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Terranea Resort coverage resulting from media guest Tim Chester, editor of AFAR, titled, “The Five-Star COVID Treatment: How an L.A. Hotel Treats a Pandemic.” The story highlights Terranea’s enhanced standards of care, luxury amenities, adventure activities, and noted “the greatest luxury during COVID? Not having to worry about feeling safe.”

<https://www.afar.com/magazine/this-la-resort-shows-how-to-combine-safety-with-luxury-during-coronavirus>

The Five-Star COVID Treatment: How an L.A. Hotel Treats a Pandemic

By [Tim Chester](#)

Aug 12, 2020



Courtesy of Terranea

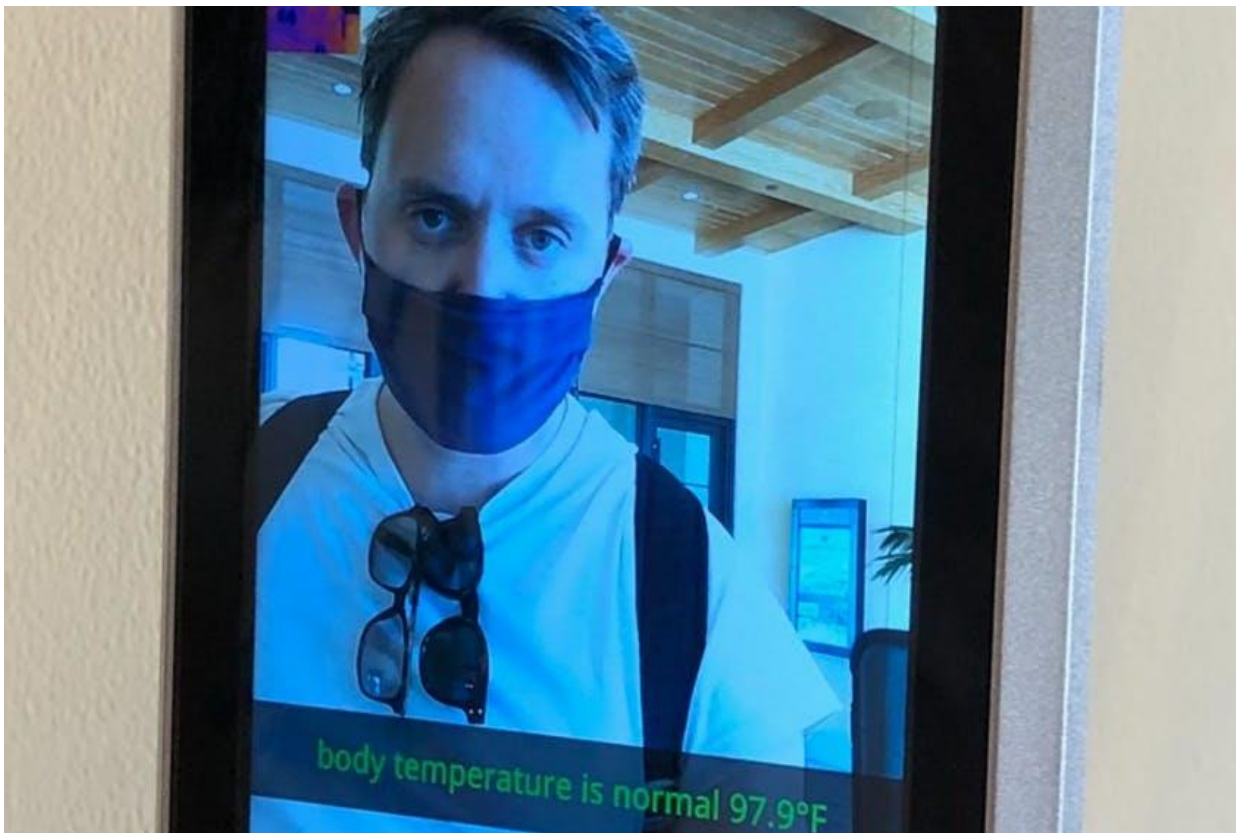
Terranea’s pools overlook the Pacific Ocean toward Catalina Island.

The greatest luxury during COVID? Not having to worry about feeling safe for an hour.

