

BC Living



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Take a Cultural Tour of San Diego

We've rounded up our top spots to take in the food and culture of San Diego

While best known for its laid-back vibe and endless supply of sun and fish tacos, San Diego's also a haven for culture vultures. The best part is that this coastal town is still relatively small, making most attractions an easy 15-minute drive away, including the San Ysidro US/Mexico border going to Tijuana. Even from the airport—10 minutes from the city centre—you can start your holiday right away and head directly to Balboa Park or Liberty Station and immerse yourself in San Diego's rich cultural scene.

Here are our must-see spots in San Diego...

2. Liberty Station



With Naval Base San Diego taking up prime oceanfront real estate in San Diego, this home to the U.S.'s Pacific Fleet is hardly a secret. But lesser-known and only a few miles away is [Liberty Station](#), a former naval training centre made up of beautiful buildings in the Spanish Colonial Revival-style that today are protected historical sites

When the training centre closed in 1997, the city of San Diego leased more than half of the campus, repurposing these buildings to support the city's growing need for an arts and culture district. The newly reinvented and renamed Liberty Station is now a public space featuring various new endeavours, such as the Arts District, which stretches across 100 park-like acres and is home to nearly 145 museums, galleries, artist studios, dance companies, cafes and other creative pursuits.

Start your visit with brunch at [Breakfast Republic](#) where even vegan and gluten-free diners can enjoy a hearty Baja Cali meal. Whatever your main, make sure to order the *cafe de olla*, an authentic Mexican coffee that's infused with cinnamon and *piloncillo* (tip: order it half sweet to start).

Then work your way through some of the galleries and studios. Try [Veltz](#) for some fine art inspired by modern Japanese techniques. If you're a knitter, you can't miss [Apricot Yarn & Supply](#). And make a stop in the [New American Museum](#), which explores America's diverse, contemporary immigrant experience.

When you're feeling hungry again, head over to the [Liberty Public Market](#), a Granville Island-esque market that's housed in the training centre's former commissary, brimming with stalls and vendors showcasing local, artisanal produce, food items and crafts. Try [Parana Empanadas](#) (*pictured*) for a satisfying, savoury snack, or if it's something sweet you're looking for, [Le Parfait Parais](#) has shelves of flaky pastries and macarons to satisfy any sweet tooth.