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Destination MONSARAZ

SAN DIEGO

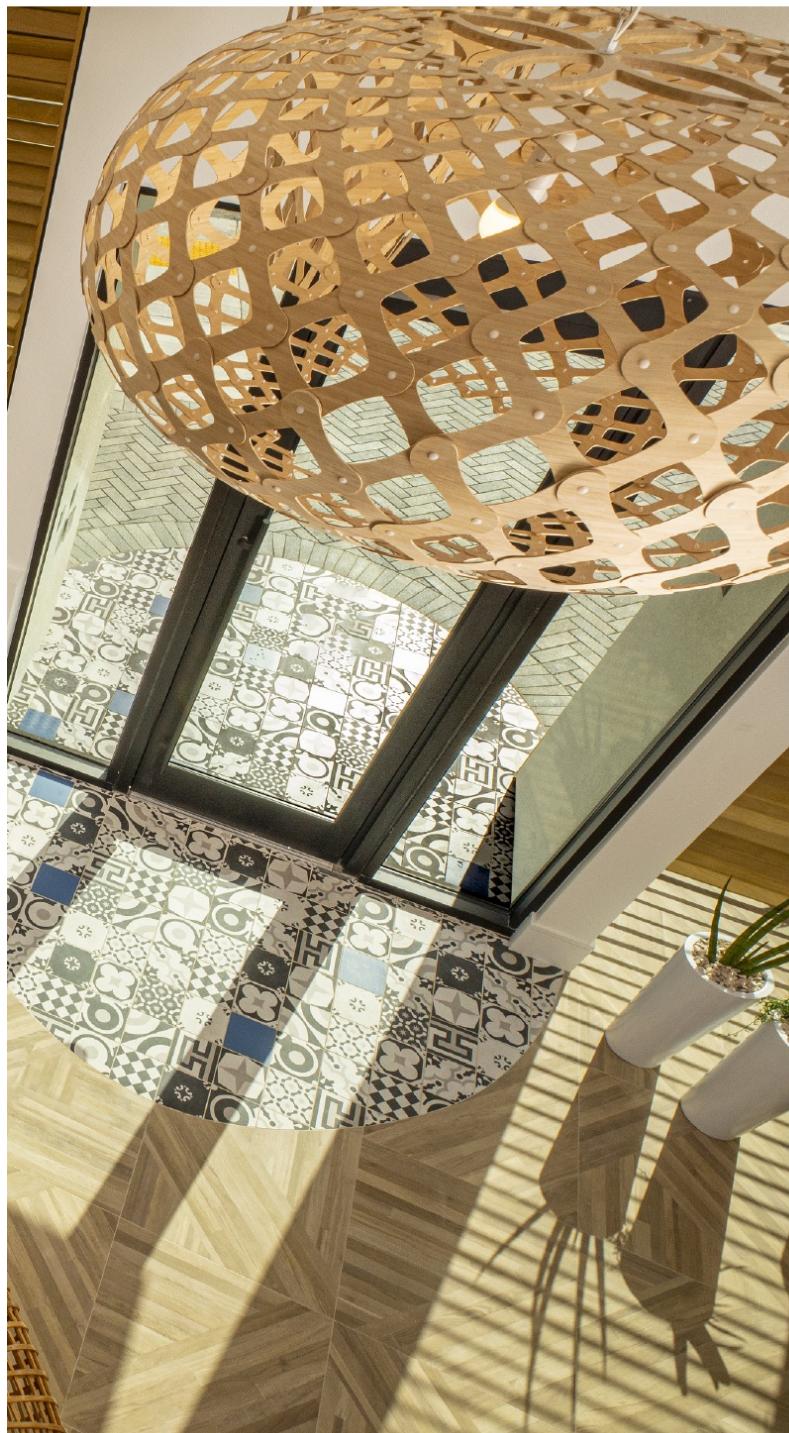


Mid-century modern design is retooled for 21st Century sensibilities in the Monsaraz' main lobby and other public areas.

OPPOSITE: Sign of the times: The Monsaraz's bright, cheerful front door says a lot about what the guests will experience inside.

