

Located high on a bluff with dramatic ocean views, Birch Aquarium at Scripps is a unique and engaging venue for any event. Our one-of-a-kind facility includes more than 60 diverse marine habitats and features a two-story Giant Kelp Tank, where guests feel surrounded by the ocean world. Birch Aquarium is the public outreach center for the renowned Scripps Institution of Oceanography, UC San Diego, and your guests will dive deeper into the cutting-edge research being done to understand, protect, and preserve the planet.

The mission of Birch Aquarium is to provide ocean science education, interpret Scripps Institution of Oceanography research, and promote ocean conservation.

Your special event directly supports Birch Aquarium's mission. Not only will an event at Birch Aquarium create lasting memories, but it will also inspire ocean conservation by supporting exhibits, animal care, and education programs. Our experienced Special Events Team is here to help you create memorable events for conventions, corporate events, professional events, academic retreats, wedding receptions and ceremonies, social organizations, and family celebrations. The venue is exclusive and is available to one group per evening.

Event Spaces

The exclusive event property of Birch Aquarium at Scripps includes the following spaces:

Full Facility

At more than 30,000 square feet, the full Birch Aquarium facility can accommodate up to 1,500 guests with multiple setup configurations. Guests will be able to explore ocean habitats, get hands on with Scripps Oceanography science, and enjoy some of the best ocean views in San Diego.



Entrance Courtyard

This 3,000-square-foot entirely open-air space is a great area to extend your party from the indoor Galleria. It accommodates 300 for a reception and 150 for a sit-down dinner.

Galleria

Central and beautiful, Birch Aquarium's Galleria features multi-story windows and ocean views. At 4,200 square feet, this unique indoor space accommodates 400 people for a stand-up reception, 200 for a sit-down dinner, 160 for buffet-style service, and 375 for a theater-style event. This location offers easy access to all of Birch Aquarium's exhibits.



Preuss Tide Pool Plaza

Featuring the most spectacular views at Birch Aquarium, this 3,750-square-foot open-air space includes panoramic ocean views and the aquarium's tide pool exhibit. Accessible from inside the Galleria, this split-level accessible space accommodates 500 people for a stand-up reception, 140 for a sit-down dinner, and 175 for a wedding ceremony. The views from Preuss Tide Pool Plaza are especially spectacular during sunset.





Event Spaces

Nigella Hillgarth Education Plaza

The 3,000-square-foot open-air Education Courtyard is enclosed on four sides. This intimate space accommodates 250 people for a stand-up reception or 100 seated and is a lovely area for a variety of activities.

Smargon Exhibit Courtyard

At 6,000 square feet, this open-air courtyard features some of the best views at Birch Aquarium. The dynamic Smargon Courtyard offers guests plenty to touch and see while enjoying panoramic La Jolla Shores views. It accommodates 300 people for a stand-up reception or 170 seated.

Cafe Pavilion

Located at the entrance of Birch Aquarium, this 10,000-square-foot open-air courtyard accommodates 1,000 people for a stand-up reception or 500 seated. It is a spacious area for a variety of events and features dramatic life-sized brass statues of breaching gray whales.

Policies and Procedures

Event Hours

All rental spaces within Birch Aquarium are only available outside aquarium business hours; set up is permitted during business hours with aquarium staff supervision. All events must end by 10 p.m. or additional fees apply. Other rules and restrictions related to setup and breakdown vary by event size.

Security

Birch Aquarium requires event security for all facility rentals. The number of security guards will be based on the number of attendees for each event. The security guard(s) fee will be automatically added to your invoice.

Maintenance

Caterers and vendors are responsible for clean-up. In-house maintenance staff will be present to handle facility emergencies. Standard facility cleaning is included in the facility rental fees. If additional assistance is necessary, fees will apply for extra staffing.

Parking

Birch Aquarium provides up to 230 parking spaces, which are included in the rental fee. Additional parking options are available and can be arranged upon request; however, additional fees apply.

Catering

Birch Aquarium works exclusively with a list of 15 caterers. Clients must contract with one of the listed caterers. Birch Aquarium has food and beverage restrictions due to exhibits. Guests are allowed to tour the facility with their hors d'oeuvres and beverage in hand.

