

Find A Better You At Pelican Hill

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Is your New Year's resolution on this list?

- Take better care of myself.
- Spend more time with my family.
- Improve my golf game.
- Travel to an exotic destination.
- Start working on wedding plans.

If one of these looks familiar and you don't know how to get started, may I suggest you drive 90 minutes north to Pelican Hill Resort? This award-winning retreat sprawls over 504 acres on the Newport Coast and provides the people and the programs to help you achieve your goals.

Pelican Hill's monthly Balanced Wellness Weekends include nutritional advice, cooking lessons, fitness classes, and a mind and soul component. When I attended, I learned to make delicious breakfast smoothies. I was also introduced to Udo's

Choice 3-6-9 Oil Blend, which is a great source of omega fatty acids. Back in La Jolla, I found it at Whole Foods and have been adding it to almost everything ever since.

The Dynamic Yoga class was good, but I really loved the "Slow Down" massage, where an excellent therapist very slowly stretched my muscles and helped me unwind and relax.

Pelican Hill's next Balanced Wellness Weekends are January 20-21, February 10-11, and March 23-24.

If you'd rather focus on spending time with your family, Pelican Hill is still an ideal destination. Bungalows and suites that sleep up to four people come with cozy fireplaces and spacious ocean-view terraces. For larger family groups, the resort offers two-,

three-, and four-bedroom villas with full kitchens, private garages, and all the comforts of home — including a staff of butlers, housekeepers, and concierges.

Siblings, cousins, and friends ages 4-12 can play at the resort's Camp Pelican under the



Camp Pelican offers fun and games for guests ages 4-12

supervision of trained staff while adults enjoy the spa or linger over a meal. Camp Pelican includes games, arts and crafts, computers, and a special kids-only pool with bubble-jet fountains. S'mores and popcorn are a popular accompaniment to Saturday night movies. The Teen Adventure Program for ages 13-17 includes off-site kayaking and biking excursions.

The whole family will enjoy the Coliseum Pool, which, at 136 feet in diameter, is one of the world's largest circular pools. It's also fun to walk and play together on the beach at nearby Crystal Cove State Park. The resort provides free shuttles.

Speaking of free, I was very impressed to learn that Pelican



Pelican Hill's bungalows come with fireplaces and ocean-view terraces

Cove does not charge a fee for valet parking, Wi-Fi, yoga classes, use of the fitness center, or spa amenities (sauna, spa pool, and steam room).

If your resolution is to lower your golf score or straighten out your slice, Pelican Hill offers monthly golf clinics that range from a half day to two days. These are taught by PGA professionals including Glenn Deck. You can practice what you've learned on the resort's two Tom Fazio courses. In fact, you'll get great tips from Pelican Hill's professional forecaddies.

If you want to travel overseas in 2012, but can't find the time — Pelican Hill can help. The resort was designed in the style of Andrea Palladio, the famous 16th century Italian architect, and the whole time I was there I had to keep reminding myself I wasn't in Tuscany. The Great Room near the entrance boasts two



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Andrea Ristorante's Northern Italian menu includes risotto presented tableside

impressive tapestries on either side of a large stone fireplace, and a collection of beautiful Italian ceramics is displayed under barrel-vaulted ceilings and against walls covered in Italian plaster. In addition, 750 olive trees are included in the stunning landscaping.

At Pelican Hill's Andrea Ristorante, guests enjoy 23 varieties of pasta that are handmade daily in a climate-controlled pasta room. (Six of these are gluten free.) Chef Luca Cesarini's Northern Italian menu also includes milk-fed veal dishes and risotto served tableside. Insider tip: request a tour of the pasta kitchen when you make your dinner reservation.

Gelato is another specialty of the house — made in a special lab and served at the Gelato Café. The chef also makes his own olive oil on the premises. Guests are invited to the pressing, which takes place every October.



Pelican Hill is an ideal spot for a destination wedding

Finally, if your New Year's goal is to start planning your wedding, be sure to consider Pelican Hill, where couples can choose between La Cappella — with its own bell tower — or the wedding lawn with an iconic Renaissance rotunda. Both settings provide panoramic ocean views.

With your resolutions resolved, you'll be sure to have a Happy New Year! ELIZABETH HANSEN