

LAWEEKLY[®]

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REDISCOVER
SAFARI

SAN DIEGO ZOO
PARK IN THE NEW

ELEPHANT VALLEY

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

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Photo: Courtesy of San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance

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LA WEEKLY

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MUSIC

ANGELENOS WIN BIG AT GRAMMYS 2026

BY MARK STEFANOS



Kendrick Lamar, SZA, and the team of "Luther"

COURTESY OF GETTY IMAGES

Los Angeles-natives claimed many of the major awards at the Grammys last Sunday, Feb. 1:

- **Kendrick Lamar** took home Record of the Year for "Luther" with **SZA**, plus Rap Song, Rap Album, Melodic Rap Performance, and as a feature in Best Rap Performance, Clipse's "Chains & Whips."
 - **Billie Eilish** and her brother **Finneas O'Connell** won Song of the Year for "Wildflower."
- Other top winners included:
- **Bad Bunny**, who took home Album of the Year, Música Urbana Album, and Global Music Performance. It is the first time an all-Spanish album won Album of the Year.
 - Best New Artist went to **Olivia Dean**.

For the first time, all of the Best New Artist nominees performed in a medley.

Major awards were given at the televised show at Crypto.com Arena, with Trevor Noah returning as host. The non-televised Premiere Ceremony was held earlier in the day at the Peacock Theater hosted by Darren Criss.

Some of our favorite artists took home two wins:

- **Kehlani** won for Best R&B Performance and Best R&B Song for her beautiful hit "Folded"
- **Turnstile** won Best Rock Album for *NEVER ENOUGH* and

Best Metal Performance for "BIRDS."

- **Leon Thomas** took home Best R&B Album *MUTT* and Best Traditional R&B Performance for "Vibes Don't Lie."

Other *LA Weekly* favorites include:

- French producer and Prince of Darkness **Gesaffelstein** won his first Grammy for his work on Lady Gaga's single "Abracadabra," winning Best Remixed Recording for "Abracadabra (Gesaffelstein Remix)."
- South African superstar **Tyla** won Best African Music Performance for her hit "Push 2 Start."
- Korean artist **EJAE** made history with the first-ever Grammy Award for a K-pop song, winning Best Song Written for Visual Media for "Golden," which she co-wrote and performed for the hit Netflix animated film *KPop Demon Hunters*.
- **FKA twigs** took home Best Dance/Electronic Album for her album *Eusexua*.
- **Yungblud** won his first-ever Grammy for Best Rock Performance for his live cover of Black Sabbath's "Changes," recorded at the Back To The Beginning concert. He appeared on stage with Sharon Osbourne. Oh, and Justin Bieber performed "Yukon" in his chonies. **LA**



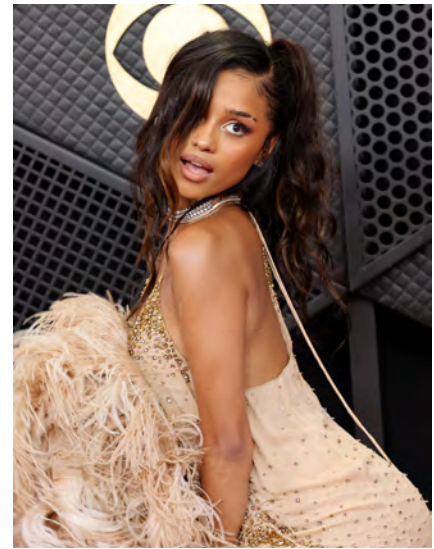
Billie Eilish and Finneas O'Connell



Bad Bunny



Olivia Dean



Tyla



Kehlani



Turnstile



EJAE



FKA twigs



Gesaffelstein



Leon Thomas



Yungblud

REDISCOVER SAN DIEGO ZOO SAFARI PARK IN THE NEW ELEPHANT VALLEY

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

In 2003, an orphaned group of elephants was rescued from slaughter in Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) due to a severe drought and lack of food by a group of zoos. Four of them were brought back to the San Diego Zoo by the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance. Since then, they have become a viral sensation.

