

California

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Irvine Company's 3 Orange County Hotels Offer 3 Can't-Miss Experiences

by Kate Cripe



The Backyard Event Setup at Hotel Irvine

Over a three-day press trip, I saw how the **Irvine Company's Coastal Collection** has the bases covered when it comes to meeting, staying and playing in Orange County.

Properties in the Collection, which includes **The Resort at Pelican Hill, Hotel Irvine** and **Fashion Island Hotel**, are different in style, vibe and onsite amenities, giving groups three options for an Orange County event.

Each property has its own style, and the experiences each offer are unique to the location and fully customizable for any groups' specific needs.

Play and Meet at Hotel Irvine

The playful vibe of Hotel Irvine is evident in its meeting spaces, which are decked out in the property's signature orange color palette.



Hotel Irvine Seating Area With Signature Orange Palette

Red Bar, with the Friday evening crowd overflowing into the lobby, the food at EATS Kitchen and Bar, and especially in The Backyard, the property's outdoor event space, this fun ambiance continues.

I saw the playful atmosphere in action the Friday afternoon and evening I was on property. There were games set up on the lawn adjacent to the pool, a private event set up for an evening reception and live music by the firepit on the terrace outside EATS Kitchen and Bar.

Jeff Graham, director of sales and marketing for the hotel, told me they often tent the 10,000-square-foot lawn for both meetings and events as well as regular programming for guests and locals, such as the recent Mother's Day brunch.

The hotel also brings in a big screen for movie nights on the lawn in the warmer months.

The lawn is also perfect for immersive group experiences, such as a mixology or yoga class before or after a meeting. And the 6,000-square-foot Pavilion is right off The Backyard, making it a versatile option for indoor/outdoor functions.



Grand Ballroom at Hotel Irvine

According to the hotel, the nearly 15,000-square-foot Grand Ballroom is and can accommodate 2,100 guests. There is also the tiered theater, which has built-in desks.

Hotel Irvine is located right off the 405 between Newport Beach and **Anaheim**, making it ideal for groups that want to be near its many neighboring companies, including many tech industry satellite offices. The location also offers convenient access to other Orange County cities.

And Los Angeles and San Diego aren't far away either!

Other “can’t miss” at the property:

- **Marketplace:** Located off the lobby, this 24/7 market offers locally branded goods, ranging from food items to beauty products. There is a deli-like service counter and the refrigerated shelves are stocked with sushi, kombucha, cheese and charcuterie platters. The pantry offers snacks such as gluten-free protein bars and gourmet chocolates.
- **Club 12:** This 12th-floor lounge offers residential-style seating and a wraparound terrace. Guests who opt for this upgrade get priority check-in, dedicated club concierge and premium Wi-Fi. Club 12 offers daily breakfast, refreshments throughout the day and evening “happy hour” bites and beverages.

Meet California Chic at Fashion Island Hotel

In Newport Beach, the Fashion Island Hotel emits a coastal chic vibe, which blends blue and green hues, the use of indoor/outdoor spaces across the lobby and meeting venues with a sophistication that can be seen from the architecture to the food and beverage menus.

This plays off the hotel’s location, which is both near the beach and across from the high-end Fashion Island shopping destination.



The Aqua Lounge at Fashion Island Hotel

During my stay, we took an offsite adventure on electric bikes that were dropped off at the porte cochere. After a ride to Balboa Island, we traded the bikes for a Duffy boat and enjoyed a tour of Newport Harbor. To top it off, we enjoyed an on-board meal catered by Coastal Catering, which is based at Fashion Island Hotel.

Groups can arrange for these activities or also hold an event aboard a larger vessel at one of the four marinas owned and managed by the Irvine Company.



Marina Near Irvine Company's Fashion Island Hotel

Planners hosting a meeting or event at the hotel can give attendees a “toes-in-the-sand” experience at nearby Newport Dunes.