Bar Service

Birch Aquarium works exclusively with the on-site bar service that holds the current liquor license issued by the State of California. Clients must contract for bar service if alcohol will be served at their event.

Equipment

All equipment vendors, including furniture and audiovisual, must provide a valid business license and liability insurance to the aquarium.

Decorations

Decor may not be attached to any aquarium wall, floor, or ceiling without permission. Anything that was once a part of a marine habitat is not allowed as decoration. All decor must be approved prior to the event by the Special Events Department.

Set-Up/Clean-Up

All set up and break down of events must occur on the same day unless prior arrangements have been approved by the Special Events Department. The aquarium is not responsible for any materials, rentals, or decor left behind. Additional fees may apply for substantial mess or items left behind.

Insurance

The client and vendors all need to provide a one-day certificate of insurance listing the Regents of the University of California as a certificate holder and a separate endorsement naming The Regents of the University of California as additionally insured.

Smoking

Smoking is strictly prohibited at Birch Aquarium and all other UC San Diego properties.

Accessibility

Birch Aquarium is a fully accessible facility.

Rental Fees

Please contact the Special Events Department for a customized quote or a site visit. Please email basevents@ucsd.edu or call (858) 822-5439.

Staffing

Museum special event staff will be on-site throughout your event to assist with event logistics. The staff is not available to set up, tear down, move inventory, or assist contracted vendors during the event. Please work with your vendors to ensure ample staff is scheduled for your event.





Caterer Collection

Birch Aquarium promotes conservation through education and research, believing that with increased understanding of the oceans, people will make informed decisions to preserve and protect the planet for future generations. Through science education,

creative programs, exhibits, and hands-on activities, visitors gain knowledge that informs conservation-minded decisions. As a member of the Association of Zoos and Aquariums, Birch Aquarium also works to protect endangered species and reduce the capture of wild species.

We strive to promote the same type of conservation during all of our private events, as well. In our effort to do this, Birch Aquarium has chosen exclusive catering partners who are as passionate about the environment as we are.



Brothers Signature Catering & Events

Here at Brothers Signature Catering & Events, we are dedicated to getting to know each individual client on a personal level. By understanding your expectations, budget, and concerns, we will provide you with exactly what you are looking for and an unforgettable experience.

We are the leading provider of catering services for weddings, company events, private parties – virtually any catered event.

Executive Chef Augie Saucedo and his expert team will attend to every detail to ensure that your event is a unique affair that exceeds your wildest dreams.



858.397.1777
www.brotherssce.com



BTS Catering and Events



Premier catering and events company for more than 25 years.

Behind the Scenes is dedicated to creating sophisticated and memorable occasions for corporate groups and private clients through innovative appeal, exquisite cuisine, professionalism, knowledge, and flexibility. Our 5-Star team of culinary masters, along with our experienced event planning team, is dedicated to making your event both memorable and enjoyable. BTS offers full-service event planning services, including menu creation and service, beverage services, entertainment planning, audiovisual, and equipment rental, as well as floral design and decor.

858.638.1400
www.btscenes.com



Coast Catering



QUALITY. CREATIVITY. PROFESSIONALISM.

Coast Catering offers full-service event planning and custom catering for every occasion. Whether planning a small private party, major celebration, or high-profile corporate event, enjoy the ultimate experience with our perfect blend of event strategy, custom menu design, and culinary execution. Our unique, boutique-style approach sets us apart from the many catering options available. Our personal dedication to every event provides you with the highest level of service before, during, and after the event.

877.577.1718
www.coastcatering.com





Continental Catering

We'll cook for you. It's kind of our thing.

We may be known for our mouthwatering cuisine, but did we forget to mention we're a full-service caterer? And what exactly does that mean? Well, it means that you can take a load off and leave it all to us. From fantastic fare to spectacular staff, we've got you covered. We'll be the peanut butter to your jelly – or the caviar to your vodka. No matter what your preference is, you are everything to us, so we will be everything to you.



619.698.3500
www.continentalcateringsd.com



Creative Catering & Events

We Create You Celebrate!

Going above and beyond is part of the tradition at Creative Catering & Events with a 5 star team and an expertise of 20 years plus experience. Creating unforgettable events by exceeding your expectations with innovative cuisine, exceptional service and personal attention to every detail of our clients' requirements while doing so with a creative presentation! We are a full-service Catering, prepared in our kitchen with our handcrafted Chef's and/or fully equipped for onsite cooking. We put our hearts into making every event nothing but a success and Creativity is what makes us who we are.



