



LAKEHOUSE HOTEL AND RESORT

By the light of the silvery moon, you can swoon at the Lakehouse. With new rooms, two cottages, pools, fire pits and San Marcos Lake views, it's a North San Diego County getaway that's reasonably priced and offers a great deal of value for the money. If it's a romantic getaway you want, go there and just nest. But the close proximity to Legoland, Carlsbad Premium Outlets and the San Diego Zoo and San Diego Zoo Safari Parks make it a fantastic family hotel as well. It has a retro feel from a bygone era when it was safe to let your kids roam the neighborhood and play outside after dark. The layout is such that a corporate retreat or family reunion would be so fun spread out amongst the pools, Jacuzzi and 142 rooms.

Checking in with Franco was a pleasure. He welcomed us in the lobby library, where a pitcher of green tea stood on ice. He arranged our activities – a one-hour paddleboard for morning that seemed so short when we booked it, but was oh so long on the legs when we did it, a sunset cruise in the Duffy and an hour on the tennis courts

(we declined the instructor). Our home away from home was the Shore Cottage – a two-bedroom, two-bath kitchenette mini house which had its own grassy driveway, fresh soothing décor, and happy lime yellow accents. There were silver walls with simple elegant light fixtures while rows of primary colored boats waited outside the sunny decks that were stocked with pairs of yellow wood deck chairs and a fire pit that begged us to make s'mores, even though we really don't like them.

It's difficult to sleep in because it's so bright outside and the lake reflects the light and looks like giant sparkly diamonds. You can order room service breakfast, lunch or dinner from The Grill, and the food is surprisingly fresh if a bit heavy. Guests can enjoy St. Mark's miniature par-71 golf course, driving range and petite fitness center just up the street. The hotel arranges in-room spa services which allow you to lounge as much as you like, or heed the siren call of the lake. Mad Men would be happy having cocktails here, as would you! –S.L.