

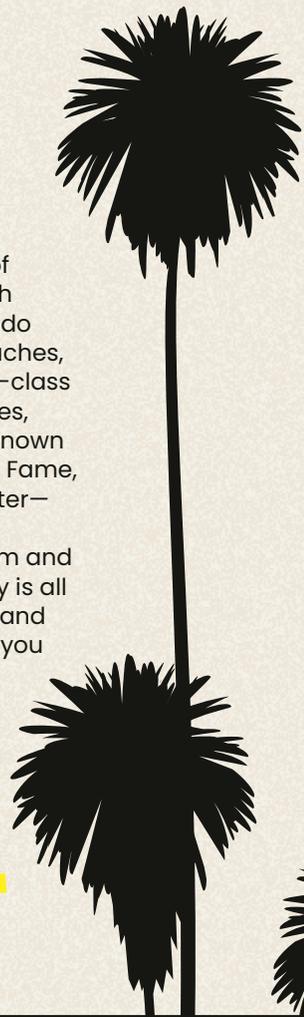


LOS ANGELES is a tapestry of unique neighborhoods packed with hidden gems, from the San Fernando Valley to the South Bay. Secret beaches, basement speakeasies, and world-class restaurants exist in surprising places, and even some of the city's best-known landmarks—the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Griffith Observatory, the Getty Center—have a hidden side to discover.

Created by Los Angeles Tourism and Atlas Obscura, this guide to the city is all about embracing the unexpected and looking at a place you might think you know from a new perspective. This book is your ticket to an LA adventure.

You'll be astounded by all there is to discover in this city.

GET READY TO EXPLORE



LOS ANGELES THE OFFICIAL VISITOR'S GUIDE

LOS ANGELES

THE OFFICIAL VISITOR'S GUIDE



 Atlas Obscura

Los Angeles



LOS ANGELES
THE OFFICIAL VISITOR'S GUIDE

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WELCOME TO LOS ANGELES

No matter how many times you've seen it on TV or in the movies, no matter how often you've visited or how long you've lived here, Los Angeles is always sure to surprise you. We're talking about a city where David Lynch gives the daily weather report. Where the bones of prehistoric mammals bubble in pits of asphalt just steps from the museum that Dorothy's glittering ruby slippers from *The Wizard of Oz* call home. Where fifty-foot-tall letters propped up on a hillside became a homing beacon for generations of the most interesting

and talented people in the world. Notoriously brusque documentary filmmaker Werner Herzog, a proud LA transplant, called it "the city with the most substance in the United States"—and who's going to argue with Werner Herzog?

This guide is all about embracing the unexpected and looking at a city you might think you know from a new perspective. A stroll down Sunset Boulevard in Silver Lake or Echo Park takes on a whole new light when you start climbing the neighborhood's many hillside stairways. A visit to

the Beach Cities, where a proliferation of futuristic tech startups has given rise to Silicon Beach, reveals Prohibition-era basement speak-easies and classic dive bars where Jim Morrison and the Beach Boys once sipped beers. Down in the South Bay, where you might assume there's not much more to see than tankers unloading cargo at the Port of Los Angeles, you'll find living Civil War history and the most beautiful secret beaches in the region. Even some of the city's most iconic landmarks—the Hollywood Walk of Fame, Griffith Observatory, the Getty Center—have a hidden side to discover. Did you know you can see the Hollywood Sign up close on horseback? And obviously you have to eat. Luckily, you're in a

city where life-changing meals can be found everywhere from Michelin-starred restaurants to unassuming strip malls.

No matter where you go or what you do during your stay in LA, we think you'll be pleasantly surprised. Grab your guide and get ready to explore.



USING QR CODES

Unlock even more content by using your smartphone to scan the QR codes throughout the guide. On both iPhones and Androids, simply open the camera app, hover, and wait for the URL to materialize. Scan the code above for a digital map of Los Angeles.



BUCKET LIST WITH A TWIST

There are a lot of ways to view the Hollywood Sign—from an airplane descending into LAX, from the palm-tree-lined streets below, or on-screen in nearly one hundred years of movies and TV shows filmed in Los Angeles—but did you know you can saddle up, jump on a horse, and trot beneath it? Suddenly, a landmark you thought you knew looks totally different.

The Bucket List with a Twist is your guide to finding fresh ways to look at and explore some of the most iconic and most visited LA destinations. The Getty Center is known for its unparalleled collection of priceless art—you obviously won't miss Van Gogh's *Irises*—but outside its galleries' walls, stunning gardens are full

of unexpected treasures (not to mention views for days). The Academy Museum of Motion Pictures, the newest addition to the museums of Miracle Mile, is full of costumes, props, and other flashy movie artifacts, but it's also home to fascinating relics that date to the earliest days of motion pictures, well before Oscars were ever doled out at Dolby Theatre. And while the Venice Canals and the bridges that traverse them are fun to explore on foot, the channels take on a whole new light when you hit the water in a kayak or a canoe and go for a paddle at sunset.

So go ahead and tick these familiar spots off your LA bucket list—just be sure to bring your sense of adventure.

WHERE
GREATER
HOLLYWOOD
Mount Lee,
Beachwood
Canyon

TIPS
For killer views of
the sign on foot,
check out the
Mount Hollywood
Trail, which begins
in Griffith Park.

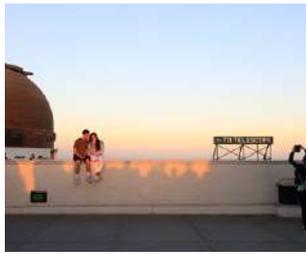
THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN

You can't visit LA without seeing the Hollywood Sign—literally. On a clear day, its fifty-foot-tall letters perched high in the Hollywood Hills are visible all the way from Downtown's high rises and South Los Angeles's hilltop parks. There are lots of ways to see the sign, but one of the best ways to enjoy it up close is a horseback ride at Sunset Ranch. Located at the top of Beachwood Drive, the ranch offers guided tours on Griffith Park's miles of trails. You'll feel like a Wild West desperado—or at least a movie cowboy—as you ride the rugged terrain, taking a break from the buzz of the city below. There are options for both day and night tours with spectacular views of the Griffith Observatory, the Downtown skyline, and, of course, the Hollywood Sign. If saddling up sounds intimidating, companies like Bikes and Hikes offer up-close tours on foot—just don't go it alone and, whatever you do, don't bug the neighbors.

For decades the sign has symbolized the glamour and magic of the movies, but it didn't originally have anything to do with the film industry—in fact, it didn't even spell out “Hollywood” when it first went up. The sign originally read “Hollywoodland” and was meant to be a temporary advertisement for a new subdivision of the same name in the Beachwood Canyon hills below. In 1923, workers built the sign out of wood and steel, with each letter anchored by old telephone poles. Glittering lights covered the sign, which shone like a beacon at night to those in the basin below.

Over the years, the sign has gone through many iterations and periods of neglect (for a time in the forties, the first “H” fell clean off). But Hollywood's pride in its greatest monument has swelled over the past fifty years. In the 1970s a group of entertainment industry luminaries including Hugh Hefner, Gene Autry, and Andy Williams funded a new Hollywood Sign made of sturdy corrugated steel painted white. It was officially named a Historic-Cultural Monument in 1973.





GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY

During a visit to nearby Mount Wilson Observatory in 1912, businessman and philanthropist Griffith J. Griffith had an epiphany. “Man’s sense of values ought to be revised,” he exclaimed. “If all mankind could look through that telescope, it would revolutionize the world!”

