

**Welcome to Laguna Beach**, Southern California's premier coastal destination. Located midway between Los Angeles and San Diego, this seven-mile stretch of sand and surf offers a year-round retreat for art lovers, nature enthusiasts and beachgoers.

Laguna Beach is a seaside resort city known for a mild year-round climate, scenic coves, environmental preservation and an artist community. It was settled in the 1870s and officially founded in 1887. The current population is about 23 thousand people.

**The Beach Cities** include Laguna Beach, Dana Point and San Clemente. While San Juan Capistrano is not technically a "beach city", it is near the coast and offers a lot of history. It is the oldest community in Orange County and may be best known for the return of the swallows.

#### **Top Twelve things to See in Laguna Beach:**

1. Attend the **50<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting** of the Academy of Electrical Contracting
2. **2<sup>nd</sup> Smallest Cathedral in the World** ~ St Francis by the Sea is listed in the Guinness book of World Records as such. It was built in 1933 with rubble salvaged from the 1933 Long Beach earthquake and has 42 seats.
3. **Whaling Wall** ~ Wyland, the world-famous marine artist, posted his first Whaling Wall on the Pacific Coast Highway. The mural was dedicated in 1981 by Mrs. John Wayne. It was repainted in 1986 and then tiled in 1996.
4. **Heisler Park** ~ offers spectacular views of the coastline. Enjoy a half-mile walk along the paved path. In 2011 a sculpture, incorporating two metal beams salvaged from the World Trade Center debris, was installed here.
5. **Festival of Arts/Pageant of the Masters** ~ voted one of the top three festivals in the US, this festival has been a summer tradition for more than 80 years. Unfortunately for us, it doesn't begin until July 5.
6. **Hotel Laguna** ~ was the first hotel built in Laguna Beach and the first substantial business building. It remains today one of the most well-known structures in the city and has a history dating back to 1888.
7. **Laguna Art Museum** ~ is the oldest museum in California. It is situated on one of the busiest streets of any coastal town and is 100 yards from the ocean.
8. **Laguna Playhouse** ~ celebrating almost 100 years, this is the oldest continually operating theater on the West coast.
9. **The Greeter** ~ Eiler Larsen became the Official Laguna Beach "Greeter" in the 1940s. While in his mid-thirties, with his flowing tresses and full beard, he was cast in the Pageant of the Master's "Last Supper". You can take a "selfie" at one of his two statues in town that memorialize him.
10. **Welcome to Laguna** ~ the famous gate that welcomes you to the city reads: *The Gate Hangs Well and Hinders None, Refresh and Rest, Then Travel On*. It stands at the corner of Forest and Park avenues since 1935.
11. **Shipwreck** ~ discover a shipwreck 175 yards off Laguna Beach at Cleo Street. It was built in 1943 in Tacoma, WA and went down in November 1958.
12. **Art Galleries** ~ with more than 100 art galleries and artist studios, you'll come to understand why Laguna Beach refers to itself as an "art colony". The impeccable art draws hundreds and thousands from near and far. **Plan to join us on our Friday night optional Academy Art Walk** for a glimpse into this unique artisan culture.