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Race to enjoy the charms of Del Mar

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Be a part of Del Mar's Hat Contest on Opening Day at the races, July 20. / Courtesy Photo

Written by **Kathy Strong**

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Del Mar means “by the sea,” and the seaside resort not only delivers the entire experience the name promises, but so much more, from world-class horseracing to a top resort. Just 20 minutes north of San Diego and cradled by lagoons at both ends, the city has long been a haven for celebrities with an affinity for horseracing — their upscale estates tucked within ocean-view canyons. A quaint village of shops, notable eateries and art galleries add 1880s historical charm to the 2-square-mile area's natural beauty.

Where Bing's turf meets the surf

Del Mar has natural beauty and village charm at every turn, but it is best known for its world-renowned racetrack. One of the Del Mar Thoroughbred Club's founders was Bing Crosby, who became president of the Turf Club. Crosby coined the lyrics, which live on today: “Where the surf meets the turf, down in old Del Mar.” In 1993, a major expansion and renovation made Del Mar that much more enjoyable.

The summer racing season still brings celebrities in droves to Del Mar, many with second homes in San Diego's tiniest municipality. The season is about to commence on July 20 with the opening day extravaganza, “The One and Only Truly Fabulous Hats Contest,” or

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plan to be there for closing day festivities on Sept. 7. In between, it is always in style to don a hat, but try to catch a Friday night concert



Catch the excitement of Del Mar's races, July 20-Sept. 7. / Courtesy Photo

or attend the third most popular racing event, the "\$1 Million TVG Pacific Classic" on Aug. 28, featuring Del Mar's biggest stakes race and the nation's top horses.

For the first time ever, the racetrack's Turf Club is available to the public as part of a package with Park Hyatt Aviara. The "Del Mar Races Turf Club Package" requires a two-night minimum stay but includes a one-day admission for two into the private Del Mar Turf Club.

Information: www.parkhyattaviara.com; (760) 448-1234.

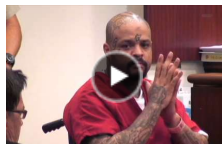
Wind your way through the Village

Take some time to wander the village with art galleries, designer boutiques and bistros. If you time your visit for a Friday

evening, catch a free, live concert on the sunset-facing deck of Del Mar Plaza.

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