Almost two dozen years later, in 1935, Griffith’s shrine to the cosmos opened its doors to visitors in the hills above the Los Feliz neighborhood. Today, the observatory is a world-class museum with a theater named after *Star Trek*’s Leonard Nimoy, scale models of the solar system, and a planetarium where you can do a different kind of stargazing than you’d do down in Hollywood below.

Be sure to make your way to the Wilder Hall of the Eye, where several times daily the powerful Tesla coil is fired up, emitting curving lightning-like sparks and bursts of electric noise. The first Tesla coil was unveiled by eccentric inventor Nikola Tesla in 1891 to prove that electricity could be transmitted through the air—no wires needed. Griffith Observatory’s coil was donated to the City of Los Angeles by doctor and college professor Dr. Frederick Finch Strong and has been a beloved feature since back in 1937.

While science is the Observatory’s *raison d’être*, the institution is also home to artistic treasures commissioned by FDR’s Public Works of Art Project during the Great Depression. Look up in the W. M. Keck Foundation Central Rotunda to check out murals painted in 1934 by artist and author Hugo Ballin, which depict celestial mythological figures and the twelve constellations of the zodiac. After your visit, have a picnic on the lawn in the shadow of the Astronomers Monument, designed in part by George Stanley, the artist who sculpted the iconic Oscar statuette that’s doled out to this day.

Speaking of Oscars, make sure to visit the *Rebel Without a Cause* Monument, which celebrates the Observatory’s role in the iconic 1955 film, one of the few films James Dean starred in before his untimely death. A bust of Dean is perched on a ridge overlooking the Hollywood Sign, offering the perfect opportunity for a movie-worthy photo op.

WHERE
GREATER
HOLLYWOOD
2800 E.
Observatory Rd.,
Griffith Park

TIPS
Parking can be a pain (or flat-out impossible) at the top of the hill, but you can hop on the DASH Observatory/Los Feliz public bus at the Vermont/Sunset Metro B Line (formerly the Red Line) station to get to the observatory.

Star gazing



1

- 1 MOUNT WILSON OBSERVATORY**
On Public Ticket Nights, you can view celestial objects at the very observatory where the universe was discovered.
- 2 NASA JET PROPULSION LABORATORY**
The facility invites the public in once a year for its Open House.
- 3 ERNEST E. DEBS REGIONAL PARK**
This popular hiking spot has a pond and views of the Downtown LA skyline from the northeast.
- 4 VISTA HERMOSA NATURAL PARK**
The lights of nearby Downtown may obscure the stars, but the views of the city are incredible from this verdant vantage point.
- 5 CALIFORNIA SCIENCE CENTER**
See a space shuttle that soared among the stars at this beloved science museum.
- 6 BARNSDALL ART PARK**
This hilltop park in Los Feliz is also home to Hollyhock House, a UNESCO World Heritage Site.
- 7 GRIFFITH OBSERVATORY**
The observatory hosts monthly "star parties" with dozens of telescopes on its lawn.
- 8 JEROME C. DANIEL OVERLOOK**
On a clear day, you can see all the way to Catalina Island from this overlook high above the Hollywood Bowl.
- 9 UNIVERSAL CITY OVERLOOK**
This lookout spot on Mulholland Drive has killer views of the Valley and the Verdugo Hills.
- 10 MULHOLLAND SCENIC OVERLOOK**
Take in the pink skies at sunset from this overlook, which is open till 9 p.m.
- 11 KENNETH HAHN STATE RECREATION AREA**
This hilly park has sweeping views and a gorgeous Japanese garden.
- 12 BALDWIN HILLS SCENIC OVERLOOK**
Scale 282 steps to the top of the overlook to take in the entire LA Basin.



HOLLYWOOD WALK OF FAME

Back when the film industry was still in its infancy and Hollywood was little more than a movie colony and a bunch of orange groves, stars painted on the ceiling of the ballroom inside the old Hollywood Hotel honored the biggest names of the silent era. That landmark was torn down in the fifties (you'll now find the Dolby Theatre where it used to stand), but those stars are said to have inspired Hollywood Chamber of Commerce president E. M. Stuart, who is credited with conceiving of the now-iconic Hollywood Walk of Fame to “maintain the glory of a community whose name means glamour and excitement in the four corners of the world.”

Today, more than twenty-seven hundred stars line the Walk of Fame, which stretches along Hollywood Boulevard from Gower Street to La Brea Avenue, and down three blocks of Vine Street, for a grand total of 1.3 miles. Grab an e-bike or a scooter and traverse the entire walk starting at the Hollywood and La Brea Gateway, an art deco monument that celebrates the magic of moviemaking, designed— weirdly enough—by *Twilight* director Catherine Hardwicke.

At 6100 Hollywood Blvd., keep your eyes peeled for the first star permanently installed on the Walk of Fame, which honors Stanley Kramer, director of midcentury hits like *Guess Who's Coming to Dinner* and *It's a Mad, Mad, Mad, Mad World*. Farther west, at 6800 Hollywood Blvd., look for Joanne Woodward's name. The Oscar-winning actress (and wife of Paul Newman) was presented with her star on February 9, 1960, during a ceremony celebrating the Walk's groundbreaking, and she was the first honoree photographed with their star.

New names are added to the Walk throughout the year—celebs have to be nominated by a third party—and some of the latest additions include Daniel Craig, Salma Hayek, and Missy Elliott.

Want to snag a selfie with a particular star? WalkoffFame.com has a directory of every star on the Walk, with its location and information on the honoree's life and career. To see Muhammad Ali's Walk of Fame star, look up rather than down outside Dolby Theatre. The late, great boxer asked that his star not be embedded in the sidewalk so that people wouldn't step on the name of Muhammad.

WHERE
GREATER
HOLLYWOOD
Hollywood
Boulevard and
Vine Street

TIPS
Want to see a celeb get their star? Ceremonies on the Walk of Fame are free and open to the public. Check walkoffame.com for more info.

WHERE
MID-CITY
6067 Wilshire Blvd.,
Mid-Wilshire

TIPS
Be sure to buy your timed admission tickets in advance on the museum's website, where you can also make reservations for a meal at Fanny's. The restaurant was named after showbiz legend Fanny Brice, whom Barbra Streisand won an Oscar for portraying in *Funny Girl*.

ACADEMY MUSEUM OF MOTION PICTURES

Bruce, the twelve-hundred-pound, twenty-five-foot-long shark who raised hell off the coast of Amity Island forty-five years ago, is spending his retirement in some pretty swanky digs. The fiberglass behemoth—the last surviving model created for Steven Spielberg's *Jaws*—is suspended above an escalator in the Academy Museum of Motion Pictures, where it's joined by other priceless artifacts from movie history, like the sled from *Citizen Kane*, the typewriter used to write Hitchcock's horror classic *Psycho*, and both C-3PO and R2-D2 from the Star Wars franchise. The bedazzled ruby slippers Judy Garland wore in *The Wizard of Oz* have found a home here too—and like Dorothy said, there's no place like home.

Cinephiles will find something to love hiding around every corner in this Streamline Moderne treasure box of a museum, designed by famed Italian architect Renzo Piano. The Academy of Motion Picture Arts & Sciences nods to its annual awards show with a room of gleaming Oscar statuettes and iconic outfits, including the Bob Mackie–designed getup Cher wore to the Oscars in 1986, a year before she took home a statuette for *Moonstruck*.

Harboring Academy Award aspirations of your own? Check out the museum's Oscars Experience, an immersive exhibit that simulates the excitement of winning the big prize. Feel your heart pound as you're handed a replica Oscar (be forewarned, it's heavy!). If you want to take a statuette home, the museum store sells both a Lego version and a chocolate Oscar dusted with gold.

