

A Day in Laguna Beach

Coral sunrise and the sky is on fire – every shade of pink, peach and violet you can imagine, slowly turning to amber and then a riot of orange in the sky as the sun makes its way over the ocean. I am up because I am still on New York time, and I am taking Elvis (a.k.a. Elvie) for a 5 am walk on the beach. Elvie is a coppery-red Carolina dog with giant pointy ears whom we rescued from a shelter in Memphis, Tennessee 4 years ago and everyone thinks we have the same coloring. . . . but I think he is redder than I am, I am more blondish – and in certain lights he looks like an orangey-red fox, except much sweeter and more soulful. The beach is salty with light grainy sand tones and the water is a calm dark silvery blue in the early morning light. Elvie is pulling on the leash, anxious to nibble on the dull green seaweed that litters the beach, and play with the other dogs – a happily romping collage of grey, white and amber fur, thrilled to be congregating unleashed by the sea.

We all go to breakfast – rich purple blueberries and a frothy mauve-toned smoothies with fluffy yellow eggs. It is vacation so orange bubbly mimosas are ordered and drunk as well. Sometimes we skip the orange and go straight to champagne, a luminescent yellow so light and transparent it becomes jewel-toned in the morning sun. Back to the beach for morning yoga by an ocean that has already turned a light turquoise with gentle white caps. (Yup – that order should be reversed, but again – New Yorkers get up early on the West Coast). Off to the teal blue pool and we find a white blue-striped tented poolside bed, where the bathing suits and drinks appear in every color – reds, blues, whites, with children running around in pink and purple florals - and light lime green mojitos in almost every hand. I am lazing on my front, black ruffled bikini-clad, with R in the burnt orange swim trunks I picked out for him last summer in Montauk. It is late morning now and the sun is overhead, and the ocean before us is a medley of white-capped teal and seafoam, with dancing ripples of glistening light. There is music in this ocean. The pool is getting crowded so we retreat to the safety and calming neutral tones of the beach, with tangerine umbrellas (my favorite color, aside from turquoise) dotting the backdrop of the bright cerulean sky. Blue and emerald sea everywhere. . . . it is literally heaven on earth. We walk and I collect beach rocks with interesting shapes in off-whites, beiges, greys and blacks.

We are drowsy from all this exertion ☺ and fall asleep. Upon waking, we take Elvis for a walk in town and look at artwork – Laguna is well known for its many galleries, and the whole area welcomes dogs like long-awaited honored guests. R gravitates toward the pop art – all reds, yellows and blues, while I am drawn by the

soft seascape photography and paintings in every shade of blue and green. There is also a little wooden, walnut-colored shop where I like to look at stones. I buy a few for my apartment in New York in pale pinks and deep amethyst purples. We take Elvis to The Deck... which is well, a wooden deck jutting out into the beach with live music. Thick orange-red Bloody Marys with a hint of celery, mild green salads and deeper avocado tones of guacamole, shimmery light creams of fresh fish. There are, of course, brown treats for Elvie. Someone spots dolphins – glittering silvery-blue leaping arcs in the distance that feel like a blessing and we are all insanely happy to see them.

Back to the hotel, and soon it is sunset. We watch the reverse of the morning - but somehow more intense - from our hotel balcony overlooking the Pacific, opening a bottle of local Cabernet, glinting deep purple velvet in the retiring sun. As the fiery orange ball drops into the ocean horizon, the sky erupts in purples, mauves and luminescent pinks, then softening into pastels as we toast and give thanks for the day.

The perfect, majestically colorful California seaside day.