

LocalGetaways

CALIFORNIA

jumping into
Summer

The Ultimate Guide to Sacramento + Monterey Getties



Taking the Plunge

California and Hawaii hotel pools tempt swimmers and sunbathers of all ages. BY JEANNE COOPER

△
*Sensei Porcupine Creek,
Palm Springs*



CHRIS SIMPSON

What makes the best pool?

The swimming-tinged analogy “different strokes for different folks” holds one clue. Here are some of our favorites in popular Hawaii and California destinations, appealing to a variety of ages in a range of price points. **C’mon in, the water’s fine.**

California

Whether you’re unwinding in Wine Country, hanging out with celebrities in Hollywood or frolicking on a family vacation in Carmel, choosing a resort with a pool can add new luster to your Golden State getaway. Here are some notables, from north to south.

Wine Country and Lake Tahoe

In South Tahoe, ogle the lake and mountains from the year-round pool at **Edgewood Resort**, which recently added two-, three- and five-bedroom lake-view Villa Suites on the eighth and ninth fairways of its golf course. The **Brockway Springs Resort** on the North Shore, which offers more modest vacation rentals in townhome condos, relies on natural hot springs to heat its lakeside pool with children’s wading pool.

In Napa, Auberge resorts are known for their pools as well as poshness, including the original, adults-only **Auberge du Soleil**; **Solage**, home to five mineral soaking pools, a 130-foot-main and children’s splash pad; and the new 732-acre **Stanly Ranch**, which has a hilltop spa pool and a family pool surrounded by lavender shrubs. At the similarly luxurious **Carneros Resort and Spa**, cabanas and lounges line the adults-only Hilltop Pool with sweeping vistas, while the family-friendly Otto’s Pool, next to the fitness center, is also ideal for lap swimming. Those who really want to immerse themselves in the region’s thermal waters should head to **Indian Springs Calistoga**, home to an Olympic-sized mineral pool and a smaller, cooler adult pool, both open till midnight.

The **Fairmont Sonoma Mission Inn & Spa** draws on the mineral waters of Boyes Hot Springs, some 1,000 feet below ground, for its spacious main pool, five spa pools and watsu

(water massage) pool. Check out the Cabernet Sauvignon vines from the zero-edge adult pool at **Montage Healdsburg**, which also has a family pool next to putt-putt golf and other kid-friendly activities. **The Lodge at Bodega Bay**, meanwhile, may not have the fanciest or largest pool, but its views of the ocean and Bodega Head, especially from the wind-protected hot tub, will warm the heart on even the foggiest of days.

Santa Cruz, Carmel and Big Sur

Sure, the beach may be the big draw in Santa Cruz, but you can easily alternate between the surf and the smartly renovated pool deck at the **Dream Inn** on Cowell Beach. Or take a break from the beach crowds and head to the redwoods, which frame the view from **Chaminade Resort & Spa**'s twin pools with new cabana service.

Pools in Carmel-by-the-Sea tend to be petite; family-friendly **Hofsas House** has one of the larger ones, plus two dry saunas that feel delicious post-swim. In Carmel Valley, lots of sun and space make pools even more inviting, especially at **Carmel Valley Ranch**, which has three spacious saltwater pools (two just for adults), each with an adjacent hot tub. At **Bernardus Lodge**, also in Carmel Valley, there's an adults-only whirlpool on a small hill by its residential-style villas and suites, as well as a sunny main pool by the original rooms and secluded "warming pool" in the spa.

In Big Sur, the venerable, adults-only **Post Ranch Inn** claims the most spectacular ocean views from its two cliffside infinity spa pools; stretch your limbs in the sunny lap pool. High in the hills across Highway 1, **Alila Ventana Big Sur** is also only





for adults, with two pools: The Meadow Pool, which has ocean views from the chaise lounges and a forest panorama from its infinity-edge hot tub, and the clothing-optional Mountain Pool, which faces the ocean and abuts the Japanese Bathhouses (men's, women's and coed.) The relative bargain **Big Sur River Inn** has a smaller, seasonal pool, but also offers a semi-immersive option of lounging in an Adirondack chair in the river.