People more interested in the craft of filmmaking than the pomp of ceremonies will want to check out “The Path to Cinema: Highlights from the Richard Balzer Collection,” a fascinating exhibit featuring precinematic objects dating back to the 1700s. There are exquisite examples of optical marvels including magic lanterns, praxinoscopes, shadow plays, and zoetropes.

The collection's most important object is an original Cinématographe Lumière. The 35-millimeter camera, made of wood and brass, was designed by French film pioneers Auguste and Louis Lumière in the 1890s. It's also a printer



and projector, making it the first working model ever produced with all three functions.

When you're done learning about the movies, you can actually catch a screening at one of the museum's two theaters, including the thousand-seat David Geffen Theater inside the futuristic glass Sphere Building. While you're there, keep an eye out for Spencer, a four-year-old hawk, who watches over the Sphere to ensure it isn't besieged by an invasion of pigeons. Someone get this bird an agent.

WHERE
MID-CITY
5801 Wilshire Blvd.,
Mid-Wilshire

TIPS
Energetic kids will love the museum's Get Dirty Zone, where they can dig for worms in compost bins or explore a little hut made entirely of willow branches.

LA BREA TAR PITS

Bent over an amorphous clump of asphalt, an archeologist uses a dental pick to carefully scrape and clean debris from the femur of a young mastodon that met its demise when it wandered into a sticky pit of tar and never wandered out.

Smack in the middle of modern-day LA, alongside Wilshire Boulevard's towering office buildings and world-class museums, fifty thousand years of Southern California history gurgles in the prehistoric puddles of asphalt that make up the La Brea Tar Pits, an active excavation site where paleontologists are always at work piecing together the past. Since the pits were discovered, 3.5 million fossils have been recovered from the black pitch: the skeletons of saber-toothed cats, mammoths, ground sloths, western horses, and dire wolves, all trapped in shallow pools of bubbling goo.

As you'll gather from the re-creation of a mammoth struggling for survival in the Lake Pit, these animals' deaths were pretty unpleasant, but their remains have been invaluable in shaping our understanding of the prehistoric American West. Active excavations are ongoing, and visitors can check out paleontologists at work throughout the park.

Inside the park's George C. Page Museum, you'll find the skeletons of some of the Pits' most impressive finds, but the museum isn't just a showcase of artifacts: it's a laboratory. Visitors can watch paleontology in action at the Fossil Lab, where scientists clean, extract, and study fossils from Project 23. This excavation project has been active since 2006, when workers building a new parking deck for the Los Angeles County Museum of Art discovered a treasure trove of new fossils. During the summer, you can watch paleontologists sift through sticky asphalt at Pit 91, one of the longest-running urban paleontological excavation sites in the world.

While the big finds get the most attention—pumas, bison, etc.—some of the most extraordinary discoveries in the tar pits are the smallest. Inside the Page Museum, you can check out a collection of dragonflies and other small creatures and plants that were painstakingly recovered from the pits.

Ancient animals weren't the only beings whose remains ended up buried in the muck. In the collection but not



on display is La Brea Woman, a nine-thousand-year-old incomplete human skeleton belonging to a young Native Californian. Indigenous people in the region, including the Chumash and the Tongva, used tar from the pits for a variety of purposes, including to caulk drinking vessels and canoes and to waterproof their homes and baskets. La Brea Woman probably lived near the pits and extracted the tar. Her small skeleton was discovered next to the remains of a fox terrier dog—and to this day her cause of death is a mystery.



WHERE
WESTSIDE
1200 Getty Center
Dr., Brentwood

TIPS
Watch for the return of in-person tours, but in the meantime... there's an app for that. Bring earphones and download GettyGuide to your smartphone for themed audio tours in ten languages.

THE GETTY CENTER

No one knows why the *Vexed Man* is grimacing, but his alabaster face has been stuck that way since 1783.

This Franz Xaver Messerschmidt sculpture—one of the artist's famed sixty-plus Character Heads modeled on his own face—might not be the most famous work at the Getty, but it's proof that something thought-provoking is waiting in every single gallery and garden.

Open since late 1997, the 110-acre museum nestled in the Santa Monica Mountains is home to Vincent van Gogh's *Iris*, Paul Cézanne's *Still Life with Apples*, and a priceless collection of historic manuscripts, as well as one of the most impressive collections of photography in the world.

Still, lots of people would argue that the Getty Center's true masterwork is the campus itself, a Valhalla-like citadel designed by architect Richard Meier. Built with 1.2 million square feet of stone, including three hundred thousand pieces of gleaming, glittering travertine quarried from Bagni di Tivoli in Italy, the sprawling museum complex makes you feel like you're on top of Mount Olympus—if Mount Olympus had a convenient monorail that took you to the top.

There are more natural wonders to explore in the form of the center's four idyllic gardens. The Cactus Garden, full of succulents and other spiny plants native to the American West, has unreal views of the LA basin all the way to the Pacific Ocean. The Fran and Ray Stark Sculpture Terrace features works by artists René Magritte and Barbara Hepworth, while the Fran and Ray Stark Sculpture Garden includes works by Alexander Calder and Joan Miró.

But the showstopper is the Getty's 134-thousand-square-foot Center Garden, a living spiral sculpture designed by artist Robert Irwin. A stepping stone in the garden reads, "Always changing, never twice the same," a fitting description of the feeling you get while exploring the space. Its maze-like walkways wind through five hundred varieties of plants—bougainvillea, azaleas, lavender, and crepe myrtles—plus streams and a peaceful stone waterfall.

Maybe that grimacing dude in gallery W102 is just bummed he can't get his alabaster head outside.





VENICE CANALS

Imagine gliding down a lush waterway alongside your sweetheart, a gondolier singing as he gingerly navigates canals lined with twinkling lights. Well, that was the scene in Venice Beach shortly after the turn of the last century. The neighborhood's famed network of canals was the fantastical idea of tobacco millionaire Abbot Kinney, who dreamed of developing a seaside resort that would have the fun of Coney Island and the cultural importance of Venice, Italy.

From 1905 until 1910, workers dug six miles of canals, creating tiny landlocked islands in the process. Singing gondoliers manned boats brought in from Italy, and city leaders saw to it that a profusion of foliage, flowers, and palm trees was planted on the banks of the waterways.

While none of Kinney's original canals remain (they were filled in during the 1920s), the Short Line canals that were built afterward survive to this day. There are six in all, and each has a name: Sherman, Howland, Linnie, Carroll, Eastern, and Grand. In the early nineties, the canals underwent a dramatic restoration, and they are now the centerpiece of an eclectic LA neighborhood of distinctive bungalows and cottages.

Carve out an afternoon to take a stroll along the canals and cross their nine picturesque foot bridges, looking out for the herons, seagulls, and pelicans that call this area home. Even better, take out a paddleboard with Paddle Method or SUP in Venice, tour companies that offer both private and group excursions. If you have a small engineless boat of your own, like a kayak or a canoe, you can put it in the water at the public launch at the end of Grand Canal. The most magical time to paddle is at sunrise or sunset, when golden light shimmers on the water and the surrounding neighborhoods are quiet and calm.

WHERE

BEACH CITIES
Venice, between Venice Boulevard and Washington Boulevard

TIPS

A main thoroughfare that slices through Venice is named for Abbot Kinney, father of the canals. Check out the upscale-boho shops, fancy grocery stores, and brunchy restaurants that line the trendy strip.

WHERE
SOUTH LOS
ANGELES
1727 E. 107th
St., Watts

TIPS
You can't venture inside the fence that surrounds the monument at the moment, but guided tours around the periphery are free and available several days a week. Check Wattstowers.org for the schedule.

