



# Enjoy Malibu!

## Water Sports Aren't Over on Our Coast

BY DEBORAH SHADOVITZ

**T**hroughout our hemisphere people are lamenting that the summer of 2009 has ended, leaving some of the season's promises unfulfilled. Even those of us in the West Valley, who live so close to the ocean, tend to put ocean or water sports away in our minds, turning to school, work and the holidays.

But this time of year can actually be the best time to enjoy our Pacific Ocean and relaxation such as kayaking. The summer crowds are gone. Parking is free and easy along PCH.

With the air not so warm and the water having actually warmed up in August, the water is more enjoyable and not shockingly cold. The water is clearer in winter, too.

Right over the mountains, a bit south of Las Virgenes Road/Malibu Canyon Road is the Malibu Pier and Surfrider Beach — one of the world's top surfing spots. The Malibu Surf Shack is pretty much across the street from the Pier. This small, friendly shop is chock full of hanging surfboards and wet suits. Outside are large stashes of surfboards, boogie boards and stand up paddle boards awaiting rental. In a truck across the street is a selection of single and tandem kayaks.

If you have never kayaked in the ocean it can look a bit daunting.

Unlike a lake, there are waves. (I'd forgotten that fact when I set out to do this, but the Surf Shack folks allayed my fears.) The first bit of water, about one-quarter way out to the end of the pier, has the waves but then you're quickly behind them. The waves come in sets. After any set passes you get into your kayak and paddle out quickly.

Soon it struck me that I was on the other side of the pier, out in the ocean behind a bunch of surfers, watching as the waves formed between our kayak and the surfers enjoying the show as they rode in on those waves. (There was some fancy doubles-riding going on, too!)

If you rent the kayak for two hours you can head up the coast enough to see some nice kelp beds. The water

is particularly clear in the winter months. You may also be treated to a show of playful dolphins.

While there, the owner and staff talked me into some more adventure — stand up paddle boards! They've been known in Hawaii for ages but are new here in the past few years. These are large boards on which you can lie down, kneel, sit, or stand. As with the kayak, you want to get out past the waves. I did this by paddling out on my knees as did the others I saw. Once past that point, you can get up on your knees and then stand. The paddle is one-sided and has a long handle. You paddle a bit on one side then the other.

I wasn't up to standing up fully, but not for fear of falling into the water. (In fact, the water was so



inviting that I went in after bringing my board in.) I saw several people out behind the surfers, proceeding up the coast and making the sport seem effortless.

Don't let the end of the summer season and name autumn put you off of our coastline's fabulous water sports! You don't have to know how. The Malibu Surf Shack has lessons and guided kayak rides.

You can kayak or board just about anywhere along the coast. Head up to Ventura, down to Marina del Rey or Newport Beach. Catalina has great kayaking too.

Or enjoy Malibu as I did. Then afterward, you can have a great meal at The Beachcomber on the pier. They have a nice brunch, and a great clam chowder. You can sit

inside, sit on the boardwalk, or sit by the bar. And if you bring a group you might love their private tiki room. Ruby's Dinner awaits at the end of the pier in case you'd like a burger and shake. Or have an excellent casual meal at The Fish Grill, right below the Malibu Surf Shack.

In addition to rentals and guided kayak groups or lessons, the Malibu Surf Shack offers guided stand up paddle groups, stand up paddle board lessons and surf lessons.

For more information contact:  
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