

REALTOR[®]

2021 CONFERENCE PICKS

Explore San Diego's
hidden gems Page 1

Navigating the
big event Page 4

Get that conference
elixir all year! Page 7

Drew Brees: the
power unleashed
by adversity Page 8



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Brees: I've always believed that adversity equals opportunity. With every failure, there's a learning opportunity. Everything that happens in our lives is designed to motivate, train, and empower us to put us in a position to accomplish even greater things down the road. Failure is a tough teacher, but that is where you absolutely learn the most. The mindset of constantly driving forward, putting one foot in front of the other, and that never-quit attitude is what makes the journey challenging, fun, and rewarding when you are able to accomplish the goals you set out to accomplish.

RM: I read that you studied business at Purdue University and then, as an NFL player, took continuing education classes in business. What would you say sets the most successful businesses apart from the rest?

Brees: The most successful businesses have a great culture. I've always felt that's the most important element to any business. When businesses fail, it's not necessarily because they didn't have a good idea or didn't have the ability to execute. It was the fact that they didn't create an environment where everyone on the team is buying in, working toward a common goal, and really enjoying coming to work each and every day because the

work is about something more than themselves and they really enjoy being a part of the team.

RM: Speaking of something bigger than themselves, about 10,000 REALTORS® will be reading this magazine when they're in San Diego attending this industry's largest event, the REALTORS® Conference & Expo. You're no stranger to this city. Do you have a favorite spot in San Diego that REALTORS® shouldn't miss?

Brees: There are so many great options. Of course, if I am with my kids, there's always the San Diego Zoo, one of the best zoos in the country. The Wild Animal Park makes you feel like you're in the middle of the Serengeti. There's Sea World and the activities in Mission Bay. Del Mar is one of my favorite beaches to hang out, and Legoland is a family favorite.

Football great Drew Brees headlines the REALTORS® Conference General Session on Saturday, Nov. 13, at 9 a.m. See full details at conference.realtor or on your conference app.

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San Diego's Calling

Take time away from the conference to discover the city's hidden gems. Here are five ideas to get you started.

BY JARED WHITLOCK

Your visit to San Diego couldn't be better timed. San Diegans call fall "locals' summer": Crowds thin out, but the weather remains conducive to sandcastles and flip-flops. In the spirit of doing as the locals do, those attending the REALTORS® Conference & Expo can check out these hidden gems scattered across San Diego's varied neighborhoods.



1. Ferry to Coronado Island

With its quaint main street, white-sand beaches, and seaside restaurants, Coronado Island unfolds at a more leisurely pace than downtown San Diego. Sabrina Covington, a managing broker with Covington & Associates, describes the area as "Disneyland for adults."

While access is easy via the landmark San Diego–Coronado Bridge—to sound like a local, just say "the Coronado bridge"—Covington recommends getting to the area via a convenient, lesser-known means: The Coronado Ferry Landing (coronadoferrylanding.com, 619-435-8895). The ferry departs from downtown San Diego at Broadway Pier and travels to and from The Coronado Ferry Landing. Along the way, take in the sights of San Diego Bay.

For an up-close experience on the bay, rent a standup paddleboard at SUP Coronado (www.supcoronado.com, 619-888-7686). Experienced paddlers can opt for an ocean lesson.

Hop on a bike and pedal along a 5-mile loop of the island, starting at the ferry landing or downtown Coronado. Holland's Bicycles rents bikes at both spots (hollandsbicycles.com, 619-435-7180).

While not a hidden spot, Hotel del Coronado—San Diego's most iconic property—merits a stop. Opened in 1888, the hotel combines Victorian architecture, ocean views, and award-winning cuisine. Recently, the site underwent a \$200 million upgrade and expansion (hoteldel.com, 619-435-6611).

2. The Mystical Appeal of Swami's Beach

Up for venturing north? On the outskirts of downtown Encinitas, golden spires welcome visitors to Swami's Self-Realization Fellowship, an oceanside hermitage built in 1937 (encinitastemple.org/visiting, 760-436-7220). The mysticism attracts more than monks.



