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SEPTEMBER 2014

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# Moms Away!

Taking a break with girlfriends is a great way to recharge.

By Lisa Castillo



PHOTO BY BARBARA KRAFT

**At local resorts like the Terranea Resort moms can indulge with friends and relaxing activities.**

Women — especially moms — tend to take care of everything and everyone but themselves. And as important as our daily responsibilities might be, there is real value in taking a moment to rediscover what it is we want out of life, to re-establish our priorities and our passions. A wonderful way to kick-start this process is a night out, or even a weekend getaway, with our special girlfriends.

Still, most moms, when they receive a friend's call, text or email invitation for this type of getaway, have their initial exhilaration and excitement dashed by nagging feelings of anxiety and guilt about the idea of not being there to care for the rest of the humans in our homes.

But children benefit from having moms who keep their identities

intact through time with close friends. "The adult connections we have with other moms help us recharge our batteries so that we can be at our optimal performance with our children," says Woodland Hills-based therapist Janice Weiss, LMFT, who has been in practice more than 18 years. "The work we need to do is to keep ourselves connected internally and honor ourselves as women, and the value of this very important job we are doing. We are creating the next generation. What's more important than that?"

Getaways with friends also offer time for frank conversations about the complexity of balancing motherhood, careers and relationships. "As we talk with our girlfriends, in our own space, we hopefully come away realizing we are well intentioned at being the best we can be," says Weiss.

A weekend away, a leisurely spa day or even a brief girls' night out offers the opportunity to experience everything from unstoppable laughter to life-changing leaps of faith. When we give ourselves space to breathe, our senses seem to heighten. Creative juices start flowing again. Everything tastes better. (Maybe it's because we are ordering what we really want, instead of what the kids will like.) Music sounds better as it awakens our spirit.

## Creative Fun

One quick and creative recipe for a great girls' night is Paint Nite ([www.paintnite.com](http://www.paintnite.com)), a series of events held at restaurants all over L.A., where people come together to paint and play. "Paint Nite allows moms to get together out of the house, away from the kids, and enjoy a not-so-typical night out with friends," says co-founder Sean McGrail. "While catching up, with a glass of wine in hand, women can enjoy being creative – something that they probably never get a chance to do while at home taking care of the kids."

"Moms are so happy as they come out with their paintings," says artist Elizabeth Grebler, who has hosted more than 150 Paint Nite parties. "They say that when they get home from Paint Nite, their kids want to keep their paintings and hang them in their bedrooms. It's great for kids to see their moms out of the house doing something creative."

## Getaway Wednesdays

Doing something indulgent is another guaranteed mom refresher. To that end, Four Seasons Hotel Westlake Village (2 Dole Dr., Westlake Village; 818-575-3100; [www.fourseasons.com/westlakevillage](http://www.fourseasons.com/westlakevillage)) offers Wow Me Wednesdays. Created by Four Seasons Senior Spa Director for North America Damien Craft, who is also a local father of two girls, the program offers moms childcare from 9 a.m.-1 p.m., a massage or facial, and access to the outdoor adult serenity pool, steam room, sauna, hot tub and relaxation lounge for just \$119.

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– Paint Nite co-founder Sean McGrail

"A day or two at the spa gives moms a chance to talk about everything from relationships and health to life in general ... but mainly about their husbands," says Craft. "All I have to say is, my hat's off to the ladies!" (He then rushed home from work to relieve his wife of child-watching duty, so she could enjoy a well-deserved girls' night out.)

Beyond the Wednesday program, the hotel is a mom magnet every day of the week. "I constantly see groups of moms enjoying spa days, moms nights and overnights," says publicity director Morgan Fukumoto. "We have so much to offer, from our new sustained-living menu to our newly opened wine tasting room featuring Malibu Wines."

Doing something creative, like getting together for a Paint Nite party, can be a great way to catch up.



PHOTO COURTESY-PAINT NITE