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**The San Diego Natural History Museum**

**By Stephanie Foster**

The San Diego Natural History Museum has an impressive range in its collection. As of this writing, there's the fossil section, a section on the big fire in San Diego in 2003, rocks and minerals and a variety of educational programs.

We watched a movie in their movie theater. The current one is on Vikings, but of course the selection changes regularly, so don't count on this being current information for long. The theater is large and comfortable – almost stadium seating with how the seats are tiered, but the chairs are not so high backed as in other movie theaters. The entire family enjoyed the movie.

The second floor is where the fossils are, and this was the area we spent the most time on. There's a cave for the kids to play in, and it was hard to get my daughter to leave that area.

The kids will also enjoy joining magnetic parts to make various animals. Depending on age, it can be a bit tricky for them to figure out which part goes where, but since there are only about 5 or 6 parts per animal, it's not too tough.

My kids weren't all that impressed by the microscopic fossils that could be examined. A quick look, then they were bored. I found those quite interesting, however, and older children may as well.

If you think back to October 2003 and the gigantic fire we had here in San Diego, you'll find the section on that fire quite interesting. Brings back a lot of memories, even though my home was not threatened at that time.

In the basement level there is currently an exhibit called "Dinosaurs: Reel and Robotic". The kids loved this part. No pictures are allowed, so I can't share anything like that with you. It's a great exhibit, though. The basement exhibit changes at least once or twice a year. Last year it was robotic bugs. However, the times I have been there it has always been something really interesting for the kids.

The outside of the building is quite interesting. They've made changes to the building through the years, so one side is very old fashioned with lots of accents while the other side is quite modern. The

building is just huge, but quite a bit of it is not open to the public.

The museum is free for San Diego city and county residents and active duty military the first Tuesday of each month. ID is required. If there are exhibits that require separate admission, those will still require admission.

Stephanie Foster has lived in San Diego since she was 2 years old. She decided to start

<http://www.gettoknowsandiego.com/>

to share her knowledge of the area.

## **Taking Your Vacation In San Diego**

**By Sarah Miles**

Summer is here, but maybe you had not noticed. Of course, you probably realized that the weather was a tad warmer and the days are lasting longer. Your children are no longer complaining about how hard math is, instead, they are filled with glee over what they have done at summer camp. Yep, the world went on while you slaved away at work, day in and out, without you even noticing. Well after reading that, I am sure you notice now, so what are you going to do about it? Why not consider a vacation in San Diego.

What is great about San Diego is that the weather is always comfortable, no matter what time of year you visit. Therefore, even if you have to wait a little while to request time off from your boss, it is never too late to plan your vacation to San Diego. What would you do in San Diego? What would you do without the office? What would you do without having to drag the kids all around the entire state for sports or camp? What would you do without all the housework that sits waiting for you each day? Well this article should come in handy. We are going to provide you with some suggestions on what you can do on your vacation in San Diego.

Consider Balboa Park on your trip, this park plays host to San Diego Zoo. Too often, people are unaware of the parks name itself because the zoo overshadows the park, but once you have visited the zoo, check out the rest of the park. There is a great deal to see and do while in Balboa Park. For instances several museums make their homes right here, such as Reuben H. Fleet Science Center, Natural History Museum, Museum of Man, Museum of Photographic Arts, and the San Diego Museum. That is not all; if the kids get bored or restless, there is a very large play area just for them.

A vacation in San Diego would just not be a vacation without a trip to the beach, or beaches if you wanted to visit them all. Pacific Beach, Mission Beach, and Ocean Beach are the three San Diego area beaches. The beach is always full of fun and exciting activities such as building sand castles, swimming in the deep blue sea, taking surf lessons, or even shopping and eating at the many eateries, ice cream shops, and antique stores.

During your vacation in San Diego, you will want to make sure you visit downtown to have a look at the

heart of the city. You will never be bored, rent a bike and take in the city, ride down Broadway and see the harbor, or take a ferry out the famous island of Coronado. If baseball is your thing, make a stop at Petco Park a part of your itinerary. This is the home of the beloved locals, the San Diego Padres.

After all this and so much more, you will realize you did not miss summer, it simply moved to San Diego for a while.

Sarah Miles is a travel expert and publishes her articles on

<http://ilive2vacation.com>

and

<http://caribbeanstateofmind.com>



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