The property's meditation gardens, which are open to the public, offer expansive views of the Pacific Ocean. At Swami's Beach below, surfers ride waves that peel along a point break—and beachgoers gander at marine life in rocky tide pools visible during low tide. Less-ambitious folks relax on the wide, sandy beach.

A mile south, snap a picture with the Cardiff Kook, a statue so named for the awkward pose the bronze surfer strikes. So, it's no surprise that pranksters regularly adorn the figure in costumes, from Peter Pan to prom dresses. Once, the jaws of a papier-mache shark encircled the Kook.

A stone's throw east, grab a couple of fish tacos at Fish 101 Cardiff, where the menu centers on locally caught seafood (fish101restaurant.com, 760-230-1021). Then grab a blueberry buttermilk or chocolate old-fashioned doughnut at VG Donut & Bakery (vgbakery.com, 760-753-2400). Afterward, you'll slip into a transcendental state.

3. Tacos, Suds, and Art in Barrio Logan

When it comes to eating and drinking, San Diego is known for two things: beer and tacos. Get both in Barrio Logan, a focal point for Mexican American culture, bordering downtown San



Diego. At La Fachada, order carnitas street tacos—and rinse them down with aguas frescas, drinks made from fresh fruits (la-fachada.cafes-world.com, 619-236-8566).

Next, walk to Mujeres Brew House, a brewery entirely operated by women, which serves up a variety of beers, all delicious (mujeresbrewhouse.com, 619-213-4340). The brewery also runs Mujeres Brew Club, to teach folks—particularly women of color—the basics of craft beer.

After a beer or two, you might need a jolt. Mixed Grounds Coffee serves up tasty Vietnamese coffee (mixedgrounds.com, 619-782-9004). Earlier this year, the coffee shop reopened as an arts and community hub, joining Barrio Logan's stellar art scene.

Keep walking and you'll hit Bread and Salt, a former bread factory and now an art and music studio (breadandsaltsandiego.com, 619-851-4083). At Chicano Park, more than 70 murals adorn walls and concrete pillars.

4. Take a Hike

San Diego is teeming with hiking spots—hopefully you packed more than dress shoes and flip-flops. Torrey Pines State Park, one of the more popular hikes, borders the ocean. A path ascends, descends, and winds along sheer cliffs, the landscape dotted with the U.S.'s rarest pine tree. You might even see a dolphin or two in the distance.



Maybe you're seeking a less-traveled path. The Torrey Pines Gliderport, which offers tandem paragliding, also acts as the starting point for another hike (flytorrey.com, 858-452-9858). There, a trail descends to Black's Beach, where the clothing-optional policy usually keeps the crowds away. That is, except for surfers smitten by the big waves, the result of swells traveling through a submarine canyon and bending toward the coast.

For longer treks, go inland. The 6-mile stroll through Los Peñasquitos Canyon Preserve culminates in a waterfall. Want a tougher hike? Take the steep 8-mile path to Potato Chip Rock, named after the thin, climbable rock resembling a Pringle at the peak. Yes, the rock makes for a great photo, but be prepared to wait in line.



5. Rooftop Bars and Lush Views

In recent years, the rooftop bar trend has rolled into many cities. But San Diego's pleasant year-round weather makes the region one of the better places to sip a cocktail while kissing the sky.

"It's the perfect way to get to know San Diego," says Vernice Ross, a real estate broker and owner of Ross & Ross Realty.

On the 22nd story, Altitude Sky Lounge, in the Gaslamp district, counts as the region's highest rooftop bar (altitudeskylounge.com/sandiego, 619-446-6024). From the bar, glimpse the Coronado bridge, the ocean, and Petco Park, where the San Diego Padres play.

Looking for a rooftop bar with a pool? Check out Upper East Bar, also in Gaslamp (hotelsolamar.com/dining/upper-east, 619-819-9770). The adjoining Normal Heights neighborhood is home to SKA Bar (619-230-5038), where you can find Asian fusion and spirit-forward cocktails.