QUICK GETAWAY

written by Elyse Glickman



San Diego represents the best of the Southern California lifestyle for visitors around the U.S. and the world, yet all that's great about it had to start somewhere. Point Loma happens to be that place, where California itself is said to have taken root a couple of centuries before it took shape as a tourism destination, port city and embodiment of the "American Dream." And while we're on the subject of comparing San Diego and Southern California to other dreamy vacation destinations, it is interesting to note that experienced travelers will often draw comparisons between San Diego's beach communities to cities as diverse as Lisbon, Sydney and Cape Town, thanks to its mild weather, family-friendly beaches and colorful architectural aesthetic.





Celebrate the California Lifestyle and enjoy the sun in the Monsaraz's courtyard.



As leisure travel around the world resumes, it's fitting that The Monsaraz San Diego, part of Hilton's Tapestry Collection boutique hotel division, debuted this past summer as the area's first new property in the area in over a decade. The Monsaraz opened its doors right after Southern California travel was allowed to make its comeback. However, what makes the new hotel's debut exciting is that it translates the Southern California vacation into something that's at once international and familiar, sophisticated yet laid back, and tailored to the area's geographical attributes... all things that speak to the

experienced 21st Century traveler.

Under the direction of KNA Design, R&R Construction and JWDA Architects, the 92-room hotel developed by Lamming Co. (name other properties) weaves together Point Loma's timeless appeal and easygoing surroundings into an immersive "ecosystem" of relaxation through the use of hand-hewn materials, custom handcrafted tiles, contemporary European furnishings and breezy art pieces situated throughout. The interiors are a nod to Portugal's airy and artisanal aesthetic, (interesting to consider, as many Portuguese refer to their



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LEFT: Monsaraz's lobby is a vibey and photo-worthy place to chill.

B BELOW: The living room of a premiere suite.

OPPOSITE: (TOP) The colorful, custom tiles and retro touches make the bathroom a destination unto itself.

(BOTTOM) Take in the relaxed elegance of San Diego's updated, upgraded Point Loma without leaving the hotel.

country as the, "California of Europe"). The suites and rooms, meanwhile, are designed to be their own self-contained seaside escapes, complete with blue ceramic patterned tile and anchored with dark wood appointments (a subtle hint of the area's maritime history), oversized

walk-in showers, standout vanities and bold art accents.

The Monsaraz's larger public spaces, including the Mid-Century flavored lobby and 4,000 square-foot landscaped open-air courtyard, have a celebratory element to them through the fluid way

the furniture and decorative elements are arranged. The courtyard's vivid mural by local artist (name) (which is reminiscent of Cape Town's street art) and living plant wall provides a sense of place that could work in Sidney, Lisbon or Point Loma. However, with the clean arrangement of





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the spaces' elements, they take on a different, ethereal flavor after sundown. The third floor "Hideaway" translates the hotel's distinctive vibe into a more intimate, quieter context.

The 60-seat Westerly Public House is nestled into the heart of the hotel, and transports one to Sydney, Australia (by way of San Diego, of course) through San Diego Chef Jesse Paul's "Cali-Aussie" vision. The concept may seem a bit kitchy at first glance, with a menu full of catch-phrase signature dishes including Mushroom Toasties, "Bloomin' Mushroom," Smoked Fish Mezze and Green Chile Prawns. However, give in to the full experience and it ends up being a celebration of the sensory aspects of the big beach town lifestyle shared by both cities. It's fitting that the indoor/outdoor space flows into another communal courtyard, and everything that makes up this eatery, from the produce and proteins to the furnishings, is sustainably sourced.

Depending on what time of day you check out the Westerly, you can drink in beautifully-wrought craft cocktails, your favorite San Diego-made craft beer or a rich cup of hot or iced coffee from San Diego institution Dark Horse Coffee Roasters. (Yes, the management ultimately wants you to remember you are in one of the best spots of San Diego county!). The private rooms and meeting spaces also take full advantage of the talented Chef Paul's handiwork and the unique aesthetic, while being fully functional and adaptable to a variety of conferences, meetings and networking sessions. (This is where the benefits of the property's Hilton management proves to be an asset, even as the indie flavor of the Monsaraz remains intact.

For reservations (with rates starting at \$180/night) and information, call (619) 790-5700 or google Monsaraz San Diego. **HH**

TOP: Monsaraz's colorful and modern facade.

BOTTOM: Is an espresso martini a "morning drink?"

