3.8 miles)
  1201 First St, Coronado Island (619-437-4474)
Il Fornaio Cucina Italiana (3.9 miles)
  1333 First St, Coronado (619-437-4911)
  Comment: View of Downtown San Diego across the Bay
  Pretty good food. Standard Italian fare.
Roys at the Marriott (1 mile)
  See comments in Seafood.

Mexican

* El Agave (4.2 miles)
  2304 San Diego Ave Old Town (619-220-0692)
  Not your typical chips and salsa place. Real Mexican food,
great moles
  Several hundred different tequilas
Old Town Mexican Café (4.4 miles)
  2489 San Diego Ave Old Town (619-297-4330)
  Comment: Traditional American-Mexican food

Italian

* Il Fornaio (See above under Best Views...)

Astri (0.8 miles)
  728 Fifth Ave Downtown (619-232-8844)
Arrivederci (2.6 miles)  
3rd Ave Hillcrest (619-299-6282)  
Comment: Best Italian food by reader poll in San Diego Magazine, 2000  
Real Italians run this place and the food is outstanding!

Trattoria Positanos (3.4 miles)  
142 University Ave Hillcrest (619-294-6995)  
Comment: Also excellent food, down the street from Arrivederci

Pizza

Sammy’s California Woodfired Pizza (1 mile)  
770 4th Ave, Gaslamp District (619-230-8888)

Bronx Pizza (3.5 miles)  
111 Washington Ave Hillcrest 619-291-3341  
Comment: Most authentic NY pizza by reader poll, San Diego Magazine 2000  
Expatriate New Yorkers run this place and make great thin pizza!

California Style: meaning eclectic I guess.

Dakotas (0.9 miles)  
901 Fifth Ave (619-238-5554)  
Comment: Excellent food. Nice Atmosphere

Kemo Sabe (3.3 miles)  
3958 Fifth Ave (619-220-6802)  
Comment: Southwestern-oriental food?
Farmhouse Café (5.4 miles)
   2121 Adams Ave (619-269-9662)
   Supposedly French, but varied menu. Small but filling entrees. Quaint. Highly recommended.

Adams Avenue Grill (5.5 miles)
   2201 Adams Ave 619-298-8440
   Comment: Excellent comfort food: soups, meat loaf, barbecue, etc

Jayne’s Gastropub (8 miles)
   4677 30th St @Adams Avenue
   Great eclectic menu. Never had a bad meal here.

* Prep kitchen (1.8 miles)
   1660 India St.
   Great ambiance. Great food. Can’t say more.

Natural Food

Jyoti Bihanga Restaurant (6.5 miles)
   3351 Adams Ave 619-282-4116
   operated by followers of Sri Chimnoy
   Get the “Neat Loaf”

True Food Kitchen (5 miles)
   Fashion Valley Mall 619-810-2929
   Good food, a bit expensive. Great waitstaff

Fast Food
   Rubio’s Baja Grill throughout the town. Famous for Fish Tacos

   In-n-out Burgers
Seafood

Fish Market Restaurant and Top of the Market (1.2 miles)
750 North Harbor Drive
(619) 234-4867
Comment: Voted Best Seafood Restaurant by reader poll (San Diego Magazine)

* Blue Point Coastal Cuisine (0.6 miles)
565 5th Ave (619-233-6623 (Area 9)

* The Oceannaire Sea Food Room (0.6 miles)
400 J Street (619)858-BASS
Great downtown sea food. Most flown in fresh daily. It’s a very Upscale chain restaurant. More food than you can eat With great waitstaff (Area 8)

** Bay Park Fish Company (6.9 miles)
4121 Ashton Street, San Diego
(619) 276-3474
Near Mission Bay in Bay Park. The best small neighborhood seafood restaurant in town. Get the Calimari Salad or any of the fish tacos!