858.750.2365
www.sdcreativecatering.com



Crown Point Catering

Your event is our inspiration!

Crown Point Catering has been dedicated to providing local quality food products, as well as superior service, for your corporate, weddings, and social events since 1983. Call to plan your special event today!

619.223.1211
www.crownpointcatering.com



The French Gourmet

It's always a delicious day at The French Gourmet!

The French Gourmet has served San Diego with what many consider the city's finest full-service catering for over 37 years, offering high quality menu suggestions for events ranging from simple luncheons to elaborate dinner events. We are leading professionals for wedding receptions, holiday parties, social celebrations, nonprofit fundraisers, and corporate events. The dishes conjured up in our kitchens reflect a commitment to originality, freshness, and the celebration of taste. In addition to our catering services, we are also well known for our award-winning bakery featuring sweet and savory treats, all made from scratch. It's always a delicious day at The French Gourmet.

858.488.1725
www.TheFrenchGourmet.com





Hyatt Regency La Jolla

We are on a journey to deliver food that is thoughtfully sourced and carefully served. It is what your guests deserve.

Seasonality guides our menus to optimize the freshness of our products. We enjoy discovering the finest California has to offer, whether it be locally made artisan products or new independent farmers. By fostering our relationships with local purveyors, we are confident the products we serve to you are responsibly grown, caught, and foraged. Let's eat!



858.552.1234 x 2122
www.lajolla.regency.hyatt.com



UC San Diego Catering

UC San Diego Catering is renowned throughout campus and the surrounding area for its high-end, full-service catering and event coordination. Our executive chef and ACF-certified artisans work with sustainable and locally sourced ingredients to create fresh, seasonal menu options, and our registered dietitian ensures that your special dietary needs are met without losing an ounce of flavor or flair. The friendly and creative design and sales team assists with every step of your event, from personalizing menu concepts and decor to managing room layouts, equipment rentals, and guest parking. Your sales associate will be your expert on-site liaison so that every question is answered and every detail is flawlessly executed. Contact our sales and event team today to start crafting your next special occasion!



858.534.3688
SpecialEvents@ucsd.edu



The Wild Thyme Company



The Wild Thyme Company is proud to offer only local and organic handcrafted cuisine and place great importance on supporting local farms and businesses. Our goal is to bring our client's vision to life through planning, design, execution, flavorful food, and personalized service.

Dawn Tangeman, Owner/Executive Chef

In January 2005, Dawn founded The Wild Thyme Company, which today caters and plans special events of all sizes, styles, and cuisines. TWTC is proud to be a preferred vendor/partner in some of the most prestigious venues in San Diego County. Dawn is also active in the community, working with multiple charitable foundations.

858.527.0226
www.thewildthymecompany.com



Waters Fine Catering

Waters provides the freshest quality foods sourced from local farms and artisans. We are organic whenever possible but always hand-crafted and sustainable. From start to finish, our event designers will collaborate with you to create personalized menu concepts.

Waters has been in business for 27 years and earned the trust of San Diego's top businesses, event planners, discerning clients, and brides. Our team is hand-curated for each event to ensure flawless service, exceeding your expectations. We have long-standing relationships with top production companies, rental companies, florists, and valet services. The Waters experience is customized to your budget, theme, and venue. We work with you each step of the way to create a special celebration.



619.276.8803
www.waterscatering.com



FAQs

Q: Do I have to rent the entire facility, or is there an option to rent just part of it?

A: The Birch Aquarium is an exclusive venue that only hosts one event per evening.

Q: When is the set up?

A: Set up 4:30 p.m.

Q: Is 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. enough time for my event?

A: Yes, four hours is ample time for most events held at Birch Aquarium.

Q: Do you have exclusive catering companies?