Operated by Irvine Company’s Coastal Catering, which is based at Fashion Island Hotel, it can all be part of the program’s food and beverage minimum. Groups at Hotel Irvine can also utilize these off-site experiences and Coastal Catering’s services.



Irvine Company's Coastal Catering Surprise In-Room Amenity

Hotel Irvine might have largest ballroom in Orange County, but Fashion Island Hotel offers the largest in Newport Beach. The prefunction space outside the 8,700-square-foot ballroom can be closed off from the main meetings corridor, creating another private space. The Cabana Room, with a 250-person capacity and a connected heated terrace that can accommodate another 250, is the perfect venue for indoor/outdoor events with a tropical feel.

Groups can also use one of two private dining rooms or reserve the hotel’s restaurant, Oak Grill. Another event option is the adjacent Aqua Lounge.

Other “can’t misses” at the property:

- **The Spa:** Guests can enjoy a quick 30-minute facial or stay for a longer pampering session, like the 60-minute HydraFacial I enjoyed. The Spa is located in the main hotel building with direct elevator access from the lobby and guest room floors.
- **Island Club:** This lounge offers breakfast daily, afternoon snacks and “Wine Down” hour in the evenings. Guest with the Island Club Package also receive additional upgraded amenities, such as complimentary premium Wi-Fi and dedicated concierge service. The Island Club is located on the 20th floor with views of Newport Harbor and the ocean.

Indulge at The Resort at Pelican Hill

The Resort at Pelican Hill is perched above the ocean along the Newport Coast, but once I arrived, it felt like I'd been transported to the Italian countryside.



Coliseum Pool With Ocean View at The Resort at Pelican Hill

The design of the resort was inspired by the works of Andrea Palladio, a 16th century Italian architect, and can be seen across the property in the Bungalow guest rooms and suites, multi-bedroom Villas, public space and Golf Club.

This aesthetic and residential feel carries over into the meeting and event spaces. Original artwork hangs on the walls and hand-carved wooden chandeliers grace the ceilings. The Mar Vista Ballroom has fireplaces both inside the room and outside on the adjacent terrace.



Newport Board Room at The Resort at Pelican Hill

Discovering firsthand the many unique onsite group programming and experiences here was an unforgettable highlight of my visit. For example, Painting and Prosecco is an al fresco option that pairs Italian bubbly with a paint brush.

On the Event Lawn, which can accommodate 500 people, groups can paint their own version of the resort's rotunda with views of olive trees and the ocean in the background.

Smaller groups can meet in the resort's Andrea Ristorante pasta kitchen for hands-on instruction, while larger groups can enjoy a cooking class in one of the Villas or even a progressive dinner party strolling between Villas for each course.



Pelican Grill Terrace at The Resort at Pelican Hill

Additional group experiences include:

- Art & Architecture Tour
- Luxology (luxury mixology) Class
- A Taste of Pelican Hill Dine Around
- Outdoor Movie Night
- Aqua Yoga
- Crystal Cove Hiking at the nearby State Park

Other “can’t miss” at the property:

- **Golf:** The Pelican Hill Golf Club is home to two courses with 36 holes of golf, a Golf Academy and the Pelican Grill restaurant and lounge.
- **The Spa at Pelican Hill:** First modeled after a European spa, today the treatments and service blend in modern elements. I had the indulgent Zen Awakening Experience, a 100-minute treatment that included a full body massage, body scrub and wrap. All treatments use natural products from family-owned makers.
- **Coliseum Pool:** According to the resort, it’s one of the world’s largest circular pools. It was designed with more than 1 million hand-laid glass mosaic tiles. Groups can use the poolside cabanas or the cabana suites and terrace for private events.



Golf Course at The Resort at Pelican Hill

From the fun vibe of Hotel Irvine to the chic Fashion Island Hotel and luxurious Resort at Pelican Hill, the Irvine Company’s Coastal Collection is equipped to host an array of groups.