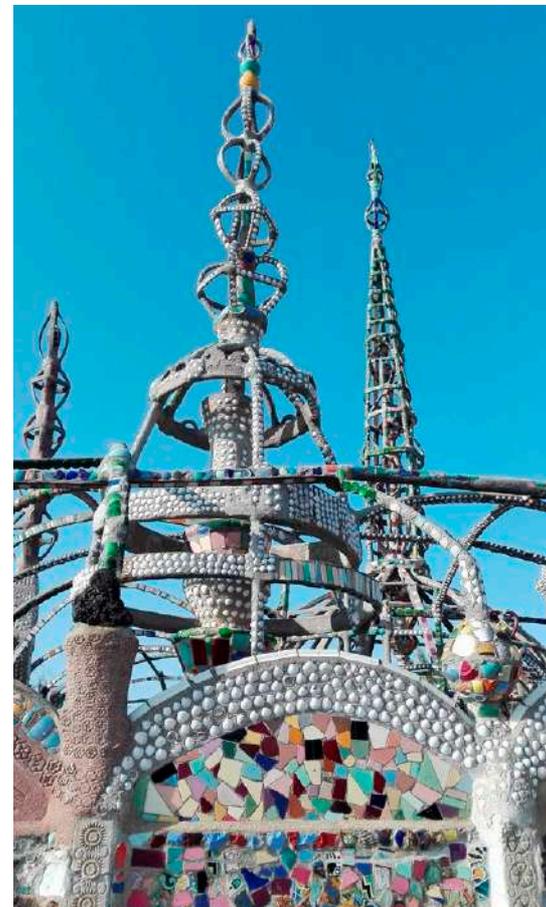
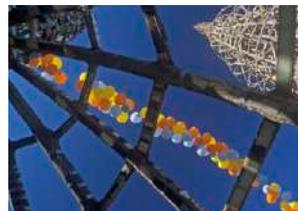
WATTS TOWERS

An aging man wearing baggy overalls and a determined look scales the ladderlike rungs of a towering cone of steel rebar, wire mesh, and concrete. It's a journey he would make countless times over the course of thirty-three years as his monumental backyard project took shape. Over the decades, as Sabato "Simon" Rodia continued his work, something magical materialized: seventeen towering structures that would come to define South Los Angeles's landscape and inspire generations of artists and musicians from jazz legend Charles Mingus to sculptor Noah Purifoy. Rodia called his creation "Nuestro Pueblo" or "Our Town," but today it's better known as Watts Towers.

"I had it in mind to do something big," Rodia once said. "And I did it."

Built between 1921 and 1954 on a triangular lot where Santa Ana Boulevard meets Graham Avenue, the towers have become an LA icon. The landmark's calling card is the silhouette of the three tallest structures—open-work steel cones that climb as high as ninety-nine-and-a-half feet splashed against the bright blue LA sky—but you have to get closer to appreciate the details that make these towers a one-of-a-kind work of outsider art. Embedded in the concrete that envelops the structures, colorful mosaics made from discarded bottles, broken tiles, and shells collected from local beaches tell a story that illuminates decades of LA history, from trends in soda and stoneware to the health of certain marine ecosystems.

Researchers at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art determined that a lot of the cracked and broken pottery Rodia used in his mosaics—mass-produced dishes, mugs, pitchers, and bowls—came from local manufacturers like Vernon Kilns in Vernon and Metlox Pottery in Manhattan Beach. Bright, solid-color dinnerware was a big SoCal-born trend in the 1930s, eventually inspiring those Fiesta dishes and bowls your antiques-savvy grandmother might collect. If you look closely at fragments lodged bottom-up in the towers' concrete surfaces, you can see which pottery mill made the objects and get a feel for what would've been found in homes at the time.



The towers aren't just for art buffs. Marine scientists have studied the shells Rodia embedded in the towers to determine what mollusks and gastropods were plentiful off the coast of Southern California during the thirties and forties. Researchers recently discovered that only five nonnative species could be found among the seventy-seven hundred (or so) seashells that embellish Watts Towers. This likely means that invasive species used to be a lot less common than they are today on California's coasts, while Venus clams used to be a lot more plentiful.



UNIVERSAL STUDIOS HOLLYWOOD™

Fifteen thousand people are said to have been on the scene when Carl Laemmle—sporting a three-piece suit and an ear-to-ear grin—swung open Universal City's gates for the first time in 1915. A few years earlier, the now-legendary movie producer had bet big on LA, buying up hundreds of acres of rangeland in the San Fernando Valley and setting up the world's first community totally dedicated to filmmaking. More than one hundred years later, visitors gather at the gates of Universal Studios Hollywood™ every day to get a behind-the-scenes look at a real working studio, ride a few coasters, and guzzle mugs of Butterbeer™.

The Wizarding World of Harry Potter™ and Jurassic World™: The Ride may generate lots of excitement, but the hour-long Studio Tour is still one of the park's biggest hits. Caravans of trams take visitors on a journey through the studio, past ersatz suburban streets and the Bates Motel from Alfred Hitchcock's *Psycho*, and into the King Kong: 360 3D experience created by director Peter Jackson.

The movie-famous back lots include Courthouse Square (as seen in *Back to the Future* and *To Kill a Mockingbird*), Brownstone Street (*Annie* and *The Sting*), and Mediterranean Square (*Three Amigos!* and *Pirates of the Caribbean: Dead Man's Chest*). Hold on for dear life during the Flash Flood experience, where you'll get a firsthand look at how filmmakers create a rainstorm and make sure it shows up on film (hint: powdered milk is involved).

Elsewhere in the park, you can grab a can of Duff Beer at Moe's in Springfield, run wild through the streets of New York City on *The Secret Life of Pets: Off the Leash*, or stroll through the fictional village of Hogsmeade from the Harry Potter film franchise. Be sure to stick around after dark to see the nightly display of projections on Hogwarts Castle.

If you're in town between mid-September and early November, hit up the park for Halloween Horror Nights, where some of the scariest films ever made are immortalized in mazes with movie-quality props and makeup. More than one hundred years later, Laemmle's dream of a movie that never ends rolls on.

WHERE

UNIVERSAL
CITY
100 Universal City
Plaza, Universal
City

TIPS

Want to save on parking? Take the Metro B Line (formerly the Red Line) and get off at the Universal City/Studio City stop; the park is only about a half-mile walk away.

WHERE
GREATER
HOLLYWOOD
3400 Warner Blvd.,
Burbank

TIPS
While you're on the tour, keep an eye out for plaques affixed to the various soundstages. They list all the iconic movies and television shows shot within.

WARNER BROS. STUDIO TOUR HOLLYWOOD™

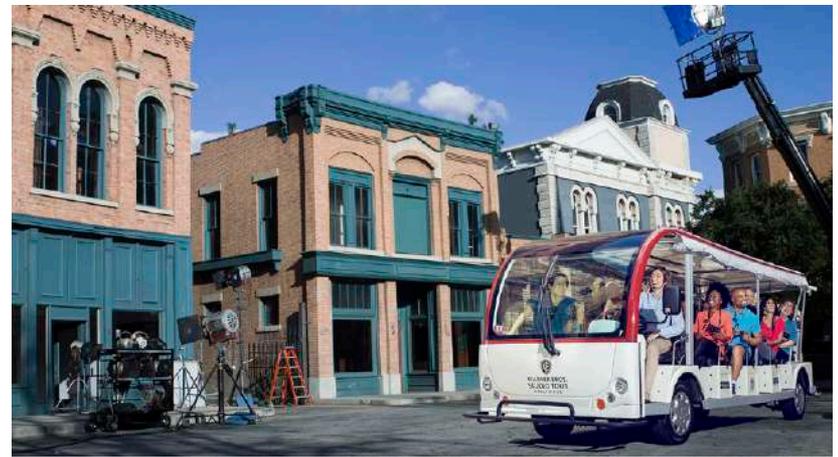
The thirty-seven soundstages on the Warner Bros. Studios™ back lot have done a lot of duty over the years. In 1942, Stage 7 doubled as the interior of Rick's quaint Moroccan café in *Casablanca*. In 1985, Stage 16 was transformed to become a cavern along the Oregon coast where One-Eyed Willy's pirate ship was stranded in *The Goonies*. And in 1987, the cave where those tragically cool vampires from *The Lost Boys* hung out (literally) was constructed on Stage 12.