The Central Coast

The rooftop pool at chic **Hotel Cerro** in San Luis Obispo showcases views of tree-studded hills from its cabanas and popular daytime restaurant and bar. For more rural environs, repair to the 20-acre **Allegretto Vineyard Resort** in Paso Robles, a Tuscan-style oasis where bright blue umbrellas shade the lounges by the long, sun-soaked pool.

In Santa Barbara, the best oceanfront pool is the Olympic-sized one at the **Coral Casino Beach and Cabana Club** overlooking Butterfly Beach and open only to members and guests at the **Four Seasons Resort The Biltmore** across the way — but like the hotel, it remains indefinitely closed for repairs. Luckily, the less opulent **Mar Monte Hotel** comes with an ocean-view pool just across the road from Santa Barbara's East

Beach, while the equally opulent **Rosewood Miramar Beach** in Montecito shelters a family pool and scalloped, zero-edge adult pool with plush cabanas.

In Ventura County, the inland **Ojai Valley Inn**, which celebrates its 100th anniversary this year, features mountain views and oversized cabanas at its adults-only Indigo Pool; its sizable family Pixie Pool — named for the iconic citrus that perfumes the valley in late spring — includes a large fireplace and hot tub on its substantial pool deck. Enjoy a fresh-pressed juice by the Tranquility Pool at the inn's Spa Ojai, which also holds a two-lane, 60-foot lap pool with hot tub and Arcadian views.

Los Angeles and Orange County

Rooftop pools abound in the City of Angels, offering a sense of exclusivity as well as eye-popping views, such as those of the **SLS Hotel** in Beverly Hills, **Pendry West Hollywood**, and the **Hollywood Roosevelt**, built in 1927. The retro Tropicana Pool and Bar even boasts a mural by David Hockney, the painter of L.A. pools par excellence.

The pool at the **Beverly Hills Hotel** may be ground level, but it's hardly down to earth: Celebrities including Katharine Hepburn and the Beatles have splashed here, and modern luminaries still frequent the 11 cabanas and poolside Cabana Café.

In Santa Monica, **Shutters at the Beach** places its stylish spool terrace with whirlpool spa discreetly above the sand, yet still with dreamy sunset and ocean views. The 102-acre oceanfront **Terranea Resort** sits atop the rugged Palos Verdes Peninsula, with four pools, all overlooking the Pacific: one for families that includes a 140-foot slide; a 25-meter lap pool reserved for spa guests; a saltwater pool and hot tub for guests 13 and older; and the cozy, adults-only Cielo Point Pool, which also has a view of Catalina Island.

In Orange County, bluff top resorts with fabulous pools are not uncommon. The **Waldorf Astoria Monarch Beach** in Dana Point, which has the trifecta of beguiling resort, family and spa pools, is notable in also recently completing a \$300 million refresh of its 400 rooms and suites. **Lido House**, a 118-room Newport Beach hotel that's part of Marriott's Autograph Collection, is known for its rooftop bar, but also has a secluded pool with wide steps in each of its four corners for those who prefer gradual immersion; cute cabanas and creative lawn games are also at hand. Huntington Beach's top-rated **Paséa Hotel & Spa** serves as a bridge between urban bustle and the beach, with an elevated, sheltered pool.

San Diego and Palm Springs

Like Orange County, the cliffside resorts of northern San Diego County brim with ocean-view pools; among the newest is **Alila Marea Beach Resort**, which opened on the Pacific Coast Highway in Encinitas in 2021. Near Oceanside's historic pier, **Mission Pacific Hotel** is a popular oceanfront boutique hotel with not only a Michelin-recognized restaurant, Valle, but also Oceanside's only rooftop pool and bar.

Hawaii

With the warm Pacific Ocean lapping at the Hawaiian Islands, some may wonder if a pool needs to be part of their vacation plans. Our advice: Absolutely. Storms may bring rough waves, muddy waters and/or beach debris, while sightings of critters from jellyfish to tiger sharks may occasionally prompt beach closures. Plus, you're more likely to have access to a cooling cocktail or shave ice while lounging by a pool — not to mention soaking in a hot tub after an ocean swim or surf session can be wonderfully restorative. Among the best, by island:



Turtle Bay Resort, Oahu

Oahu

Not surprisingly, Disney's **Aulani** resort pulls out all the stops, with nine different pool and whirlpool experiences, including a lazy stream and fully enclosed saltwater lagoon with reef fish. But its West Side neighbor, **Four Seasons Oahu at Ko Olina**, has the best adults-only pool, including heavenly cabanas, a view of fiery sunsets over the ocean and the Dr. Mai Tai swim-up bar.

