



May/June 2019

# Westways

The Magazine for Auto Club Members



# THE FORCE AWAKENS

bicycling + sunset picnics + botanical gardens

## Corona del Mar

Corona del Mar is a place of almost mythical scenic beauty. In the 1920s, film crews waited in line to shoot scenes on its beaches, which stood in for far-flung tropical locales. In the decades after World War II, landscape painters came to this Newport Beach neighborhood to study at watercolorist Rex Brandt's Blue Sky studio. Today, visitors of all stripes continue to fall under the spell of the "Crown of the Sea." *By Brad Wright ♦ Illustration by Virginia Vallely*

Lose yourself among the blooms at the **Sherman Library and Gardens 1**, a tranquil 2.2-acre horticultural maze of arbor-shaded red-brick pathways. Relax in the Tea Garden and keep an eye out for Julius Caesar, the resident cat, sunning himself next to a burbling fountain. 2647 E. Coast Highway. (949) 673-2261; [slgardens.org](http://slgardens.org).

Cottage-casual **Summer House 2** serves burgers, salads, and tender kung pao calamari with pineapple, peanuts, and Asian slaw. Wash it down with a pomegranate-infused Antioxidant Margarita, garnished with blueberries and served in a mason jar. 2744 E. Coast Highway. (949) 612-7700; [summerhousecdm.com](http://summerhousecdm.com).

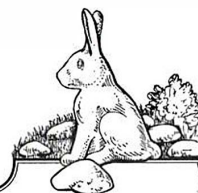
**Pedego Corona del Mar 3** leads three-hour electric-bike tours of Corona del Mar and Crystal Cove State Park. Ask your guide to show you the flower-lined Goldenrod Footbridge, which was built in 1928. *Tour price, \$159.* 2515 E. Coast Highway. (949) 612-7989; [pedegoelectricbikes.com](http://pedegoelectricbikes.com).

The English-style gastropub **SideDoor's 4** cheese and charcuterie station is a treasure trove of artisanal delights curated by a full-time cheese monger. Order your selections to go (for a later picnic), and they'll plate them appealingly with honeycomb, mustard, jam, walnuts, and bread. *Opens at 4:30 p.m. daily.* 3801 E. Coast Highway. (949) 717-4322; [sidedoorcdm.com](http://sidedoorcdm.com).

Take a dip in the calm waters at **Pirate's Cove Beach 5**, presumably named for the swashbuckling silent movies once filmed here. Small caves are tucked into the rugged sandstone promontory. Accessible via stairs, this small beach is located below the cliffs of Lookout Point Park (3001 Ocean Boulevard). [tinyurl.com/piratescovecdm](http://tinyurl.com/piratescovecdm).