In La Jolla, an area replete with tide pools nestled in the curving, rocky coastline, George's at the Cove (georgesatthecove.com, 858-454-4244) has panoramic ocean views. Likewise for nearby Eddie V's Prime Seafood and Steaks (eddiev.com, 858-459-5500). "I love watching the sun set there," Ross says.

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2021 CONFERENCE PICKS

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Celebrate and Reconnect

Advocating for clients in a red-hot market—and a locked-down world—is exhausting. Enjoy the festivities, the education, and a little “me time” at the 2021 REALTORS® Conference & Expo.

BY GINA RAUTENBERG



Since 1908, U.S. real estate professionals have had a national gathering to connect, conduct the business of the association, and honor the best in the industry. Perhaps no event has been quite as anticipated as the 2021 REALTORS® Conference & Expo.

More than 10,000 REALTORS® and guests are gathering for this year's event, which bears the theme “Rise & Shine: Celebrating You and Everything You Do.” What's there to celebrate? How about REALTORS®' tireless client advocacy and industry commitment as they navigated a red-hot market in a locked-down world?

“We are hearing so much positivity and excitement to get back together for an in-person conference. The past two years have been rough, both with the pandemic and the stress of the real estate market. Our members are looking forward to coming together for rejuvenation, education, motivation, and networking,” says NAR Conference & Expo co-chair Beckwith Bolle.

“San Diego is the perfect location to shine together, as we conduct the important business of NAR and celebrate what it means to be a REALTOR®,” says Bolle's co-chair, Doug Sager.

Special celebratory events include:

- **The Inaugural Gala** (Thursday, Nov. 11, 6:30–10 p.m. PT), featuring the installation of your incoming NAR Leadership Team, including 2022 President Leslie Rouda Smith of Plano, Texas.
- **Opening Reception at Petco Park** (Friday, Nov. 12, 6–9 p.m. PT), free for all Premier Access attendees, sponsored by **Realtor.com**.
- **The Young Professionals Networking Reception** (Friday, Nov. 12, 6–9 p.m. PT, ticketed), sponsored by **Century 21**, featuring recognition of the five Networks of the Year.
- **General Session, featuring football great Drew Brees**, sponsored by **ABR**.
- **REALTORS® Good Neighbor Awards Dinner** (Saturday, Nov. 13, 6:30–10 p.m. PT, ticketed), honoring REALTORS®' The Good Neighbor Awards are sponsored by **Realtor.com**, **Chase Home Mortgage**, and the **Center for REALTOR® Development**.
- **International Night Out** (Saturday, Nov. 13, 8 p.m.–1 a.m. PT, ticketed) featuring an awards ceremony, live music, and dancing.

Educate Yourself!

While dazzling events and networking opportunities are highlights for many attendees, most REALTORS® also come ready to work and learn. The 2021 conference will feature more than 100 speakers covering topics ranging from post-pandemic business operations to strategies for handling persistently low inventory.

And whether you're involved in NAR committees or not, many committee meetings are open to guests, giving you a seat at important industry discussions and debates. Virtual attendees can observe meetings using the Meeting Play platform (see *page 6*). Learn which meetings are open to guests at conference.realtor.com/schedule.

Meet Us on the Expo Floor

Conference organizers have built a show where you can easily come together with friends old and new. You'll find dedicated networking space on the expo floor at the San Diego Convention Center and networking sessions by topic in the daily schedule. And no doubt REALTORS® will continue to participate in the long-honored tradition of "LobbyCon," meeting in their hotel's lobby or bar at all hours for connection and camaraderie.

For Sager, the moments of togetherness aren't just what make the conference special—they're also vital to keeping REALTORS® motivated and successful. "We literally thrive, both financially and holistically, on personal contact in our profession," Sager says, "so this event speaks to our core. It's like going to your first rock concert; the energy and anticipation in the air are potent."

Look for more than 250 new and long-time favorite exhibitors on the expo floor, where you can learn about new tools and take advantage of exclusive discounts. The focal point is the all-new "Town Square" featuring the **Town Square Theater**, as well as:

- **Recharge stations** sponsored by NAR's Consumer Ad Campaign, "That's Who We R."
- **Game Zone** sponsored by REALTORS® Information Network.
- **Golf Simulator and Putting Challenge** sponsored by Rapid Mold Removal, featuring daily competitions for straightest drive, longest drive, and closest to the pin.