On the North Shore, **Turtle Bay Resort** beckons with three terraced pools — including a *keiki* (children's) pool with two

water slides and an adult pool with in-water loungers — plus an infinity-edge pool exclusive to the resort's Ocean Bungalows.

In Waikiki, **Prince Waikiki** boasts an adults-only, crescent-shaped infinity pool and compact, all-ages saltwater pool perched high above sailboats in the marina. The best (and busiest) family pool in Waikiki: Helumoa Playground shared by the **Royal Hawaiian** and **Sheraton Waikiki**.

Kauai

The multilevel pools of Poipu's **Grand Hyatt Kauai** are grand indeed, with a 150-foot-water slide, a lazy river passing by waterfalls and caves, and a sand-entry saltwater lagoon; adults can avail themselves of a quiet pool, too. **Koloa Landing Resort at Poipu**, part of Marriott's Autograph Collection, also features a large, tiered fantasy pool plus two other well-landscaped smaller pools (one just for adults.) On the North Shore, the new, eco-luxury oasis of **1 Hotel Hanalei Bay** makes the most of its spectacular ocean and mountain views with an idyllic adult infinity pool, shallow *keiki* pool and main pool just off the beach.

The more moderately priced **Sheraton Kauai Coconut Beach Resort** sports a gorgeous "zero edge" pool with in-water loungers, children's zone and hot tub.

Maui

The **Grand Wailea**, a Waldorf Astoria Resort, set the bar for fantasy pools when its massive complex opened in 1991, including numerous waterfalls, streams, saltwater lagoons and the world's first water elevator. For something family-friendly but less frenetic, the **Wailea Beach Marriott** offers the Nalu Adventure Pool with large cabanas and four slides, among them a 425-foot exhilarator that's Maui's largest, plus an adults-only infinity edge pool with overwater cabanas and two more all-ages pools with

Splashing Out at Hearst Castle

To swim in a truly palatial pool, join the Foundation at Hearst Castle. Several times a year, the nonprofit allows members the opportunity to swim in one of the San Simeon landmark's two pool for a princely sum of \$1,000. This year, up to 40 members — who also pay membership fees that start at \$500 a year — can reserve splash time in the outdoor, marble-lined Neptune Pool designed and enlarged twice by William Randolph Hearst and architect Julia Morgan.



COURTESY OF TURTLE BAY; LAURA PEDRINO (HEARST)

whirlpool spas. The intimate, adults-only **Hotel Wailea** also provides a chic retreat with the island's best poolside cocktails.

In Kaanapali, the **Sheraton Maui** and **Westin Maui** resorts both vie for attention with elaborate oceanfront pool options. Those on a budget, though, will appreciate the retro whale-shaped pool at neighboring **Kaanapali Beach Hotel**. For a more luxurious vibe and tranquil setting, the newly renovated **Ritz-Carlton Maui, Kapalua**, and **Montage Kapalua Bay** to the north fit the bill. The Ritz-Carlton's sprawling, triple-tiered pool is open 24 hours, for those who like a midnight dip.

Hawaii Island

All eyes will be on **Kona Village**, a Rosewood Resort, when the newly remodeled and rebranded ultra-luxe compound (closed since 2011) debuts in July, with four pools among its amenities. **Four Seasons Resort Hualalai** remains the exemplar for a pool for every purpose: Among its eight swimming holes are a four-lane lap pool and the King's Pond saltwater lagoon with more than 1,000 tropical fish, a new elevated pool and lounge deck.

On the Kohala Coast, the **Westin Hapuna Beach Resort** offers in-water loungers and a large whirlpool at its adult infinity-edge pool, set above the larger family pool with a shallow kids' area and lots of green lawn for spreading out. With more affordable room rates, **Hilton Waikoloa Village** provides the most bells and whistles in its two family pools, including a rope bridge and multiple slides; there's also a small, secluded adult pond.

▽
1 Hotel Hanalei Bay, Kauai



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*Westin Hapuna Beach Resort,
Hawaii Island*



COURTESY OF WESTIN HAPUNA BEACH RESORT; COURTESY OF 1 HOTEL HANALEI BAY