Just before the magnitude 5.2 earthquake shook near Julian in April of 2025, the elephants at the [San Diego Zoo Safari Park](#) instinctively formed an alert circle to protect the younger members of the herd.

They started trumpeting and putting the babies in the middle of a circle before the ground even started shaking. They already felt the rumble through the pads of their feet. Zuli, the seven-year-old male, kept trying to get out of the middle to become part of the circle to help protect the herd, which has now grown to eight.

The pack consists of eight elephants: Swazi (female, 36), Umngani (female, 36), Ndlulamitis “Ndlula” (female, 36), Khosi (female, 19), Phakamile “Kami” (female, 18), Qinisa (female, 13), Umzula “Zuli” (male, 7), and Mkhaya (female, 7). Khosi, Kami, Qinisa, Zuli, and Mkhaya were all born in the park.

They calmly resumed normal behavior shortly after the quake, but stayed close together, all of which was randomly captured on the park’s security cameras.

The all-new [Denny Sanford Elephant Valley](#) at the San Diego Zoo Safari Park is their new home and will officially open to visitors on Thursday, March 5, as the largest and most transformative project in the San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance’s 109-year history. Elephant Valley was meticulously designed to foster empathy, understanding, and a lasting appreciation for elephants in a natural setting familiar to them.

The enclosure was built around the herd during the pandemic, and the experience shines a spotlight on San Diego Zoo Wildlife Alliance’s global conservation partners and celebrates the cultures and local communities in Kenya where humans and elephants coexist, reflecting the seasonal variations of the African savanna year-round.

The immersive space is thoughtfully designed with this concept in mind. Hills, valleys, and hiding spots encourage behavioral enrichment, employing techniques like hiding food, using puzzle feeders, and simulating natural foraging to prevent boredom and stress.



COURTESY OF SAN DIEGO ZOO WILDLIFE ALLIANCE



And speaking of feeding, at the heart of the valley overlooking the lagoon is Mkutano House, a new two-story restaurant with three different dining destinations, Mkutano, Ona Lounge, and Tu Grill, that all overlook the exact spot where the historic alert circle took place.

Mkutano comes from Swahili, meaning “gathering with purpose,” and the sprawling indoor/outdoor space is elegant and romantic with floor-to-ceiling windows in an authentic safari lodge setting with detailed design elements and menus inspired by culinary traditions across Africa’s diverse regions.

The Safari Park in the rolling hills of San Pasqual Valley in Northern San Diego opened in 1972. It spans 1,800 acres in Escondido and is home to no less than 3,100 animals from more than 340 species. Elephant Valley is included with Safari Park admission.

Make it a Weekend: Roar and Snore

For the full savannah experience, check into the **Roar and Snore** glampsite overlooking Elephant Valley. The sleepover experience includes camp activities, an after-hours look at the wildlife, guided walks, s’mores around the campfire, dinner, an evening snack, and breakfast the following morning, all overlooking the vast expanse of the savannah dotted with giraffes, rhinos, and dozens of other species interacting in their natural setting.

Choose from several age-appropriate sleepover categories with their own themes, like adults only and school and youth nights. With the safari package, you’ll begin your evening by soaring into camp on a 2/3rd mile Flightline Safari zip line. At night, take a nocturnal safari to view the wildlife of Africa and Asia through night vision binoculars.



Koji Marinated Chicken Wings at Mkutano House

After breakfast, as the elephants begin to stir, there is reserved up close viewing and encounters with some of the park’s inhabitants in the amphitheater. Finally, the overnight experience ends with a wildlife safari into the expansive savanna habitats in the back of a covered, open-air safari truck for an up-close view of the varied wildlife, including turkey vultures, lions, and cheetahs.