Roys
Marriott Towers, Downtown.
Great View of the harbor and all of the sailboats. Great food. Outside bar.
Star of the Sea (1.8 miles)
1360 North Harbor Dr (619-232-7408)
Comment: Very romantic. Great view and ambience. Great Food

Harbor House (1.2 miles)
831 Harbor Drive Seaport Village (Area 10)

Steak
Rainwater (1.4 miles)
1202 Kettner Blvd, Downtown (619-233-5757) (Downtown)

Morton’s of Chicago (0.6 miles)
285 J St (619-696-3369)

Indian
Bombay (3.3 miles)
3975 Fifth Ave, Hillcrest (619-298-3155) (Area 6)

Chinese
Emerald (8.8 miles)
3709 Convoy St. Kearney Mesa 858-565-6888
Comment: Traditional Large Chinese place with thousands of things on the menu.(a few miles north of #15)
Jasmine (9.9 miles)
4609 Convoy St. Kearney Mesa (858-268-0888)
Thai

* Royal Thai (0.6 miles)
  467 Fifth Ave (619-230-THAI)
  Comment: Best Thai in town!
Rama (0.5 miles)
  327 Fourth Ave (619-501-8424)
  San Diego Magazine rates it the best in town as well
Barbeque
Phil's Barbecue (5.5 miles)
3750 Sports Arena Blvd, San Diego  619-226-6333
Point Loma/Sports Arena Area
Best BBQ in city. Get there early, or easier, call ahead, place order, go to the left hand side of the entrance and walk to the front. Just take the food home.

Brewery
San Diego has the reputation of having the best microbrewery scene in the United States. We haven’t been to many, but you should consider a microbrewery tour.  http://www.yelp.com/biz/brewery-tours-of-san-diego-san-diego

Karl Strauss (1.4 miles)
1157 Columbia Street (619) 234-2739 (Area 9)

Gordon Biersch (5.8 miles)
5010 Mission Center Rd.
Coronado Brewery (4 miles)
170 Orange Avenue Coronado, CA (619-437-4452)

**Food and Entertainment**
Croce’s (0.8 miles)
802 Fifth Ave, Downtown (619-233-4355)
*Comment:* Jazz and good food

Dick’s Last Resort (0.5 miles)
345 Fourth Ave Gaslamp (619-231-9100)
*Comment:* Purposely rude waiters, party atmosphere

*** See a concert at the Humphrey’s Outdoor Stage in the summer and fall.
Breakfast

**Hash House a Go Go (2.9 miles)
3628 5th Avenue, San Diego in the Park Area
(619) 298-4646
Great food, great atmosphere. Very busy place. Prepare for a line

*Café 222 (0.8 miles)
222 Island Ave Downtown near Convention Center
(858-794-6838)
Get Peanut Butter and Banana Stuffed French Toast

Crest Cafe (3.1 miles)
425 Robinson Avenue, 619-295-2510

Richard Walker’s Pancake House (0.9 miles)
520 Front Street, Downtown near convention center
619-231-7777

Lunch

*Con Pane Rustic Breads and Café (5.5 miles)
Near airport
2750 Dewey Road, Suite 105 (619) 224-4344
Best artisanal breads and fantastic sandwiches in town

In n’ Out Burgers:
3102 Sports Arena Blvd (5.1 miles)
2005 Camino Del Este (6.3 miles)
Best burgers in town.

Desserts

Extraordinary Desserts (2.4 miles)
2929 Fifth Avenue, 619-294-7001

Heaven Sent Desserts (4.8 miles)
3001 University (corner of 30th St), (619)793-4758
Shopping

Horton Plaza (1.0 miles)
4th and Broadway, Downtown
Great shopping in an architectural award winning mall. Easy access downtown, adjacent to the Gaslamp District for great restaurants and night life

Seaport Village (0.8 miles)
North Harbor Blvd
Comment: Quaint shops on the waterfront, o.k. restaurants

Fashion Valley Mall (4.9 miles)
6899 Friars Road
Upscale shopping area with Nordstroms, Saks, etc

Mission Valley Center (6.2 miles)
1640 Camino Del Rio North (Near Area 15)