

Written by Written By Elizabeth Exline

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Tell people you're going to try standup paddle boarding (that's SUP to insiders), and you'll probably suffer a few unflattering comparisons to Jennifer Aniston. But it doesn't matter if you're an unathletic mother of one who counts trolling Nordstrom as her most strenuous weekly exercise. (Hypothetically speaking, of course.) Because at La Jolla's Surf Diva (858.454.8273, www.surfdiva.com), founder Izzy Tihanyi likes to assure you she'll be happy if your stomach never leaves the board--so long as you and said board get in the water.



Of course, she says that while you're on shore. By the time you're safely (relatively speaking) rollicking on the green waves, Izzy will encourage, cajole and downright command you to stand up. And so, despite your better judgment and an abiding fear of Jaws, you put down your paddle and shakily attempt it.

At this point, you'll experience one of two fates. The first is to achieve an astonishing summit. You're up on the board! You grab your paddle and find that the view of the sun, sky and sea improves tremendously with a few extra feet between you and the water. You might spot leopard sharks (they're harmless) or garibaldi (California's official state marine fish) in the emerald waters below. You'll make these sightings, of course, as you expertly navigate the ceaseless waves with your paddle. This is a good time to pause and appreciate the irony of coming to San Diego to see the ocean only to find yourself gazing back at the coastline.



But don't forget about the alternate (and far more likely) fate: A swift fall into those poetry-inspiring waves.

Happily, it doesn't really matter whether you stand up or belly flop. The fun is in attempting it and in having the time to reflect on the dwarfing beauty of the place. (The last of these gives SUP a leg up on its sister sport, surfing, which allows a lot less time for rumination.) You may not look like Jennifer Aniston, but you're probably having just as good a time.

Operated by Izzy and her twin sister, Coco, Surf Diva specializes in introducing women--and men and kids, too--to surfing and paddle boarding, while a charming boutique caters to everyone's inner diva. In addition to the company's membership packages and surf camps for kids and teens, Surf Diva is unveiling a three-day SUP and yoga package this fall. (SUP is, for core-enhancing reasons, commonly described as "yoga on water.")



If you'd rather look at the water than be in it, consider a hike through Torrey Pines State Reserve (www.torreypines.org). Just don't try to beat the regulars. Even if you get there around the time the park opens, hikers are already pounding the pavement. But that's part of the charm of this 2,000-acre destination. Hike along the eight miles of trails—with a stroller, an iPod or your girlfriends—and the coastal scenes will reward you ten times over. Pacific views, wildflowers, birds and, of course, those eponymous pines all collude to inspire and invigorate.

Of course, the view from Coronado isn't so bad either, and the beach yoga at the Hotel del Coronado makes a strong case for getting up early. Guests of the hotel can sign up for a mild morning class where billowing sheets in the sand replace traditional mats, and where the teacher's playlist (always a gamble in even the best of classes) is replaced by the ocean's rhythmic waves. Best yet, the soothing yoga practice makes you feel virtuous while on vacation. Visit <http://www.hoteldel.com/recreation-and-fitness.aspx> for schedules. (Note: Beach yoga is available only to hotel guests.)

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