- **Friday Break:** craft beer floats made with locally brewed Abnormal Coffee Stout and vanilla ice cream. **Saturday Break:** freshly made margaritas made with Topo Chico and topped with Tajin, both sponsored by SEI/Navica MLS (pick up tickets at the SEI/Navica booth each day).

While you're at the Town Square, snap a photo at the **REALTOR® Magazine cover star** booth, visit with **Real Estate Today** radio, order audio of sessions at the **Playback Now** booth, and meet this year's **Good Neighbor Award** winners.

Also new to the expo floor in 2021 is the **Sustainability Corner**, highlighting the sustainable technologies shaping the future of real estate. Walk through a Mighty Buildings 3D printed sustainable house, and learn about new methods and materials being used in high-performance home design.

While you're exploring, play the **REALTORS® Expo Cash In & Win!** game for one of five chances to win \$1,000. Submit stamped entries at the Liberty Mutual Insurance booth at least 30 minutes before each day's drawing. Also, enter the **Grand Prize Drawing** for a chance to win the Trip of a Lifetime, sponsored by Homes.com and Homesnap (entry form is in your conference tote bag). And check out the **REALTORS® Relief Foundation** Wall, sponsored by Wells Fargo.

The REALTORS® Conference & Expo is the "me time" you need to set the stage for a successful 2022. Enjoy the show!



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Virtually Here

With a Virtual Pass or a Premier Access Pass, you'll have a flexible experience that extends beyond the three-day conference.

BY NICOLE SLAUGHTER GRAHAM



One of the challenges of attending the REALTORS® Conference & Expo is the sheer size and number of activities. If only it were possible to be two, three, or four places at once! Well, this year's virtual conference option makes it possible for you to cover a lot of ground without wearing out the soles of your shoes.

REALTORS® who are attending the Conference & Expo via a **Virtual Pass** have access to three full days of conference content. "That includes select education sessions and our three keynote speakers as well as daily networking opportunities," says Stephanie Andropolis, manager of conference content strategy. "Virtual attendees also have access to the virtual expo to see this year's cutting-edge products."

NAR's virtual conference experience, built on the Meeting Play platform, gives virtual attendees the feel of being there. Here are some details to keep in mind:

- Streaming on the platform occurs from two main stages, which is where the three keynote speakers are presenting, says Bonnie Stetz, NAR's director of conference experience.
- Select education sessions will be streamed. Check conference.realtor often to learn which sessions are available.

- If you miss a session or want to rewatch any sessions, you'll have access to all of the Virtual Pass content for a full 30 days after the event.

Those who are attending the conference in person have virtual options, too.

In-person, Premier Access: If you're in San Diego with a Premier Access Pass, you can still catch sessions you missed after the show. You get 30 days of streaming access to all recorded content at conference.realtor/session-recordings.

In person, One-day or Expo-only Pass: Add a Virtual Pass (\$150 for NAR members) and you'll get online access to General Sessions, select education sessions, the virtual expo, networking opportunities specifically developed for the event platform, and on-demand access to Virtual Pass content for 30 days after the event.

Want extended on-demand access? For another \$95, in-person attendees can get the Enhanced Works Package. It includes this year's recorded sessions and more than 70 recorded sessions from the 2020 REALTORS® Conference. You'll get a pre-loaded USB flash drive with both the 2020 and 2021 conference content—speaker handouts, such as PDFs of their presentations or supplemental information—as well as streaming access until Nov. 15, 2022.



Capture the Magic of the Conference, All Year Long

A new online event series—an extension of the REALTORS® Conference & Expo—gives REALTORS® more opportunities to learn, connect, and live their best lives.

BY GINA RAUTENBERG

Attending the REALTORS® Conference & Expo can feel like a magical elixir—a needed dose of personal growth, inspiration, motivation, excitement, and fun. But let's face it: Most members don't have the opportunity to be at the conference in person. Now, NAR's bringing a bit of that magic to *all* members with **Conference Year-Round**, a free online series just for National Association of REALTORS® members.

