REVIEW: The Island Hotel in Newport Beach – The Best spot for 4th of July Fireworks in Orange County

So for those who haven't been to the Orange County coast of California, you may not be familiar with the swathe of land that covers approximately 60 miles from Northern tip to Southern tip. This swathe of land also happens to have an incredible variety of hotels from resorts such as the Rancho Valencia in the south, to the Island Hotel in Newport Beach all the way on the North. My preference has always been for the resorts on the Southern end of Orange County (Including the Ritz-Carlton in Laguna, the Monarch Beach in Laguna, or the Montage also in Laguna).

However, sometimes you need to be in a particular place and don't feel like driving an hour just to get to somewhere you need to be. If it so happens that you need to be spending time in Huntington Beach or Newport Beach – then your best option, in my opinion, is the Island Hotel.

This property isn't particularly new, nor is it particularly flashy, but what it does have it does very well. The tone of the property is muted and beach-reminiscent. Pastel tones carry the property and make it feel light and airy and even though it is still a few miles from the Ocean one would think they were right on the beach when entering the lobby.

Check out those pastel beachy tones

The rooms themselves have great expansive views, as the building is exceptionally tall and although they’re not as updated as I would personally prefer, they still have a well-built luxurious quality to them and the mattresses are comfortable, the entertainment systems are updated, and bathrooms are kept exquisitely clean.

The rooms aren’t the most modern, but they’re comfy and luxurious still

My favorite features at the hotel are the poolside fireplace – a great place to have a glass of wine and unwind for the night, and the rooftop lounge – replete with awesome views all the way to Los Angeles and of course towards the Ocean.

This is where you want to spend your time when you're here

Oh yea, spend some time up top as well. It's on the 12th floor

PROS:

- This hotel has excellent service, and even though its not the newest property it has been very well maintained
- The fireplace and rooftop lounge really are excellent features that you don't find in many hotels in the area
- They have an incredible room service menu and it's 24/7

CONS:

- The hotel could use a slight update, things are wearing well but it wouldn't hurt to refresh the colors or furniture to something more modern

SECRETS:

- I highly recommend checking last minute rates at this hotel, they are often pretty cheap. Also, you can often get a good room upgrade once you get to the hotel, the suites are pretty great bargains and are very nice – a step up from the standard accommodations and worth the extra $$.

THINGS TO DO IN THE AREA:

- Check out Balboa Island – rent a Duffy and cruise the harbor, eat frozen dipped bananas at the original Banana Stand
- This is the best place to spend 4th of July, but book early, as the Island Hotel is the BEST place to watch fireworks down in Orange County (the height of the building really lends itself to this)