The list goes on, but the versatility of this Burbank moviemaking mecca has never ceased to amaze. Doris Day once recalled being stunned that the ship from her 1948 film *Romance on the High Seas* would be docked, so to speak, inside one of the cavernous spaces, many miles east of the coast: "I naively asked when we'd be leaving for the boat. Everyone laughed at me. But as I explored that film's intricate ocean liner setting, I realized that this soundstage and its dozens of sisters on the lot had actually been the place where hundreds of the movies I had watched growing up in Cincinnati had been made."

You can tap into that sense of wonder on the Warner Bros. Studio Tour Hollywood™, a crash course in the history of a pop-culture powerhouse founded by actual brothers—Harry, Sam, Albert, and Jack—in 1923. The studio was long known for its hard-boiled dramas starring legends like Bette Davis, Humphrey Bogart, Joan Blondell, and James Cagney; nowadays, though, people take the tour to see sets from more recent properties, like *The Big Bang Theory* and *Friends*. Fans of the latter can actually grab a snack at Central Perk Café and then hang out in a recreation of Monica's apartment.

The tour will also take you through iconic back lots, interactive experiences, and the DC Super Heroes and Villains exhibit. Hold Wonder Woman's illuminated lasso in your hands and check out the legendary Batmobile.

If you came to do some impromptu stargazing, the best way to see celebrities on the lot today is to watch for people



zipping around in golf carts or on bicycles—it might be an actor traveling between soundstages and back lots. But it isn't just stars who make Warner Bros. tick. One of the coolest places to visit on the studio tour is the cavernous prop house, which contains thousands of pieces of furniture, household appliances, and accessories that bring sets to life.

WHERE
CITYWIDE

TIPS
Twice a year, hundreds of restaurants across the city offer specially priced tasting menus during Dine LA Restaurant Week. Keep an eye out for upcoming dates.

EATING LA

Here in LA, land of a million life-changing taco stands and strip-mall noodle joints, the best meal you've ever had could be hiding where you least expect it. Of course, if you want to plan in advance to have your mind (and taste buds) blown, put some of these spots—all of them Michelin-recognized in one way or another—on your dining bucket list.

In an unassuming strip mall on the Westside, try Taiwanese nibbles like Chinese-style steamed fish, egg custard with abalone and geoduck, and street-food-inspired short ribs at **KATO RESTAURANT** (777 Alameda St., Bldg. 1, Ste. 114). Chef Jon Yao's horizon-expanding multicourse tasting menu is a splurge, but considerably cheaper than a flight to Taiwan.

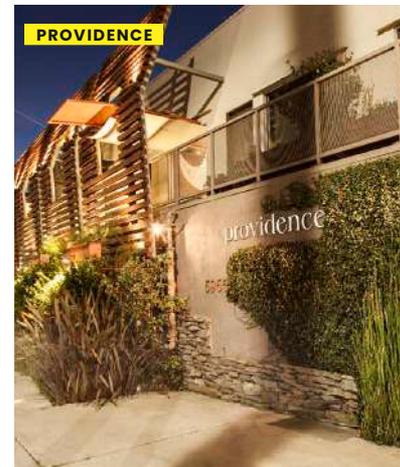
Settle in for thirteen courses of bites like sashimi, Wagyu beef with baby corn, and abalone spaghetti served over the course of two and a half hours at **N/NAKA** (3455 S. Overland Ave.), where chef Niki Nakayama and her wife, Carole Iida-Nakayama, are putting a fresh spin on the Japanese culinary art form of kaiseki. Or, in a coworking space in Hollywood, dig into the tasting menu at **PHENAKITE** (1370 N. St. Andrews Pl.), where Chef Minh Phan is setting out to redefine fine dining with bites like abalone liver porridge and mochi dumplings with lardoon and sugar snap peas.

Try the uni egg with caviar at **PROVIDENCE** (5955 Melrose Ave.), Chef Michael Cimarusti's sustainable-seafood-centric culinary landmark, which has become one of the city's most coveted dining experiences. A recent version of the nine-course tasting menu included an oyster with golden kaluga caviar, lobster with matsutake mushrooms, and salmon with sunchoke, pancetta, and black truffle. If you can swing it, splurge and get the wine pairings to go with the multicourse meal.

Eating well doesn't have to be an extravagance. Skip the tasting menus and get your shrimp fix at **CONI'S SEAFOOD** (3544 W. Imperial Hwy., Inglewood), a Michelin Bib Gourmand pick that serves cuisine from Mexico's Acaponeta region. For something supremely refreshing, try one of their ceviches or the smoked marlin tacos. Or go really



KATO



PROVIDENCE



CONI'S SEAFOOD



PHENAKITE



N/NAKA

classic with a hot pastrami sandwich at **LANGER'S DELICATESSEN AND RESTAURANT** (704 S. Alvarado St.), an LA staple since 1947 that landed a Bib Gourmand nod. In East Hollywood, hit up **JITLADA** (5233½ W. Sunset Blvd.), widely considered LA's best Southern Thai restaurant and a favorite of late LA food legend Jonathan Gold. Try their take on something familiar like pad see ew and a bowl of tom kha, or go nuts and order off the extra-spicy specialty menu.



LOS ANGELES: A CITY OF NEIGHBORHOODS

Los Angeles is a city of almost four million people living in 114 neighborhoods that stretch across five hundred square miles. While the prospect of exploring a metropolis of that magnitude might sound a *little* overwhelming, we say it just means more opportunity for adventure in a city where there's something for everyone.

From the farthest reaches of the San Fernando Valley down to the South Bay and from the true Eastside (a.k.a. east of the LA River) to Venice's sandy shores, there are local landmarks, off-beat attractions, and charming enclaves to explore that might get short shrift in typical guidebooks, but together create the colorful tapestry that is LA.

We scoured each region of the city—Downtown, Greater Hollywood, the Beach Cities, the Valley, and more—to put together

itineraries that reveal the character of a vast place packed with vitality and history, from self-guided tours of Downtown's most iconic architecture to the Westside's unique museums and historic movie houses. Hidden gems like hillside staircases, underground speakeasies, and pockets of urban nature make every corner of LA a surprise waiting to be discovered. Our neighborhood guides invite you to park your rental car and explore an area you might have otherwise just driven past. We also recommend you rethink *how* you embark on your journey: while people often consider LA a driving city, several of the itineraries you'll find in these pages are best experienced on foot or by bike.

We may not have covered every LA neighborhood, but think of this as a good place to start—at least, until your next visit.



GREATER HOLLYWOOD

METHOD
Driving

ALSO CHECK OUT

The Tam O'Shanter:

A Scottish pub in nearby Atwater Village where Walt Disney and his Imagineers used to dine

Hollywood

Museum: Movie relics in the former Max Factor Building with a Mel's Drive-In attached

DID YOU KNOW?

The famous martini at Musso & Frank is made with house-brined olives, doesn't include vermouth, and is never shaken, always stirred.

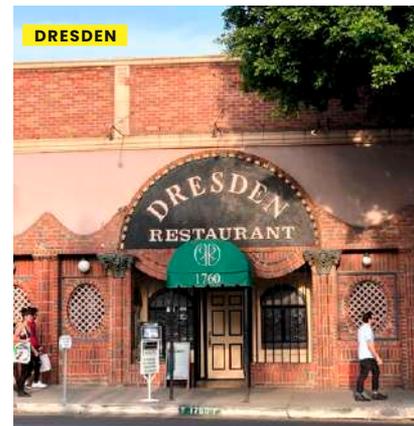
Scan the code below for more on Musso & Frank's long history in Hollywood.



TAKE A TRIP BACK IN TIME AT THESE OLD HOLLYWOOD HAUNTS

These restaurants and bars don't just channel Hollywood's Golden Age—they were its stars.

With its tchotchke-stuffed souvenir stores and family-friendly tourist attractions like Ripley's and Madame Tussauds, today's Hollywood can feel removed from the glamorous Golden Age of cinema. But scattered across the neighborhood, the very spots where celebs of yore rubbed elbows and cut deals over cocktails are pretty much preserved in amber—you just have to know where to find 'em. Have an exquisite martini and a plate of lamb kidneys (hey, they were Charlie Chaplin's favorite) at **MUSSO & FRANK GRILL** (6667 Hollywood Blvd.), which has been hosting A-listers in its wood-paneled dining room since 1919. A hundred years later, the perennial stargazing spot played itself in Quentin Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time . . . in Hollywood*; post up at the bar like Leo DiCaprio's character did or grab a seat at the lunch counter to watch the grillmasters at work. Head to the **DRESDEN** (1760 N. Vermont Ave.) for a famous Blood & Sand and a crock of French onion soup in a dimly lit, laid-back lounge that's been a hit for happy hour drinks and first dates for decades. Adjacent to the bar area, the Dresden also has a midcentury-chic dining room where Don Draper dined in an episode of *Mad Men*. Back on Hollywood Boulevard, stop for a drink at **FROLIC ROOM** (6245 Hollywood Blvd.). This cozy dive next door to Pantages Theatre was a frequent stop for writer and booze enthusiast Charles Bukowski, and it's still a great place for an affordable drink before or after a show.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

YAMASHIRO HOLLYWOOD

1999 N. Sycamore Ave.

Head up into the Hollywood Hills to find this destination restaurant that's been perched above the city since 1914. The restaurant serves California-inspired takes on Japanese classics—the sushi boats are a favorite—but the real draw is the garden, which is home to a pagoda that dates back six hundred years. The incredible views are well worth a trip up the hill.

FORMOSA CAFÉ

7156 Santa Monica Blvd.

When Formosa Café opened on Santa Monica Boulevard in 1939, it was situated right next door to Samuel Goldwyn Studio, making it a stop for stars like Frank Sinatra, Humphrey Bogart, and Ava Gardner. Today, you can slurp up seriously delicious dan dan noodles in its converted-trolley-car dining room, which is plastered with memorabilia that nods to its Hollywood heyday.

TAIL O' THE PUP

Coming Soon

LA once teemed with programmatic architecture (buildings designed to look like what they're named after or what they sell), from the hat-shaped Brown Derby restaurant to Tail o' the Pup, a hot-dog-shaped hot dog stand. The iconic snack destination has been out of commission for years, but the same restaurant group that recently returned Formosa Café to its former glory is in the process of reviving it. Keep an eye out for its return in 2022.

Magical History Tour: HOLLYWOOD'S MYSTICAL LANDMARKS

From a clubhouse for illusionists to theaters where Freemasons once met, conjure up some fun at these Hollywood landmarks.

1 THE MAGIC CASTLE

7001 Franklin Ave.

The magic of moviemaking may be LA's calling card, but the city also has a long-standing love affair with the esoteric, from jaw-dropping sleight of hand to the study of mysticism in all its forms. Cozy up to a card-carrying member of the Academy of Magical Arts to snag an invitation to this private club, theater, and restaurant, which opened in '63 and has counted Orson Welles and Neil Patrick Harris among its members. A secret password and a trick door begin a visit to the Gothic mansion, and inside you'll find a room for Houdini-era séances, a piano-playing ghost named Irma, and magic shows on multiple stages. If an invite eludes you, nonmembers can still access virtual shows, plus online or in-person magic classes.

2 BLACK RABBIT ROSE

1719 N. Hudson Ave.

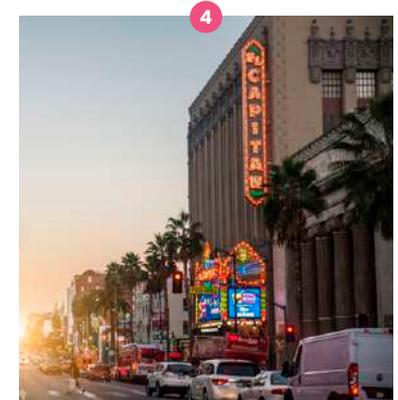
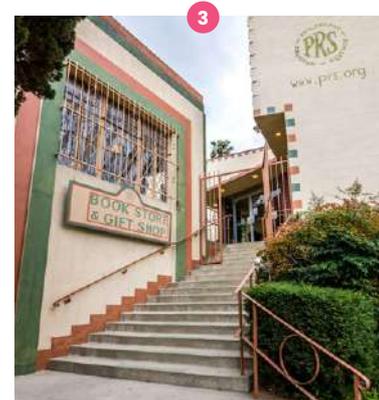
Tucked away on a side street just off Hollywood Boulevard, this semi-hidden speakeasy is sort of like the Magic Castle's

approachable younger cousin. Grab a craft cocktail in the dimly lit lounge, where you might be approached by a roving magician, or buy tickets to a show in the club's theater, where some of the city's prestidigitators work their magic (literally).

3 PHILOSOPHICAL RESEARCH SOCIETY

3910 Los Feliz Blvd.

Dive further down the rabbit hole of the mystical and unexplained at this Historic-Cultural Monument on busy Los Feliz Boulevard. The center was founded in 1934 by scholar Manly P. Hall, who traveled the world collecting the rare texts and artifacts that became the foundation for PRS's thirty-thousand-volume catalog. Rumors of books on black magic may attract the occult obsessed, but most of the titles focus on philosophy, mythology, religion, and world cultures. Keep an eye on the calendar for lectures, music, and sound baths, or swing by to browse the gift shop's selection of books, tarot decks, and tote bags emblazoned with the PRS logo.



4 THE EL CAPITAN ENTERTAINMENT CENTRE

6840 Hollywood Blvd.

A free ticket to a taping of *Jimmy Kimmel Live!* is also a ticket inside what many don't realize is a vintage Masonic temple. The Freemasons, known for their secretive rituals and elite membership, have a century-old link to Tinseltown, and this 1921 Neoclassical structure once headquartered

Hollywood Lodge No. 355. Rumor has it that back in the day stars avoided mobs on Hollywood Boulevard via a secret tunnel from the Chinese Theatre, now the TCL Chinese Theatre; today, you might catch Sandra Bullock or Nick Offerman chilling right out in the open on Kimmel's set. Also worth exploring is the Masonic lodge inside nearby Hollywood Forever cemetery, which now hosts concerts, book readings—and even the occasional magic show.

METHOD

Walking and Driving

ALSO CHECK OUT

Hollyhock House:

This Frank Lloyd Wright–designed house in Barnsdall Art Park is a UNESCO World Heritage Site—and it was a location in the 1989 movie *Cannibal Women in the Avocado Jungle of Death*.

DID YOU KNOW?

In 2018, parts of Hollywood were thrown back to '69 for the filming of Quentin Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time . . . in Hollywood*. The Earl Carroll Theatre (6230 Sunset Blvd.) is still emblazoned with a recreated mural from the bygone days when it was the Aquarius Theatre.