[Terranea](#) has long been my go-to spot for a Los Angeles staycation. The 102-acre resort on the Palos Verdes peninsula, a large chunk of SoCal that’s blissfully free of freeways and sticks into the ocean, is that perfect combination of remote and accessible. It feels far removed from the rest of the congested Los Angeles metropolitan area and yet it’s only about a 45-minute drive from my Baldwin Hills home.

With views of Catalina Island on a clear day and miles of hiking trails, coastal bluffs, and rocky shores to explore, the whole area offers a perfect breather whenever I'm feeling the weight of 13 million other souls pressing down on me. It seemed like the obvious choice for my wife and me to celebrate her milestone birthday—our first hotel stay since lockdown began some 17 years ago. And it turns out the place has got the whole health and safety-meets-luxury thing down to a T.

Everything about our arrival just over a week ago put us at ease, from the masked attendant at the parking lot entrance to the contactless temperature booths at check-in; the pouches containing spare mask, gloves, and sanitizing wipes we received on arrival, and the strategically placed social-distancing stickers on the floor of the lobby and in the four corners of the elevator.



Dystopian selfie by Tim Chester

Booths checked temperature in the lobby and at restaurant entrances.

Our room wasn't ready when we showed up, so we stopped by one of the hotel's dining options, Catalina Kitchen, for a late lunch. Here QR codes were posted in lieu of paper menus, with diners bringing up choices on their own phones, and waiters in masks and face shields ushering guests to spaced-out tables. Every detail of our meal seemed designed with safety in mind, right down to the plastic sheath holding the pen for signing the bill. (The resurgence of single-use plastic and other troubling eco implications of the virus are a whole other story.)

During the meal, the front desk called to let us know our room was ready. We dropped our key cards in a bin at reception for cleaning, picked up new ones, and took an empty elevator to the suite, which had a "Terranea Cares" sticker sealing the door and indicating it had been fully sanitized.

The resort has [implemented](#) the American Hotel and Lodging Association’s Safe Stay initiative and is certified Clean + Safe by the California Hotel and Lodging Association, meaning it satisfies the organization’s [stringent hygiene criteria](#). They’re dousing the whole place in things like Ecolab Peroxide and Clorox Total 360, but I must admit, when we threw open the balcony doors and stared out at the Pacific Ocean at the start of our first weekend without our three kids in over a year, after multiple months of living on top of each other 24/7 and juggling work, finances, home schooling, and our general sanity, we didn’t really have cleaning products on our mind.

Much of the credit for that goes to the hotel. It has managed to implement all the necessary, rigorous health and safety proto-*yada yada* subtly without sacrificing the luxury. During the course of the weekend, we did see sun loungers getting misted with some benevolent compound and furniture continually rearranged, but we were left to get on with the important business of recharging and recovering momentarily from an uniquely stressful year.



Terranea sits on the cliffs of the Palos Verdes peninsula.

We weren’t alone. Everyone by the pool was doing the same, many finding their leisure in very L.A. things like FaceTiming people who couldn’t be there, talking business loudly on the phone, or taking sunset selfies. Crucially, though, every guest we encountered was taking the pandemic seriously—and anyone who absent-mindedly forgot their mask was gently reminded by a gracious staff member.

Covering our faces to walk from lounge to restroom and back again quickly became habitual, just like it is at Trader Joe’s now, but there were few other signs that this was anything other than a normal summer. The hot tubs had lids on, and the splash pads and slides were shut—the shrieks of frolicking little kids, my own included, just a faint echo in my memory. But

really, with safety precautions ingrained from months of lockdown living in a city with more than 200,000 cases of COVID, we were able to detach from reality for 48 hours.

We paddleboarded out to sea over floating forests of kelp, again wearing masks until we were offshore and within six feet of nothing but dolphins. We cycled to a nearby lighthouse. My wife was among the first to experience the hotel's restarted spa treatments, donning her mask for 60 minutes of CBD massage in a cabana rather than in the spa building itself.

It seems somewhat crass to focus on little inconveniences, but if pressed I'd mention the poolside cocktails that came in a can, rather than from a full bar (the horror!) and the fact that, due to L.A. County Department of Health rules, we had to order food every time we wanted an alcoholic drink by the pool. We ended the weekend with a handful of half-eaten BLTs in our wake, but we could have dialed down the mojitos.

But if the point of a really nice hotel is to transport you to a responsibility-free fantasy world, far from the cares, concerns, and—during COVID—fears of everyday life, Terranea has got it just right. Pushing the pandemic to the back of your mind for 48 hours? There's no greater luxury than that.