

Babymoon in Borrego Springs

By Cynthia Morgan-Reed

Being eight months pregnant and anticipating the upcoming birth of our first child, my mind was understandably on all things baby. However, I was surprised when my husband came to me and suggested we go on a “babymoon.”

I didn’t even know he knew what that was! We both agreed it was a good idea, but weren’t sure where to go. I couldn’t fly anymore, neither of us wanted to drive for extended hours, and we wanted something easy and affordable. We also wanted to simply disconnect from the world and relax without the constant pull of our smartphones.

I had heard of Borrego Springs, but had never been there. When I researched the peaceful desert community’s La Casa Del Zorro Resort and Spa, I knew it was the perfect spot: remote enough to offer unique opportunities and not feel like a San Diego staycation, but still close enough to get to easily.

I was intrigued by La Casa Del Zorro because of its old world charm and interesting history. It was originally founded in the 1930s out of necessity: folks were traveling through the desert and had no place to stay. But in its heyday, 1960–2007, it was purchased

by the Copley family, former owners of the San Diego Union-Tribune. They modernized and made it a destination resort with all of the bells and whistles. And bells and whistles abound, as we soon realized that everything we needed could be had at the resort and we didn’t need to step off the property to have a wonderful, relaxing experience.

Our room was very comfortable and completely updated with all modern amenities, which included a flat-screen satellite television to my husband’s delight. The rooms are spacious and inviting with balconies or patios. Our suite had a huge sparkling bathroom, cozy seating area, and, best of all, a fireplace. The staff will come and light the fire for you nightly, which lends a charming warmth to the room. The property has 48 rooms and 19 casitas. The rooms are clustered around small pools, which lend an intimate feel – almost like having a pool all to yourself. If you really want your own, rent one of the casitas, which range from one to four bedrooms and are perfect for families or groups. They each come with their own pool and amenities like kitchenettes and dining rooms.

Right after checking in, I was off to the onsite Spa at La Casa del





Fireplace in a guest room.



An inviting resort swimming pool.

Zorro. I was in need of a massage to put me in “vacation mode” while shedding the stresses of work.

While not a spa snob by any means, I have participated in my share of spa experiences and I was curious how good this one would be. After all, resort or no resort, we were in the middle of a desert. But I had little to worry about. My massage therapist knew her stuff and gave an excellent pregnancy massage. The table was heated, the sheets were soft, and my therapist made sure I was comfortable and enjoying the experience throughout.

While the spa does “boast” the only elevator in Borrego Springs, it was a little odd to check in on one level and take an outside elevator to my therapy room. Luckily, my therapist led the way, and her cheery disposition made me forget about the gloomy, cold elevator. My husband, who judges how good a massage is on whether he can fall asleep or not, thoroughly enjoyed his massage (nap) as well.

While the property has numerous amenities ranging from a yoga studio to an Olympic-size pool, rock climbing wall, and nature paths to keep one busy; my husband and I loved playing chess on their oversized outdoor chess board. We played for hours, having fun and getting a bit of a workout lugging the large pieces around the board. I may or may not have had more of a workout removing my husband’s pieces as I sailed to chess domination (not!).

Another true highlight for us was the food. The Butterfield Room serves delicious, traditional food with a modern flair. It is a perfect place to have a romantic dinner with its crackling fireplace casting shadows on the adobe walls and beautiful wood beams.

The spinach lasagna with béchamel cream sauce was one of our favorites. They also had a solid and large selection of wines by the glass with a wait staff able to offer great recommendations on pairings. The Butterfield Room is open seasonally from October to May, and the Fox Den Cantina offers year-round poolside dining and a great bar. During the summer, they even feature live music on Friday and Saturday nights.

We thought our desert visit would also provide a great opportunity to see stars we couldn’t normally see in San Diego due to sky glow, which is caused by the reflection of city lights. Since I was pregnant, we wanted to make sure that I would be comfortable if we booked a stargazing experience. When we called to schedule a Stargazing Tour with Borrego Night Sky Tours, Proprietor Dennis Mammana was friendly and accommodating. He agreed his normal route over bumpy terrain might be a problem so he agreed to find us “smoother” terrain to traverse. Unfortunately, due to a forecast of overcast skies, Mammana called that afternoon and recommended we not do the tour. We appreciated him wanting to ensure we had a good experience and agreed. This is something we will absolutely do on our next trip, assuming the weather cooperates.

We enjoy golfing, so we decided to see if we could check out the neighboring Rams Hill Golf Club. Since it would have been hard for me to swing a full game, we opted for a tour instead. Michael Setchell, the club’s concierge and activities director, personally gave us a tour. The new, Tom Fazio-designed course is set up higher than Borrego Springs and offers breathtaking views of the surrounding mountains.

With bentgrass greens and Rye with

Bermuda base grass on the fairways, the club takes its golf seriously. In addition, many of the holes, surprisingly, have beautiful water features. Hole 11 has a flowing white water “river” running alongside it, while Hole 18 ends on a lake. Since we are in a desert, in a state with a drought, I had to ask about the water usage. Michael assured me that although they do not use recycled water, they have aquifers on the property that adequately serve their water needs. In addition, the club is looking into installing solar panels and usually closes the golf course down in the summer months to conserve water and wear and tear on the course.

The Rams Hill Clubhouse has a spacious and beautiful dining room with cathedral ceilings and floor-to-ceiling windows that draw in the beauty of the mountains and course. When we were there, landscapers were installing numerous outdoor fire pits surrounded by half a dozen chairs overlooking the golf course. It looked like it would be a perfect place to sip wine and stay warm on a cool desert night. We look forward to returning and playing this beautiful course and trying out their dining.

While our visit was short, La Casa Del Zorro and Rams Hill lived up to and exceeded our expectations for a weekend getaway. We left feeling relaxed and ready for our next adventure: baby.



Cynthia Morgan-Reed delivered a baby girl, Stella Elizabeth, on Feb. 6, 2015. Reed is principal of the San Diego law firm Morgan-Reed Law.