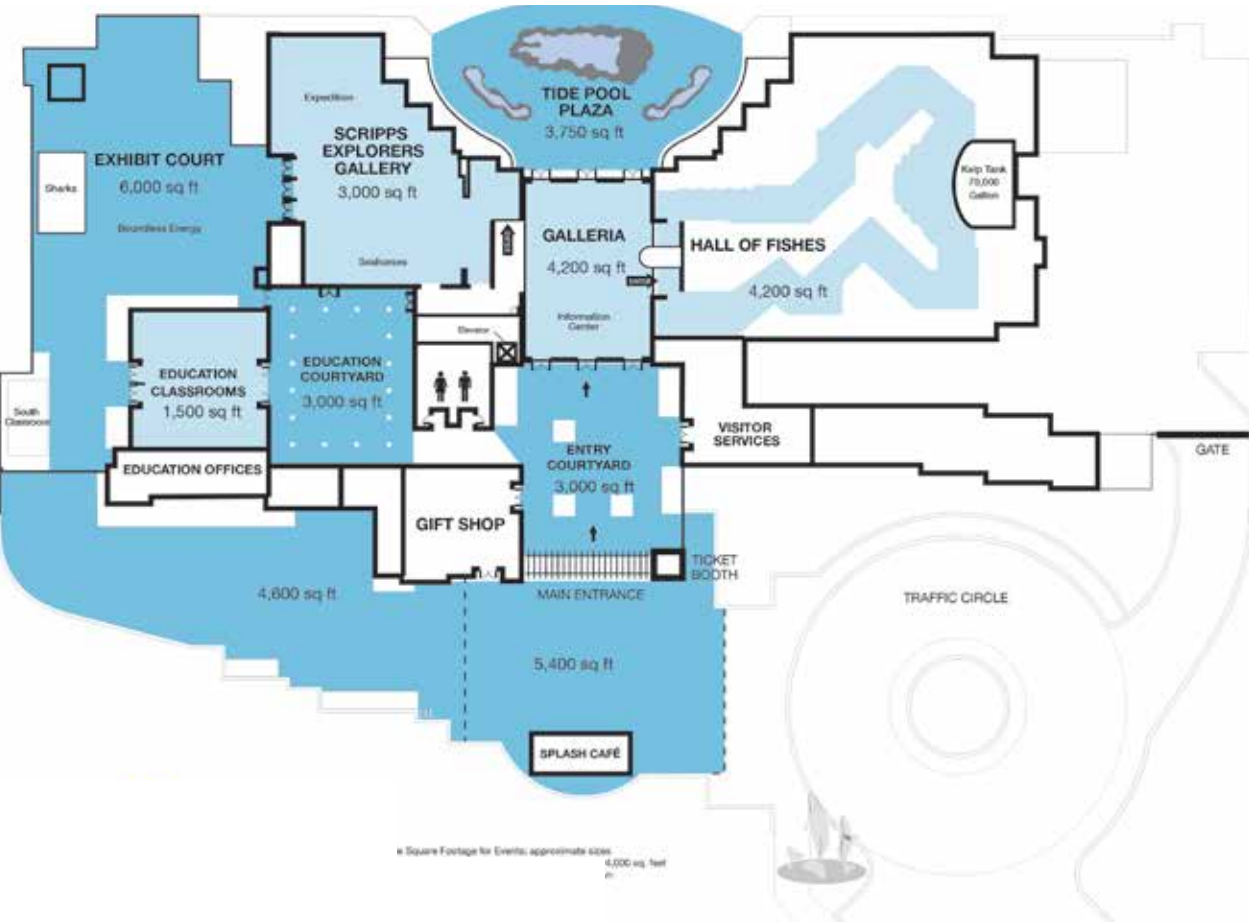
A: Yes, the aquarium has vetted an extensive list of excellent caterers through a competitive Request for Proposal process. These are the only caterers authorized to serve at the aquarium and offer excellent food and exceptional service. The selection of caterers provides a variety of menus in a range of prices. Each is familiar with our facility and carries the necessary insurance and health permits. The caterers will provide you with food, labor, non-alcoholic beverages, tables, linens, chairs, flatware, etc. in their proposal to you.

Q: Are there any restrictions on decoration?

A: Yes, the following decor is not allowed: rice, birdseed, confetti, balloons, sand, shells, or marine life, including anything that was once living in the ocean. Man-made replica of marine life is allowed. All decor must be approved in advance before the event.

Q: Can we extend the rental period?

A: Yes, we do offer an additional hour for an additional fee. Please contact the Special Events Department for details.



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Contributing Photographers:

