



VAM: On a Winter's Day, California Dreaming

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Between all the Vascular Annual Meeting has to offer and all that host city San Diego boasts, forgive California SVS surgeons, particularly those in the San Diego area, if they're looking forward to summer.

Several doctors said they enjoy VAM's plenary sessions plus seeing old friends and colleagues.

As well, said Dr. Ankur Chandra, "I am looking forward to the studies from VQI (Vascular Quality Institute) to provide important practice-changing data. And, he added, he is anticipating "reconnecting and seeing my colleagues from across the country here in my hometown."

Plenary sessions are a favorite of Dr. Kevin Casey as well, as are the alumni events. "I look forward to seeing colleagues and mentors from fellowship and seeing people that I only cross paths with once in a while. The meeting is large ... so the alumni events provide some individual time to actually see and catch up with people," he added.

Past President Dr. Julie Freischlag looks forward to VAM for "reconnecting with colleagues and attending the plenary sessions to see what is new."

Dr. Ron Dalman, program chair for VAM, is anticipating one of VAM's new features for 2017: the Guidelines concurrent session. "This will provide updated reviews of all recent SVS Patient Care Guidelines, including the upcoming 2016 Global Guidelines work group in peripheral arterial disease, all in one integrated session," he said. "It should be very educational and informative."

The sights in San Diego

As for San Diego itself, well ... what's not to like? We asked a number of our California members what guests should be sure to visit while on the West Coast. Our respondents are brimming over with ideas for places to see and food and drink to try.

Dr. Casey: Two great touristy things are the Midway Museum and the San Diego Zoo. As a former surgeon on an aircraft carrier, the Midway obviously speaks to me. But it is really quite impressive: a floating city with up to 5000 inhabitants. It is literally steps to the convention center. And the San Diego Zoo is quintessential San Diego. It is very large and beautiful, and because the weather is always nice in southern CA, it is an amazing way to spend an afternoon.

Also, San Diego is quite proud of its Craft Beer industry. There are a lot of local brews (Stone, Green Flash, Ballast Point) from San Diego, each with their own tasting rooms. Stone Brewery Liberty Station has really pretty grounds and is a quick cab ride from the VAM.

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Dr. Chandra: If there were only two places you visit, first would be the Lodge at Torrey Pines. It has an amazing farm-to-table restaurant and a patio overlooking the Torrey Pines Golf Course with an amazing sunset view. Second would be Balboa Park. It's one of the gems of San Diego and includes the San Diego Zoo, multiple museums, gardens and gourmet restaurants.

Dr. Vincent Guzzetta: There are so many great restaurants in nearby Little Italy and the Gaslamp District to enjoy. Mr. A's is great for fine dining and enjoying a view of the city.

Dr. Wang Teng: San Diego is famous for its beaches and beach culture: so great beaches, La Jolla Cove, the Pacific Beach, Coronado Island. It is known as the birthplace of fish tacos; I advise looking for small family-run Mexican restaurants. San Diego is also home to the largest collection of craft breweries. Highlights are Stone Brewery in Escondido and Ballast Point in Miramar. Plus, for families, consider the famous San Diego Zoo, San Diego Zoo Safari Park as well as Legoland.

Dr. Marc Sedwitz: The Torrey Pines Gliderport in nearby La Jolla, with lessons in paragliding and hang gliding and, of course, great panoramic views of the La Jolla coast. I also recommend dinner at the Marine Room and the eating extravaganza available at a Padres baseball game.

Dr. Freischlag: Seaport Village, the waterfront shopping and dining complex on San Diego Bay that is close to the San Diego Convention Center, plus George's at the Cove restaurant in La Jolla.

Dr. Dalman: My personal favorite activities in San Diego are watching the San Francisco Giants play in Petco Park, a few blocks from the convention center, or discovering new restaurants in the Gaslamp District, or sailing or windsurfing on Mission Bay... so much to do.

So much indeed. And as we get closer to VAM, SVS will be providing many more possibilities for guests to consider.

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