For even more to explore in Hollywood, scan the code below.



HOLLYWOOD PLAYS ITSELF AT LOCATIONS FROM ICONIC LA MOVIES

Live out your silver-screen fantasies—or at least snap a few photos—on this minitrip through cinema history.

Each year, filmmakers log upwards of three thousand shoot days here in LA. That means a couple of things: first, if you live here, you might as well get used to parking spots on your street being gobbled up by production vehicles, and second, locations from well-known movies are hiding around every corner—especially in Hollywood. When it came out in 2016, *La La Land* majorly raised the profile of Angels Flight, downtown LA's cute vintage funicular, but you also can walk in Mia's footsteps by hanging a turn on Wilcox Avenue from Hollywood Boulevard. **YOU ARE THE STAR** (1665 Wilcox Ave.) is the somewhat worse-for-wear mural that Emma Stone's character glumly walks by on-screen—snap a picture with W. C. Fields, James Dean, Shirley Temple, and Liz Taylor. Movie buffs might remember the eye-catching Lovell Health House from 1997's *L.A. Confidential*, but a couple of blocks from the *You Are the Star* mural, you can sidle up to the bar at another location from the Oscar-winning neo-noir. **BOARDNER'S** (1652 N. Cherokee Ave.), where Bud (Russell Crowe) meets up with Captain Dudley Smith (James Cromwell), has been a Hollywood landmark since the 1940s. Go early to hit up the daily happy hour specials. *Pretty Woman* fans can stop for a photo op in front of **LAS PALMAS HOTEL** (1738 N. Las Palmas Ave.), where Julia Roberts's character Vivian and her roommate Kit lived.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

MESSHALL KITCHEN

4500 Los Feliz Blvd.

We already recommended dinner and drinks at the Dresden (pages 36–37), but another location from the 1996 Gen X classic *Swingers* is worth a stop too. The dining room at this pretty BBQ-and-burger spot—a popular destination before shows at the Greek—is where Mike (Jon Favreau) and Lorraine (Heather Graham) got down to Big Bad Voodoo Daddy. It's also the only building left in LA that once housed a Brown Derby restaurant.

VISTA THEATRE

4473 Sunset Dr.

At the moment, you can't see a film at this vintage single-screen movie house situated where Sunset and Hollywood boulevards meet, but good things are coming: director Quentin Tarantino, who also owns New Beverly Cinema in the Fairfax neighborhood, purchased the theater in 2021. Makes sense: in the Tarantino-penned shoot-'em-up love story *True Romance*, the Vista stood in for the Detroit theater where Clarence (Christian Slater) and Alabama (Patricia Arquette) take in a Sonny Chiba triple feature.

Rock On: AN INSIDER'S GUIDE TO SEEING LIVE MUSIC IN LA

Make the most of a night out with your favorite band.

1 HOLLYWOOD BOWL

2301 N. Highland Ave.

It's not exactly a secret that LA has some of the best live music venues in the world, but a little insider info can make a concert even more memorable. In its hundred-year history, the Hollywood Bowl has hosted everyone from Ella Fitzgerald to Alice Cooper, but there's a lot more to the experience than who's on stage. Splurge and have dinner delivered directly to your box seats, or save some dough and opt for a picnic in the tiers of bench seats above. Outside food and drink aren't allowed when the Bowl has been leased by a promoter, but for proprietary events—like the many nights hosted by the LA Philharmonic—you can bring your own snacks and even wine. If you're on a budget and don't mind the nose-bleeds, you can sometimes snag top-row seats for just one dollar.

2 THE GREEK THEATRE

2700 N. Vermont Ave.

Get the outdoor amphitheater experience with significantly smaller crowds at the Greek. Nestled in the trees in

Griffith Park, the venue has fifty-nine hundred seats to the Bowl's eighteen thousand, but driving up and parking onsite can still be a pain. We recommend grabbing dinner in Los Feliz and then making the mile-ish trip into the park on foot (using rideshare is recommended).

3 THE FORD

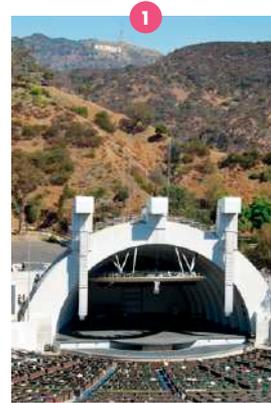
2580 Cahuenga Blvd. E.

Across the 101 Freeway from the Hollywood Bowl, you'll find yet another outdoor amphitheater suited to the city's perpetually pleasant weather. Come hungry: the venue recently partnered with Todo Verde chef Jocelyn Ramirez on a menu of plant-based offerings like jackfruit carnitas and ceviche made with hearts of palm.

4 THE FONDA THEATRE

6126 Hollywood Blvd.

Arrive early and post up in the balcony if you're seeing a show at the Fonda. The historic 1920s venue also has a low-key rooftop lounge for VIPs with incredible views of Hollywood Boulevard.



5 HOLLYWOOD PALLADIUM

6215 Sunset Blvd.

This Streamline Moderne theater opened in 1940 with a performance by Tommy Dorsey's band, and its 11,200-square-foot dance floor has made it a perennial favorite for show-going Angelenos. Before you go inside, walk up El Centro and slip into Good Times at Davey Wayne's, an honest-to-god hidden bar you enter through a refrigerator in the mock garage.

6 TROUBADOUR

9081 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood

You'll want to grab tickets ASAP to see a show at the legendary Troubadour, a five-hundred-cap rock-and-roll landmark where now-legends including Elton John and Fiona Apple made their LA debuts. If things get too cozy on the floor, grab a seat in the unique mezzanine (tip: the upstairs bar tends to be less crowded).

SPOTLIGHT ON... LARCHMONT VILLAGE

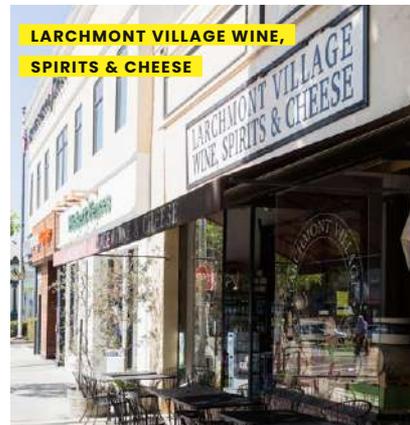
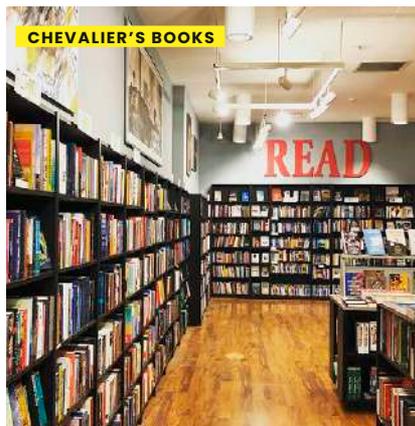
Take a stroll through a big-city neighborhood with a small-town feel.

Sure, people don't necessarily flock to a city like LA to tap into small-town vibes, but this charming retail drag in the shadow of Paramount Studio's iconic water tower is a perfect foil to the bustle of Hollywood Boulevard. Established in 1921 by a midwestern transplant named Julius LaBonte, the Larchmont Boulevard commercial district used to have a Los Angeles Railway Yellow Car running down the middle of the street. The streetcar is long gone, but the strip still has a classic feel that draws locals (and their dogs—lots of dogs) to its shops, restaurants, and coffee spots.