There are various tent options on the hillside grove, which feels like a family campout, that include queen-size and bunk beds. Linens and sleeping bags for the bunks are only available in the premium tents, so be sure to bring those along to be on the safe side. You might not get as lucky as we did, with neighbors like KABC’s Marc Cota-Robles, wife Jasmine Viel, and sons there to lend us one out, as trustworthy and reliable as their newscasts. And sorry, no showers. 🚿



Battered Trout Filet



Vegan Spicy Suug Suqaar Rigatoni



Beadworks Tree



Scrapbook Lounge

COURTESY OF SAN DIEGO ZOO WILDLIFE ALLIANCE

LAWEEKLY **CLASSIFIEDS**

EMPLOYMENT & EDUCATION

Data Analyst - Pacifix International, Inc - South El Monte, CA. Bachelor's in Stats, Data Sci, Biz Analytics, or related; 6 mos exp in a data/business analyst position; Proficient in SQL, MS Office, Tableau, R language, Python, & Power BI; Understanding of cloud computing platforms and big data; X'Int comm & analytical skills. \$73,174/yr. Email:jonathan@pacifixinc.com.

Architectural Designer - J Lou Architect Inc. - Los Angeles, CA. Master's in Architecture, or related; Proficiency in Rhinoceros, AutoCAD, & Photoshop; Strong verbal & written comm skills. Email resume to jlou@jlouarchitect.com; J Lou Architect Inc., 815 1/2 Centennial St, Los Angeles, CA 90012. \$78,811/yr.

Visual Designer - Unlimited Containers Inc. - City of Industry, CA. Bachelor's in design, graphic design, or related; Proficiency in Adobe Creative Suite & industry-standard tools (e.g., Photoshop, Illustrator, Indesign, Sketch, & Figma); Knowl of visual design, user-centered exp design, interaction design, brand dev, & the creative process; Ability to understand biz objectives& provide creative strategic solutions. Email: wyue@unlimitedcontainers.com; \$48,131/yr.

Graphic Designer. Req'd: BA in Graphic Design, Media Arts and Animation, Illustration or related. Mail Resume: Sweet Claire, Inc. 800 E. 12th St. #116 Los Angeles, CA 90021.

WHAT'S UP POPPING UP

The Valentine's Day Edition

BY MICHELE STUEVEN

This Valentine's Day, **SeaWorld San Diego** is offering two enchanting dining experience options – a romantic, four-course dinner at Turtle Reef, as well as an exclusive Valentine's-themed family option at Dine with Orcas for lunch or dinner.

Turtle Reef Dinner for Two takes place Friday, Feb. 13, through Monday, Feb. 16, for \$89.99 per person. The one-of-a-kind, after-hours four-course dinner at Turtle Reef features sea turtles gracefully swimming in the background with two evening seatings each night, and a refreshed menu. The evening includes live romantic guitar music, a complimentary glass of champagne, and Valentine's Day-themed photo opportunities. The menu highlights include tomato bisque soup, strawberry feta salad, a choice of filet mignon or gnocchi in a vodka cream sauce, and decadent desserts.

Dine with Orcas on Friday, Feb. 13, and Sunday, Feb. 15 at 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. at \$64.99 per adult, \$39.99 per child. The exclusive dining experience features a chef-crafted menu with a carving station, seafood, pasta, and a variety of desserts, while dining next to SeaWorld's famous orcas.

Space is limited for both dining offerings, and reservations are required. Park admission is not included in the Valentine's Day dining reservations. Reservations can be made online at SeaWorld.com/san-diego/dining/valentines-day/.

The **Fairmont Breakers Long Beach** turns 100 this year and is a romantic oceanfront getaway with sweeping harbor views for a picturesque coastal staycation. For Valentine's Day, there will be a prix fixe menu at **Nettuno** featuring handmade pastas, wood-fired pizzas, and Italian classics. There will be golden-hour cocktails at **HALO**, jazz at **Alter Ego**, and the **La Dolce Galentine** brunch with complimentary spritz. **Nettuno** also offers a **La Dolce Galentine** brunch on Sunday, Feb. 15 (reservations for four guests on **OpenTable**) with complimentary spritz and a handwritten note from Chef Giuseppe. Reservations for all **Nettuno** experiences



Valentine's Day at Turtle Reef



Dine with the Orcas

are available via **OpenTable**

City Cruises Marina del Rey is offering a three-hour Valentine's Day Dinner Cruise offering chef-prepared plated entrees, craft cocktails, and harbor views from indoor and open-air decks with music from a live DJ.

