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SANTA CATALINA Island of Enchantment



A Huge Swordfish.



General View of Avalon



A Group of Seals



Looking through the Glass Bottom Boats of the Marine Gardens



The Tent City

An Intimate Sketch of This Island of Enchantment Just Off Los Angeles—The Fisherman's Paradise.

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JUST off the coast of California is the much visited Island of Santa Catalina. It contains a great natural beauty and is a part of the State of California being annexed to Los Angeles County. It is reached by boat from San Pedro, the port of Los Angeles, the starting point being about twenty-five miles from the city. At this place a boat is taken and one skims over the Pacific Ocean, a distance of about twenty-seven miles, spending about two hours on the little steamer which is usually crowded with people of all classes. For Santa Catalina, like Atlantic City, has amusements to suit all pocket books. It is usually a smooth trip but a little blow generally sends many people to bed with seasickness for the Pacific at this point can get choppy over a slight wind.

The island has many attractions but the principal ones are swimming and fishing. The bathing is poor, for there is little beach and what there is is pebbly and rough to the bathers' feet. The beach slopes rapidly and one is soon in deep water, but this does not matter as nearly everyone who lives anywhere near the California Coast swims.

Interesting History The place has an interesting history for it was discovered in the year 1542 by a Spanish navigator. Several years ago the log of Captain Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo was found in a public library at Madrid, Spain, and was sent to our government. It proved to be a remarkable historical document and showed that during navigator's sailing two caravels, La Vittoria and San Salvador, came upon the island and decided to name it after one of his ships. Sebastian Vizcaino, a noted pilot of the early seventeenth century, sailed into the sheltered Bay of Avalon on November 23rd, 1602 and thereupon named the island for the saint's day of his arrival and ignored the name given by Cabrillo. A record of Vizcaino's voyage tells wonderful stories of the natives of Santa Catalina, whom he describes as a fine sturdy race of people who dressed in skins, had large houses and showed some considerable advance in civilization. All sorts of evidences of this are found in the unearthing of mortars, pistols, musical instruments and implements of various kinds, many of which are found in the canyon of the island. Near the summit of a mountain known as Black Jack there is a cave large enough to accommodate several families and nearby a small one with evidences of smoke on its walls which seems to indicate that it had been used as a kitchen. A number of stone implements used for cooking utensils were found in the caves while perfectly finished mortars were obtained from an old quarry near one of the landings.

Changed Here Many Times Many archeologists have searched in parts of the island and unearthed things which bear evidence that it was inhabited at least four or five centuries ago and that the people were intelligent and showed excellent workmanship in the articles they made. The island is about twenty-two miles long and from one to eight miles wide and contains approximately 55,000 acres. It is hilly and contains two mountain peaks which although only 2,100 and 2,000 feet high respectively, seem much higher as they rise straight up from the sea. It has changed hands frequently and has been troubled times. First it was granted by Mexico to Governor Pio Pico who afterwards deeded it to Nicholas Covarrubias, Sr. It was next purchased by James Lick to be used as a range for his sheep. In 1890 Mr. G. Shatto purchased the island and conceived the idea of turning it into a summer resort and to that end laid off some lots near Avalon Bay and sold them, calling this particular part of the island Avalon but it was not a success along these lines and somebody thought that the hills contained silver and it was purchased by an English syndicate for silver mining but this too proved unprofitable and it was disposed of in 1892 to a company who tried to carry out the summer resort idea and succeeded in making the place popular for a time. A fine hotel was erected (which was burned a few years later); cottages were built, curio shops were opened and at least a small city of tents was put up. These latter proved very successful and today it is the popular thing in southern California for whole families to go to the island, rent a tent and keep house when they are not in the water.

The fishing is excellent, the swimming fine and the hunting for wild goats very good. Here the tenters may live in the sunbath, beside the water as blue as the Mediterranean and under skies as soft as those which cover that water and amid scenes which sum up all the glories of golden California, its towering mountains, wooded canyons and undulating shore line.