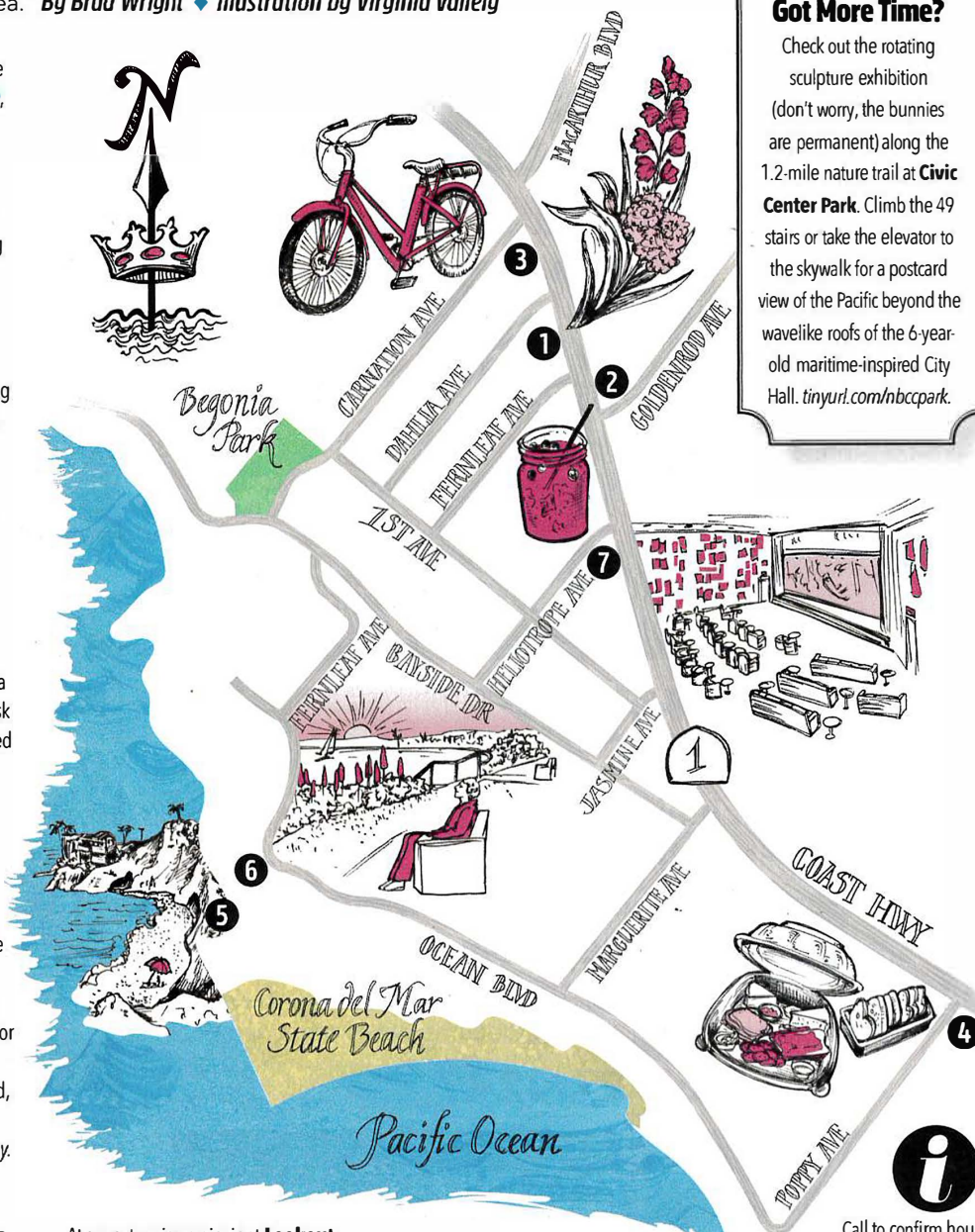
At sunset, enjoy a picnic at **Lookout Point 6**, a tiny, bluff-side park with views of Catalina Island, Newport Harbor, and the famous Wedge surf break. Slip into a charcuterie coma as you watch sailboats and yachts drift hypnotically back into the harbor. 3001 Ocean Boulevard. (949) 644-3151; [tinyurl.com/lookoutpark](http://tinyurl.com/lookoutpark).

End the day with a movie at the swanky **Port Theater 7**, a midcentury movie palace that reopened in 2012 after a 14-year dark spell. Still hungry after your picnic? Grab a pizza or some panini from the Mediterranean-inspired menu. 2905 E. Coast Highway. (949) 723-6333; [portnewport.com](http://portnewport.com).



### Got More Time?

Check out the rotating sculpture exhibition (don't worry, the bunnies are permanent) along the 1.2-mile nature trail at **Civic Center Park**. Climb the 49 stairs or take the elevator to the skywalk for a postcard view of the Pacific beyond the wavelike roofs of the 6-year-old maritime-inspired City Hall. [tinyurl.com/nbccpark](http://tinyurl.com/nbccpark).



Call to confirm hours and availability of businesses, attractions, and events before you visit. Be sure to designate a driver if you plan to drink alcohol. **Free Central Orange County maps** are available at an Auto Club branch.