Valentine's Day Pasta Class & Italian Dinner at Impastiamo DTLA: Celebrate Valentine's with a hands-on Italian pasta class in downtown Los Angeles, where couples make fresh maritani (married) pasta together, then enjoy a shared dinner with wine and beer included. This 2.5-hour social experience combines cooking, connection, and celebration.

Mastro's BH, Downtown, and Malibu will be offering a special Valentine's Day Chocolate Cheesecake starting Sunday, Feb 1, and available for the entire month

of February. The cheesecake is made up of premium cocoa, espresso, dark chocolate ganache, and an Oreo cookie crumb crust. They will also be featuring Austin Hope Cabernet Sauvignon all month for \$35 by the glass and \$140 by the bottle.

Valentine's Day at Mastro's is always a favorite for couples and galentines groups, so they will have extended hours for dinner on Feb. 13, 14, and 15; reservations via **OpenTable** are highly recommended. Special occasion signature dishes include a seafood tower of shrimp cocktail, lobster cocktail, crab legs, and crab claws, as well as the 32oz wagyu tomahawk and lobster mashed potatoes.

Valentine's Day brunch is also available at Mastro's Ocean Club Malibu with live music, cocktails, and dishes like Maine lobster eggs Benedict, New York strip steak and eggs, red King Crab omelet, and avocado toast with poached egg.

For a romantic mini getaway, **Ojai Valley Inn** offers two dining experiences just a short drive from Los Angeles. **The Oak** is serving a specially curated prix-fixe menu featuring seasonal, farm-forward

dishes like ahi tuna carpaccio with blood orange and shiso oil, roasted bone marrow with cipollini onion jam, crispy skin black cod, and steak favorites such as bone-in filet mignon.

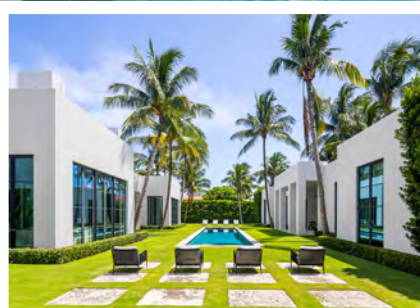
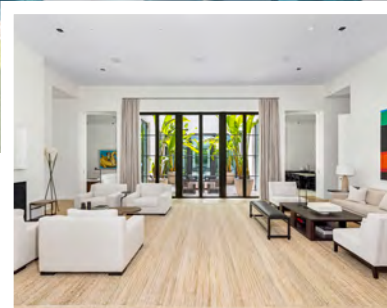
Olivella will offer a luxurious four-course Italian-inspired menu with highlights like agrumi and burrata, prime beef tartare, black truffle risotto, Santa Barbara spiny lobster bucatini, and uovo ravioli, finishing with desserts like Neapolitan rum baba and torta nerina. Reservations are available at ojaivalleyinn.com.

Love in Century City: **The Fairmont Century Plaza** is offering two different Valentine's experiences, both within the same romantic setting. **The Bar** is serving a **French fries and Martinis** pairing Friday, Feb. 13 through Sunday, Feb. 15, where guests can add fries to any martini for \$3 or order from the full menu for a playful night out.

The hotel's **Lumière Brasserie** will have a three-course Valentine's prix-fixe dinner on the same nights, featuring French-inspired dishes like crispy potato pave with sweet bread aioli or red bib lettuce with Piave Vecchio and Champagne vinaigrette; beef Wellington with bordelaise sauce or baked sablefish with shiso butter and black garlic broth; and desserts including Valrhona Jivara milk chocolate cheesecake or Pour La Passion with passion fruit, meringue and roasted white chocolate. The prix-fixe is \$105 per person. Reservations at fairmontcenturyplaza.com. 📍



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