

Balboa Park was originally called "City Park," but was renamed after Spanish explorer Vasco Núñez de Balboa, in honor of the 1915 Panama-California Exposition, held in the Park that year. Balboa Park was declared a National Historic Landmark, and a National Historic Landmark District in 1977. It is also listed on the National Register of Historic Places, as well as one of the Great Places in America.

Balboa Park is where culture and nature meet. Lush grounds, from gardens to forests, fountains to playgrounds, and sweeping architecture from Spanish Colonial Revival to mid-century Modern span the heart of the Park. More than 17 museums filled with everything from dinosaurs to space travel, science to the study of humankind, photographs to old masters, and automobiles to orchids. Plays, musicals, orchestras, ballet, heritage dancing, song, and the world-famous San Diego Zoo, round out a vast array of things to see and do.

Known as the Smithsonian of the West, Balboa Park is the largest urban park with cultural institutions in the United States and an international destination for arts, science and culture. With 17 museums and more than 10 performance spaces, you can plan a route or just let serendipity guide you. The San Diego Museum of Art, Timken Museum, Mingei Museum, San Diego Art Institute and Museum of Photographic Arts will be at the top of anyone's list, but lesser-known gems can be found at the San Diego History Center, which has an extensive collection of early 20th century plein air painters; at the Japanese Friendship Garden, where the Inamori Pavilion shows contemporary art inspired by Japanese culture; and at the San Diego Natural History Museum, which recently unveiled their collection of A.R. Valentien's "plant portraits," meticulous illustrations of California wildflowers. It's no wonder USA Today has called San Diego "One of America's most creative cities."

Arts administrators of several Balboa Park museums look forward to welcoming our group of arts deans and administrators in higher education as we arrive for conversation and then docent-led exploration or reflection of your own in several museums. Planned stops will be 30 – 45 minutes each. Registrants are also welcome to stroll Balboa Park on their own and simply benefit from transportation with colleagues. Museum admission for those which are members of San Diego Museum Council will be complimentary.

Transportation to Balboa Park will depart the Manchester Grand Hyatt (after lunch on your own) at 12:30 p.m. Wednesday and Saturday afternoons. Please meet us at the side entrance of Seaport Tower on the lobby level, near Brew 30 and the Market. Return transportation to the hotel will depart the Park at 5:30 p.m.