

Take the Plunge!

Five architecturally stunning pools worth discovering up the California coast

WRITTEN BY MICHELLE LYN



AUBERGE DU SOLEIL

Nestled within a sunlit olive grove on the slopes of Rutherford Hill, Auberge du Soleil, is the iconic hotel overlooking the Napa Valley. The vision of French-born Claude Rouas, who sought to recreate the sun-drenched ambiance of Provence in the northern California wine country, Auberge has been welcoming guests for more than 30 years.

Under the direction of San Francisco designer Suzanne Tucker, the hotel underwent a dramatic multi-year renovation of all its guest rooms, restaurants, pool and outdoor living spaces, resulting in a sophisticated refuge reminiscent of a secluded Côte d'Azur retreat.

Tucker designed the outdoor pool space to be a sexy, laid-back outdoor living room. Named *La Plage*, it's a sun-soaked spot where guests can spend lazy hours lounging poolside on oversized chaises or underneath gauze-draped canopies on day beds for two.

AubergeDuSoleil.com

MONTAGE LAGUNA BEACH

Montage Laguna Beach features Craftsman-style architecture over 30 sprawling acres on the California coast. Seaside luxury at its finest, the resort's centerpiece is the Mosaic Pool, which commands guests' attention as soon as they arrive and look out the lobby balcony.

When the sun sets from behind the Pacific Ocean, the light catches the intricate tile mosaic just right, resulting in a breathtaking sea of colors shimmering from the depths of the pool.

Poolside cabanas and service make it easy to spend the day admiring the artistry of the pool's design alongside the crystalline ocean view.

MontageHotels.com



POST RANCH INN

The Post family was among Big Sur's first pioneers, and under their generations of stewardship, the 100-acre Post Ranch has evolved from a homestead and working ranch to one of the most luxurious resorts in the world.

A drive up Highway 1 can only be perfected with a stay at Post Ranch Inn. Guests can enjoy complimentary activities like morning yoga, guided nature walks, edible tours of the chef's gardens and Tai Chi, or spend time in the two hot, cliff-top spas.

These two infinity Jade and Meditation Spas offer expansive views of the sea turning to sky. Kept at 104 degrees, they offer a rejuvenating spot to take in the natural beauty of Big Sur and gaze at the stars deep into the night.

PostRanchInn.com



THE RESORT AT PELICAN HILL

Along one of the most pristine and protected coastal enclaves in Southern California, The Resort at Pelican Hill is set on 504 acres overlooking the Pacific Ocean in Newport Beach.

Inspired by its namesake, the Coliseum Pool is perfectly circular and 136 feet in diameter. One of the world's largest circular pools, it dazzles with its radiant blue bottom created with 1.1 million hand-cut glass mosaic tiles and an amphitheater of terraced decks. Even the saltwater pool featuring soft water feels good on the skin.

Luxurious, suite-like cabanas feature amenities from private servers, wet bars, Bose audio systems and flat-screen HDTVs to 12-foot ceilings, chaise lounges and draping curtains for privacy.

PelicanHill.com

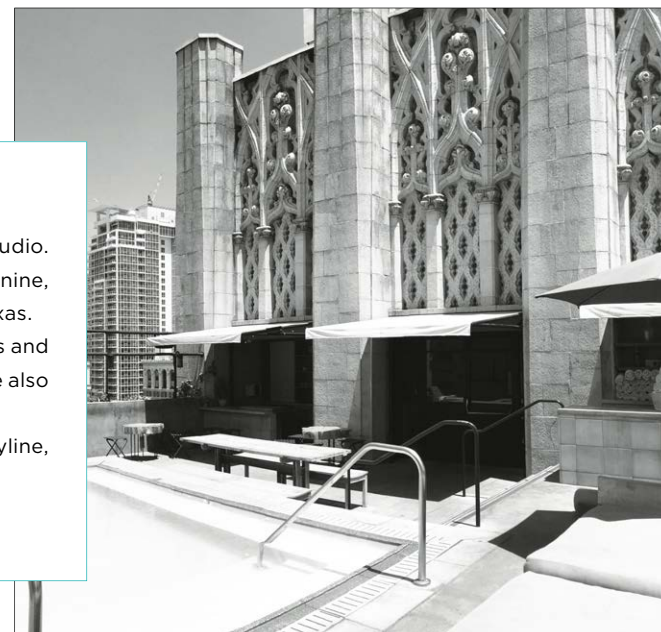
ACE HOTEL DOWNTOWN LA

The historic United Artists building in Downtown LA was built in 1927 for the Maverick film studio. Two years ago, Ace Hotel Downtown LA put down roots inside. Public spaces include the Mezzanine, Upstairs and Poolside, the rooftop pool inspired by minimalist artist Donald Judd's in Marfa, Texas.

Its swanky pool is the perfect spot to enjoy LA stargazing, as well as the occasional yoga class and pop-up shops. Mondays during summer feature throwback movies and concerts, while the space also hosts DJs and pool parties.

Freshly squeezed cocktails from on-site mixologists pair perfectly with the downtown skyline, while the building's Spanish gothic architecture adds yet another layer of art and culture.

AceHotel.com



(FROM THE TOP) PHOTOS COURTESY OF POST RANCH INN, PELICAN HILL AND MICHELLE LYN