

One Ritz-Carlton Drive  
Dana Point, California 92629  
(949) 240-2000

Contact: Jenna Duran  
Marketing & Communications Manager

## SURF'S UP AT THE RITZ-CARLTON, LAGUNA NIGUEL'S ANNUAL SURFING SANTA CONTEST AND HOLIDAY SURFBOARD AUCTION THIS NOVEMBER

*Both events continue to benefit Surfers Healing, the original surf camp for children with autism*



*L-R: Surfing Santa & Stand Up Paddle Board Contest and the Holiday Surfboard Auction*

**DANA POINT, Calif. – October 8, 2019** – In the spirit of giving, [The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel](#) kicks off the holiday season with the **Annual Surfing Santa and Stand Up Paddle Board Contest** at Salt Creek Beach in Dana Point on Saturday, November 23 and Sunday, November 24, 2019. Following, the resort will host the **Annual Holiday Surfboard Auction** from Saturday, November 23 until December 31, 2019, featuring a variety of artistry surfboards by celebrated artists, creatives and iconic shapers such as Wyland, Firewire, and Chad Smith, lead drummer of the Red Hot Chili Peppers. With the hotel's commitment to supporting worthy causes, both seasonal events benefit [Surfers Healing](#), a non-profit who provides children with autism the gift of surfing. In 2018, the resort raised over \$44,000 for the charity, with a total donation of \$390,000 since collaborating with the non-profit 11 years ago.

“Every year, we anticipate these special events, continuing to elevate our annual tradition by connecting with our local community in a meaningful way and raising more funds for Surfers Healing,” says Bruce Brainerd, General Manager of The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel. “It’s an honor to see our mission of giving back to children with autism lived out for the past 11 years with so much support from locals, artists, and creatives. We could not make such an impactful difference without them.”

The **Surfing Santa and Stand Up Paddle Board Contest** is a two-day event where contestants dress as Santa or other holiday-inspired characters and battle it out in the waves on **Saturday, November 23** and **Sunday, November 24** at **Salt Creek Beach**, located directly below the resort and known as one of the best surfing destinations in Southern California. The contest features 10 divisions, inclusive of surf, stand up paddle board, and body board – available for both children and adults. Each heat extends prizes for placed winners, and all participants are eligible for a **\$2,000 Big Air prize**, based on contestable air points throughout the day. A \$500 1<sup>st</sup> Place Costume prize, a \$200 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Costume prize (must be dressed in costume to qualify), and a **\$1,000 Fastest Stand Up Paddle Board** prize are also awarded. Contestants can register at [www.surfsantasantacontest.org](http://www.surfsantasantacontest.org). Registration ends on Monday, November 18, 2019. Locals and guests are invited to attend and cheer on the contestants.

The **Holiday Surfboard Auction** from Saturday, November 23 to Tuesday, December 31, 2019 highlights a selection of stunning surfboards from celebrated creatives, renowned artists and iconic shapers, on display at the resort and auctioned online to benefit Surfers Healing. Donated surfboards include works by artists such as **Wyland**, Juliet Gilden, and Nicholas Kontaxis; musicians like **DJ Steve Aoki** and **Red Hot Chili Peppers' drummer Chad Smith**; along with shapers such as **Firewire**, **Ellis Surfboards**, and **Brawner Boards**. The boards are on display in the oceanfront resort's lobby throughout the entire holiday season and bids can be placed online at [Bidding for Good](#) starting Saturday, November 23, 2019.

Brainerd developed the Surfing Santa and Stand Up Paddle Board Contest and Holiday Surfboard Auction as a way to connect and pay homage to Dana Point's iconic surf history. As some may know, Hobie opened in 1958 as the first California surf shop on Pacific Coast Highway in Dana Point, revolutionizing the surfboard industry and birthing the ocean sport lifestyle that has become a backbone of the local community. As a way to continue honoring the city's surf heritage, The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel debuted the first Surfboard Auction in 2008, raising more than \$13,000, and two years later, the resort hosted the first Surfing Santa Contest.

###

#### **About The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel**

[The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel](#) opened in August 1984 as the first Ritz-Carlton resort atop a 150-foot seaside bluff with panoramic views of the Pacific Ocean and direct access to more than three miles of sandy beach. Presented against an extraordinary backdrop, the reimagined surfside retreat redefines the guest experience by creating distinctive and unforgettable moments that embrace its oceanfront setting – from sea-inspired spa treatments and locally-sourced restaurant menus to ocean view accommodations, family-friendly eco-adventure excursions, and unique surfboard displays. The seaside property offers 396 guestrooms and suites with personal patios or balconies, along with six distinctive dining outlets, an intimate Ritz-Carlton Spa, a dedicated Eco-Adventure Center, and unrivaled activities that embrace the surroundings. The iconic resort emphasizes unparalleled Ritz-Carlton service while delivering a genuine experience with a playful approach to luxury. Follow The Ritz-Carlton, Laguna Niguel on [Instagram](#), [Twitter](#), or [Facebook](#).

#### **About Surfers Healing**

Though Surfers Healing serves thousands, their mission exists because of one child. Izzy and Danielle Paskowitz founded Surfers Healing because of their son, Isaiah. Isaiah has autism, and when he struggled with meltdowns and sensory overload, riding the waves with his father calmed him like nothing else. The weightlessness and rhythms of the ocean offer a surf therapy experience. Not everyone has a championship surfer for a Dad, so the Paskowitz family invited others to join them at the beach. Their idea caught on, and now Surfers Healing is a nationwide, grassroots non-profit organization. They are the original surf camp for children with autism and all of their events are free. Although autism now affects 1 in 59 children in the U.S., Surfers Healing doesn't think in thousands. They think in ones, because that's where they can effect change. One child. One family. One perfect day at the beach. Please visit [www.surfershealing.org](http://www.surfershealing.org) for more information.