

FOR THE FOURTH

CELEBRATE INDEPENDENCE DAY WITH THESE LOCAL OFFERINGS.

BY ASHLEY RYAN

From parades to fireworks, the Fourth of July is known for celebrations that go above and beyond. Bigger and better every year, these vibrant affairs—littered with red, white and blue apparel and decor, delicious summer bites and proclamations of love for our country—offer a feel-good atmosphere with plenty of chances to connect with others from the local community. Read on to discover where you can revel in patriotic cheer on this festive summer holiday.

INDEPENDENCE DAY ON THE BACK BAY

Spend all day having fun in the sun at the Back Bay during this annual Fourth of July festival. Beginning at 8 a.m., there are plenty of festivities to keep you busy throughout the day, all leading up to the fireworks show presented over the water in partnership with the city of Newport Beach at 9 p.m. After you've staked out a spot on the beach, take to the water to explore by stand-up paddleboard, kayak, Duffy or pedal boat—activities that the whole family can enjoy together; Newport Dunes Waterfront Resort & Marina's inflatable water park will also be open. As you settle back onto the sand, listen to live music from The Class throughout the afternoon, as the cover band performs everything from oldies and classic rock to Top 40 hits. Food trucks will be on-site for the event starting at noon while Moe B's Munchies will also be operating, offering refreshing cocktails from the beachfront bar as well as summer favorites like burgers, hot dogs and pizza. Everything culminates with the impressive firework show, which will last around 20 minutes and shoot off a whopping 5,000 pyrotechnics. "There will be a lot going on—a lot of entertainment," says Phil Ravenna, general manager of Newport Dunes. "It's family-oriented, with fun for kids of all ages. ... Historically, we have a lot of people that come back year after year." (949-729-3863; newportdunes.com)

OLD GLORY BOAT PARADE

For maritime enthusiasts, the American Legion Yacht Club's Old Glory Boat Parade is a definite highlight of the holiday. Before ships adorned in red, white and blue float through the harbor at noon, grab a spot along the waterfront to ensure a



City Cruises Newport Beach offers two harbor cruises on the Fourth of July.



Clockwise from above: 4th of July is for Families bike parade and festival; Old Glory Boat Parade; fireworks during Independence Day on the Back Bay

says Justin Schmillen, deputy director of the city's Recreation & Senior Services department. "Participants decorate their bikes [and] golf carts in festive decor as families and dogs enjoy a stroll down the peninsula with the police and fire trucks leading the way." Once the festive procession arrives at the park, the festival begins, providing a safe, positive and family-oriented environment in which locals, their children and their leashed pets can spend the day. Bounce houses, carnival games, arts and crafts, face painting, lawn games, live music and other activities will be available while delicious food options, including free coffee and doughnuts, will also be served. "The families in West Newport look forward to this event year, and the community involvement and participation is a key part of the success and fun," Schmillen adds. (949-644-3151; newportbeachca.gov)

CITY CRUISES

Those looking to get out on the water can sign up for one of two cruise experiences with City Cruises Newport Beach. The three-hour, buffet-style 4th of July Fireworks Dinner Cruise offers a delectable selection of fresh salads, savory entrees and sweet treats for dessert, plus a cash bar for cocktails, all before guests enjoy a dazzling view of the city's annual fireworks display overhead. Take in scenic views of the harbor before turning your eyes skyward, and consider upgrading your ticket to get a bottle of Champagne and keepsake glasses in celebration of the holiday. The company's second offering, the Newport Beach 4th of July Sights & Sips Cruise, pairs passed hors d'oeuvres and creative cocktails from the cash bar with dancing and entertainment from a local DJ before the fireworks light up the night sky. For both cruises, explore the open-air decks of the ships to take in views of the local harbor and landscape as you celebrate freedom in Newport Beach. (800-459-8105; cityexperiences.com) **NBM**



COURTESY OF NEWPORT DUNES WATERFRONT RESORT & MARINA; OPPOSITE PAGE: CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY OF CITY EXPERIENCES; COURTESY OF CITY OF NEWPORT BEACH; MIKE BERDINE; MIKE NOWAK

good view and delight in the patriotic flair as boat captains compete for honors like Most Creative, Spirit Award, Best Costumes, Best Decorations and more. Mayor Will O'Neill will also be on-site, leading the procession as grand marshal of the parade, which will feature a theme of 100 Boats for 100 Years. And although the parade is the main attraction, other events will take place that day as well. In honor of the American Legion of Newport Harbor's 100th anniversary, the Newport Beach Fire Department will host a pancake breakfast, open to the public, followed by live performances



from three bands throughout the afternoon as well as a silent auction featuring sports and Hollywood memorabilia, travel experiences, stylish jewelry and limited-edition art pieces. Deals on hot dogs, hamburgers, tacos, beer and wine will also be offered. Festivities continue throughout the weekend, with a Family Day celebration and a ticketed black-tie gala taking place on Friday plus a continuation of the auction, food and live music on Saturday. (949-673-5070; al291.com)

4TH OF JULY IS FOR FAMILIES

Family time is put front and center during the annual 4th of July is for Families bike parade and festival. The event kicks off at West Balboa Boulevard and 36th Street with the parade, which makes its way to Channel Place Park. "The bike parade is popular amongst the residents,"

Fireworks on the Back Bay