

Stay At The Garland, Visit Universal Studios, And Have A Pitch-Perfect Family Summer Vacation

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Luxury and family travel, food destinations, wine and coffee trends.

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Want to take a family vacation to Los Angeles but not sure how to please both the kids and the adults in your crew? Start by booking a room at [The Garland](#) hotel. Does the name sound familiar? If so, it's because The Garland was named for the *My Three Sons* actress Beverly Garland, a TV legend of the 1970s. (She married widower Steve Douglas, played by Fred MacMurray, for a Hollywood happy ending.)



The newly renovated fireplace lounge at The Garland hotel. THE GARLAND

Today, The Garland is owned by Garland's youngest son, James Crank, and his husband Scott Elliott, who, over the last decade, have restored the property to its retro splendor. A \$20 million multi-phase renovation in Spring 2015 re-animated the hotel's *Mad Men* vibe across seven acres just a stone's throw from the in house where *The Brady Bunch* was filmed in North Hollywood.

On the heels of its 50th anniversary last year, and with Pride month in full swing, this is a perfect time to check it out with the hotel's "Fab 50" package, which includes a food and beverage credit, a bottle of rosé, and all manner of branded swag that will put you in the right frame of mind.



The pool is the center of attraction on a hot summer day at The Garland in Los Angeles. THE GARLAND

The Garland has a free shuttle that runs to and fro' Universal Studios, less than two miles away, so you can take the transportation hassle out of your planning equation. (Don't miss the new Universal Super Nintendo World with its interactive Mario Kart ride — and be sure to secure timed entry, because this one is popular.) Add to that a restaurant (The Front Yard) so good it attracts locals and a big, refreshing swimming pool, and you've got the makings of a family summer vacation in LaLa Land.

Family suites offer a separate bunk bed area for the kids, a queen for the parents, and a nice sitting area where you can meet in the middle. The breakfast buffet at The Front Yard offers a quick and easy breakfast option so you can hit the first-come-first served trolley to Universal.



Family suites at The Garland offer parents and kids separate spaces, including bunk beds for the ... [+] THE GARLAND

While Crank grew up in a design-centric family, and many of his parents' friends were gay men, it was exactly a climate in which being out was welcome or safe, so it was many years later that Crank learned that the hotel's martini lounge had been a destination watering hole for Valley gay men in the 70's and 80's. He and Elliott "outed" the hotel in 2013 by restoring it to its BoHo glory, while making it clear that the space would be safe and welcoming for their LGBTQ team members. (From executive management to line staff, there is representation from lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and genderqueer community members.)



The indoor-outdoor Front Yard restaurant is popular with locals. THE GARLAND

We loved this place so much that my wife, son and daughter extended our stay by two nights so we could hang out and see local friends. It's an easy drive to Angelini Osteria (one of our favorite Italian restaurants), as well as the Cliffs of Id climbing gym in Culver City. It's also just nice to invite friends to you and have a leisurely dinner followed by a family movie screening at the pool. There's even a nice gym if you didn't get your requisite steps in at Universal.

Service is warm and helpful, and there's a laidback, charming vibe that infuses everything. I highly recommend The Garland for your next L.A. sojourn, with or without kids. Don't forget to pack your bell-bottoms and floral prints.