Truly Personal, Truly Interactive

There are conferences, there are virtual conferences, and then there's Conference Year-Round. Organizers developed the series to give members an experience that feels both authentic and personal.

Virtual conferences can be disjointed, says NAR's Conference Content Strategy Manager Stephanie Andropolis. Often, presenters go through a slide presentation and don't have time to review the questions or comments that attendees place in the chat box. Conference Year-Round is different, she says. "We've created a conducive space for our members to learn and discuss topics virtually rather than simply holding a typical one-way webinar."

While each session has planned content, the speaker or host also offers 15 to 30 minutes for open Q&A or a facilitated discussion where attendees can unmute and ask questions or gather best practices from the full group.

"We want these sessions to be a chance for our members to come together, bounce ideas off one another, and create a community and lasting connections, culminating in a sort of homecoming at the annual Conference & Expo," Andropolis says.

Timely Topics, Impactful Insights

Andropolis and her team draw topics from a variety of sources, including online discussions and suggestions from members. So far this year, Conference Year-Round sessions have covered:

- Prioritizing your wellness
- The listing agent's guide to multiple offers
- How to get business results from Clubhouse
- The value of being an advocate and community builder
- Unlocking business growth on Facebook and Instagram
- Staying safe on the job

"After each Conference Year-Round session, we survey attendees for their feedback and to request future topic ideas," Andropolis says. "Our primary goal is to plan relevant, engaging sessions and to ensure a broad net of coverage." While attending the live session is the best way to get your exact questions answered, every Conference Year-Round session is recorded for easy replay.

Ready to attend your first Conference Year-Round event? Find out what's coming up at conference.realtor/conference-year-round.





A Fresh Brees

“Everything that happens in our lives is designed to motivate, train, and empower us . . . to accomplish greater things down the road.”

BY STACEY MONCRIEFF

Retired National Football League star Drew Brees was quarterback for the New Orleans Saints from 2006 to 2020, leading the team to victory in Super Bowl XLIV in 2010. Over a 20-year NFL career, he set numerous records and remains the league's all-time leader in career pass completions, career completion percentage, and regular-season passing yards. But Brees—who's now an analyst for “NBC Sunday Night Football”—is just as well known in some circles for his family focus (he married his college sweetheart and the couple has four children) and his philanthropy. When REALTOR® Magazine caught up with Brees, he was focusing his attention on efforts to help Louisiana residents affected by the devastation of Hurricane Ida.

REALTOR® MAGAZINE: It's an understatement to say you're widely admired, not just in New Orleans and not just for your football record but because you come across as a genuinely nice guy who cares about his family, cares about his fellow humans, and wants to leave the world a better place. Can you share an insight about what or who shaped your worldview?

Drew Brees: I'd say I was shaped by growing up near and spending a lot of time with my grandparents. They lived in a small community where everyone looked out for one another. Many times, as a kid, I witnessed my grandparents helping others who were in need. I've followed their example and always felt that was part of our responsibility as people and Christians.

RM: In interviews you did when you announced your retirement, you said one of the things you were most excited about was the opportunity to engage in philanthropic work. Can you share a success story, something you're working on today with the Brees Dream Foundation?

Brees: We recently announced a partnership with Ochsner Health Systems in Louisiana to build 13 primary health care facilities in underserved communities throughout the state. We were excited to open our first one in New Orleans East in the fall of 2020. The feedback we have received and the number of people we are able to serve each day in that community is incredible, and it's very rewarding to know we've had a hand in providing much-needed services for the community.



RM: You had success with the San Diego Chargers. In fact, the Associated Press named you NFL Comeback Player of the Year in 2004. And you went on to achieve many winning seasons with the New Orleans Saints, including the Super Bowl win. But you've also overcome loss and injury—and you've written about overcoming adversity. REALTORS® are out in the field every day, trying to make sales. They deal with rejection and high emotions daily, and many aren't paid if they don't close sales. What would you tell them about getting past defeats and negative thoughts that threaten to derail them from their goals?