Attractions For Everyone There seems to be everything at Santa Catalina to please the pleasure seeker. For the people who prefer to be away from the crowd there is a splendid hotel with golf links, swimming pools and a stable of excellent riding horses and autos to travel about the island. For the large majority there is swimming and fishing and even aeroplaning on the beach and sells rides for the sum of \$10 per trip and does a thriving business. The lover of hiking will find many beautiful walks in the mountains where interesting discoveries sometimes come to the most venturesome. There are miles and miles of pleasant well-kept highways which invite the pleasure seeker who likes automobileing, and whether you spend a day or a month on the island there is always something to do and something to please the taste of all kinds and conditions of travellers.

Famous Fishing Grounds Much of the charm of the island is in the marine life found there for it is the home of the flying fish—a delicate little fish with gossamer-like wings which flies about the water and is used for bait when the traveller goes out to catch the big fish which seem to be so plentiful that they fairly jump into one's boat. It is a veritable fisherman's paradise for nowhere else in the world are so many game fish to be found and so many remarkable catches recorded. The Yellowtail and the Tuna are both plentiful and both will put up a fight sporty enough to please any fisherman. The Black

Sea bass and Albacore are also found in abundance. The White Sea bass, while more uncertain in its visits to the Catalina waters, is another game fish sometimes caught. Two varieties of huge sword fish fairly infest the waters and a fight with one of them is no easy task and affords plenty of excitement. This year there were many leaping Tunas ranging from 16 to 250 pounds caught while sword fish weighing from 100 to 300 pounds were brought in and huge Black Sea bass about the same weight fall before the prowess of the plucky fishermen. Only a short time ago a New Jersey man who has hypothesized devil fish and big sharks in Florida, came to Santa Catalina to try his luck and while out cruising in his launch two miles from the island sighted a huge sun fish backing in the sunshine. He had thrown a harpoon at the marine monster but it glanced off as if the hide was granite. Then he cautiously came home and the fish began to fight. Next his guide seized a gaff and plunged it into the corner of the fish's mouth and tried to pull it to the launch but the weight of the monster was so great that the boat tilted. Like a whale the fish belched great volumes of water and it was not until the fisherman had fired several shots from a large revolver that the fish was subdued. Other fishermen saw the light and came to lend assistance but the fish was so heavy that the avail-

able block and tackle was not able to stand the strain and the giant sunfish had to be placed on a truck and pulled by the aid of a number of men who used ropes and pulleys. It was found to weigh 2,000 pounds and is the record catch of the season. Then, too, fishing there is so good, if one cares to make it so as boats can be hired and the captain will take entire charge of the sport. He will row you to a spot known as good fishing grounds, bait your hook and give instructions as to how to get the fish to bite, assist in the pulling in and then fix the fish to be taken home. Frequently the anglers have their catches packed in ice and sent to the mainland. Glass Bottom Boats Perhaps the most remarkable thing about the island is the clearness of the water which surrounds it as one can see to the marine gardens on the bottom although the depth may be as much as 60 feet. Glass bottom boats have been provided for this kind of sitting in a comfortable boat one may look down through this heavy glass at the gorgeous undersea gardens with their wonderful tropical colors, their weirdly beautiful forms of sea life, the gold, blue and green fishes swimming in and out of the huge bushes of kelp and other sea weed and see the shells and pebbles on the bottom. On one of the boats is a diver who will go overboard and pick up any shell the visitor may request—usually one of

the abalone type which are so exquisitely beautiful and so plentiful in that section. All this seems like fairy land and there are few who can resist idling away their time over this beautiful picture.

Good History The Seal Rocks, a little island three miles away in the hours of a great number of seals who are protected by the State of California and have become so gentle that one may go out in a boat and anchor very near and watch their antics on the rocks.

Now the wild goats which may be hunted came upon the island is explained by the fact that long ago some unknown person—perhaps one of the Spanish owners of centuries ago, stocked the islands with these goats. For many years they were undisturbed and have so increased in number that hunting lodges are maintained at the different ranches and guides and a permit may be obtained to hunt them by those who are inclined to that sport.

Moonlight trips are frequently made on the waters and the lights of the steamer seem to wake up the entire marine world for the seals plunge about in the water and the flying fish seem disturbed at their rest and will frequently fly into the boat. The noise of the engine, the rolling off the rocks of the seals, the whir of the flying fish and the strange shadows on the water make a trip of this kind uncanny but at the same time there is a certain fascination about the scene which few can resist and those who make it once repeat it again and again. The climate of the island is perfect, in fact it has everything about it to cause its name to be changed to the Island of Enchantment.