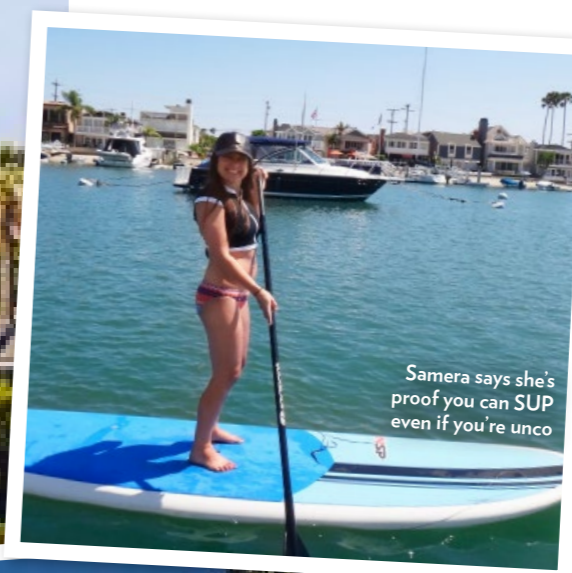


California love



Samera says she's proof you can SUP even if you're unco



REST YOUR HEAD
At Hyatt Regency Newport Beach. Why? This hotel places an emphasis on health and fitness with a 24-hour health club and StayFit menu. Rooms start at \$200 (newportbeach.hyatt.com).



WF's Samera Kamaledine discovers the real OC isn't just palm trees and surfer boys – it's a haven for health nuts, too

ANY OC FANS IN THE HOUSE

will fondly remember Julie Cooper donning sporty velour tracksuits en route to cardio barre (although at the time we were mistakenly under the impression she was on her way to Cardio Bar...). Just like *The OC* introduced the world to the teen-angst anthems of The Killers and the culture-merging holiday of Chrismukkah, so too were Julie's workouts of choice fast-tracked to popularity.

A decade later, Newport Beach (of Orange County, California that is) has further evolved into a haven of fusion fitness and conscious eating – the perfect place for WF to take a stroll down television memory lane, er, I mean a path of wellness...

Belly good

While a US vacay usually conjures up images of enough deep-fried goodness to feed your whole family tree, SoCal (that's local lingo for Southern California) represents a whole different foodie experience – one that doesn't involve waist expansion.

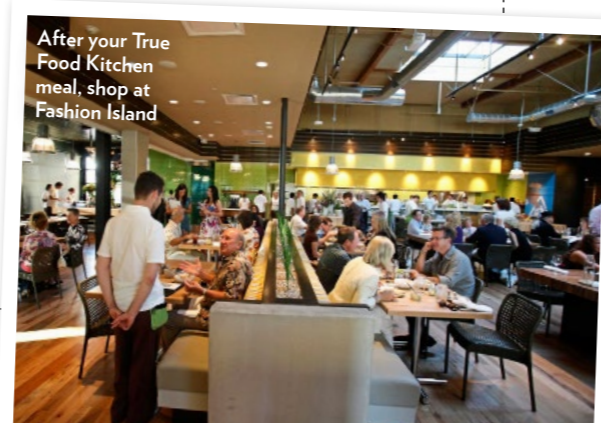
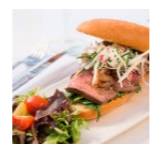
ADD TO ITINERARY:

1. True Food Kitchen (truefoodkitchen.com): Based around holistic health trailblazer Dr Andrew Weil's anti-inflammatory diet, this restaurant offers up a menu full of gluten-free, vegan and vegetarian dishes. Don't leave without trying the edamame dumplings.

2. Sambazon Açai Café (sambazon.com/cafe): This whole cafe is dedicated to the serving of delicious superfood bowls of açai

(and banana and granola and hemp protein powder if you choose). Bonus feel-good factor: they only use fair trade açai berries.

3. Provenance (provenanceoc.com): Think country farmhouse in the city. Fitted with its own produce garden (check it out between courses), the food from the seasonal menu literally goes from the garden to your dinner table. Did we mention there's wine on offer from California's Napa Valley, too?



After your True Food Kitchen meal, shop at Fashion Island

Work it out

Note I've said work it out, not work it off. The aforementioned not-your-regular-holiday-feasting won't stretch the pants, but when in Newport Beach, you do as the Newpsies do ... and that's keep fit. There's a lot of the usual outdoor beachside-action going on, thanks to all-year-round sunshine and easy access to the North Pacific Ocean. But when you head indoors, every fitness class comes with a twist.

ADD TO ITINERARY:

1. Gyrotonic (bodydesignonline.com): Created by a pro-dancer from Romania, gyrotonic exercises (made up of circular arm movements synchronised with your breathing) are performed on equipment that kinda looks like a pulley system. It costs \$45 for a trio class or \$85 for a private class.

2. Cycle with bands (defygravitystudio.com): This is a combo of high-intensity cardio and sculpting with cycling for the first 40 minutes, then an upper body and core workout using resistance bands suspended from the ceiling for the final five. Single classes from \$18.

3. Stand-up paddleboarding (piratecoastpaddle.com): Remember that ocean I mentioned? Get on it. The SUP Glow Night Tour has boards kitted out with waterproof LED lights for a glow-tastic jaunt of the bay. Even the most uncoordinated (ahem, moi) can master these waters. \$38 per person.

Prim and pamper

I always finish any trip with an obligatory spa treatment (because you know, there's all that walking). Newport Beach certainly knows how to treat a lady – luxe spas are plentiful and their menus invite you to try beauty therapies you've never heard of and didn't even know you needed (until now). Picking just one was the hardest decision I'd had to make all trip. So, I may have overindulged...

ADD TO ITINERARY:

1. Oxygen facials (thefacialworks.com): Cleanse, exfoliation, masque ... then oxygen infusion. Totally non-invasive, the unique 40-minute facial uses the power of hyperbaric oxygen to infuse serum into the skin (it's like a little spray). So super-hydrating that my skin even survived the 15-hour flight home. \$38 for a treatment.

2. Hydrotherapy (spagregories.com): Like baths? I don't! But I may have been converted after the detoxifying thalassotherapy treatment which dunks you in a spirulina-rich bath made with algae from the coast of France and is full of essential minerals and nutrients to restore the body's natural balance. \$65 for 20 minutes.

3. Natural manis/pedis (roseytoesllc.com): Rosey Toes is a health conscious nail bar that's all-natural. There are no UV lights, no gels or acrylics (which equals zero stinky chemical smells) and a no 'cell phone' policy for a peaceful setting. Choose from the Flip Flop Lemon Drop, Calming Cucumber, The Tropics, and Golden Chamomile treatments. Manis from \$27, pedis from \$38.

PHOTOGRAPHY THINKSTOCK
PRICES CONVERTED TO AUSTRALIAN DOLLARS

Want to feel the Californian love yourself? For more activities, restaurants and places to stay in Newport Beach, head on over to visitnewportbeach.com