PLACES TO VISIT

SAM'S BAGELS (154 N. Larchmont Blvd.): Groove to dance music while you wait for a chewy everything bagel heaped with lox and cream cheese at this beloved neighborhood staple. Hot tip: you can order in advance and forgo the sometimes substantial weekend line.

CHEVALIER'S BOOKS (133 N. Larchmont Blvd.): Check the wall of employee recommendations before you commence aimlessly browsing titles at LA's oldest indie bookstore. Chevalier's has been open since 1940, but don't expect dust or must: it recently relocated into a bright, airy new space on the boulevard (just across the street from its former home), where it frequently hosts readings and signings.



LARCHMONT VILLAGE WINE, SPIRITS & CHEESE (223 N. Larchmont Blvd.): It might sound nuts to wait in line for a sandwich from a liquor store, but locals swear by the grab-and-go offerings at Larchmont Wine & Cheese. Try the turkey with sun-dried tomato spread or fresh mozzarella, tomato, and basil on a freshly baked baguette. Still dubious? The line moves quickly, we promise.

BUCK MASON (107 N. Larchmont Blvd.): A cool vintage car parked inside a clothing store might catch your eye as you're strolling the boulevard. It's there to set the mood inside the gleaming Larchmont storefront where Venice-born brand Buck Mason sells upscale wardrobe staples, like jeans, light jackets, and a T-shirt celebs and fashion journalists swear by.

LARCHMONT FARMERS' MARKET (209 N. Larchmont Blvd.): If you're in town on a Sunday, grab your disposable bags and nibble on some samples at this parking-lot farmers market in the heart of Larchmont Village. During the summertime, you'll want to stock up on pluots from Arnett Farms, but there's also jewelry, soaps, and premade foods like soups to scope out.



DOWNTOWN

METHOD
Driving

ALSO CHECK OUT

Excellent Mexican restaurants are concentrated in Downtown and its environs. Try some of these spots:

- Guerrilla Tacos
- Sonoratón
- Yxta Cocina Mexicana
- LA Cha Cha Chá

DID YOU KNOW?

Pico Boulevard, which stretches from Downtown to Santa Monica, was named after Pio Pico, the last governor of California under Mexican rule.

Scan the code below for more to explore in and around Olvera Street.



LA'S LATINO HERITAGE, THEN AND NOW

Before LA was an American city, it was a Mexican city. That history lives on in Downtown LA.

History is never tidy, but the short version of the founding of Los Angeles goes like this: in 1781, a group of forty-four settlers—many of them of indigenous and Afro-Mexican descent—made their way north from present-day Northern Mexico and established an agricultural community called “El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Ángeles de Porciúncula.” The site of the pueblo that eventually grew into the LA we know today was revived as a tourist attraction in the 1930s, but it has still managed to become a “symbolic epicenter of Mexican culture,” as local public TV station KCET puts it. Stock up on colorful Mexican imports like blankets and embroidered tunics at the kiosks and shops on **OLVERA STREET**, a pedestrian drag that’s one of LA’s oldest and shortest streets. Venture upstairs to see **AMÉRICA TROPICAL** (125 Paseo de La Plaza), a landmark of the Chicano mural movement that was whitewashed decades ago and subsequently restored. A handful of classic Mexican restaurants call the strip home, but be sure to save room for an order of taquitos drenched in avocado sauce from **CIELITO LINDO** (E-23 Olvera St.). Olvera Street is also the site of the **AVILA ADOBE** (10 Olvera St.). Open daily for tours and totally free to visit, the oldest existing house in LA is now a museum you can walk through to get a feel for life in colonial California circa 1818. For an even richer understanding of the city’s roots, carve out a few hours to explore *LA Starts Here!* at **LA PLAZA DE CULTURA Y ARTES** (501 N. Main St.). The permanent exhibit on the museum’s ground floor gives history a human touch, with everything from trading beads used by LA’s native Tongva people to audio testimonies from people who were deported from the States to Mexico.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

MARIACHI PLAZA
1831 E. First St.

Take a ride east on the Metro L Line (formerly the Gold Line) to Boyle Heights and hop off at the Mariachi Plaza stop, set in the heart of one of LA’s most vibrant Mexican-American communities. Since the fifties, the park has been a hub for nattily dressed musicians waiting to be picked up for gigs at quinceañeras and birthday parties. If you happen to stop by on a quiet day, grab a horchata latte and a machaca taco at La Monarca and enjoy your snack in the gorgeous gazebo that serves as the park’s centerpiece.

EL MERCADITO
3425 E. First St.

Shop for tubs of homemade mole between sips of raspados at this iconic Mexican shopping center farther east on First Street. While you’re over there, go for a walk around Evergreen Cemetery. If grave spotting isn’t your thing, get your steps in on the one-and-a-half-mile jogging path around the outside of the grounds.

SELF HELP GRAPHICS & ART
1300 E. First St.

If you’re lucky enough to be in town in early November, you can celebrate Día de los Muertos with the very art collective that helped popularize the holiday’s traditions in Los Angeles in the 1970s, but all year round their space in Boyle Heights hosts exhibits, workshops, and markets with local makers. Check their site to see what’s new.

a guide to the arts district



SIP SOMETHING SUDSY AT . . .

- 1 ANGEL CITY BREWERY**
216 Alameda St.
Try the LA Blonde at this brewery that has called the Arts District home since 2010.
Also check out: Arts District Brewing Company

SEE AN EXHIBIT AT . . .

- 2 HAUSER & WIRTH**
901 E. Third St.
Be sure to meet the chickens in the world-famous gallery's courtyard garden.
Also check out: ICA LA

BROWSE BOOKS AT . . .

- 3 HENNESSEY + INGALLS**
300 S. Santa Fe Ave.
Shop alongside artists and architects at this beloved bookstore.

DANCE YOUR BUTT OFF AT . . .

- 4 RESIDENT**
428 S. Hewitt St.
Or, if the DJ isn't spinning something you like, there's plenty of outdoor space at this hip venue.

GRAB A COFFEE AT . . .

- 5 URTH CAFFÉ**
459 S. Hewitt St.
This cozy coffee spot is famous for its Spanish latté.

PLAY VINTAGE GAMES AT . . .

- 6 EIGHTYTWO**
707 E. Fourth Pl.
Hit up the Frogger machine while DJs spin tunes at this playground for grown-ups.

PLAY NEW GAMES AT . . .

- 7 TWO BIT CIRCUS**
634 Mateo St.
This massive amusement center has plenty of arcade classics, but you'll want to check out the VR attractions.

SHOP DESIGNER DUDS AT . . .

- 8 DOVER STREET MARKET**
606–608 Imperial St.
From Supreme to Schiaparelli, this store has style for days.

TAKE A STROLL THROUGH . . .

- 9 ROW DTLA**
777 S. Alameda St.
This once industrial outdoor district has swanky shopping, top-notch dining, and a lot more.

TRY THE BURGER AT . . .

- 10 EVERSON ROYCE BAR**
1936 E. Seventh St.
This trendy bar's outdoor patio is perfect for big parties.

PLAY A GAME OF POOL AT . . .

- 11 TONY'S SALOON**
2017 E. Seventh St.
This dive also has darts—and really good happy hour specials.

TASTE PASTA PERFECTION AT . . .

- 12 BESTIA**
2121 Seventh Pl.
Husband-wife duo Ori Menashe and Genevieve Gergis make Italian from scratch.
Also check out: Bavel

Selfie Assured:

DOWNTOWN'S MOST PHOTOGENIC SPOTS

These Instagram-friendly locales have more to offer than fodder for your feed.

1 THE LAST BOOKSTORE

453 S. Spring St.

You're traveling. You have a smartphone in your pocket. Photos will be taken. Still, browsing new and used books will be at the top of your agenda at this bibliophile's wonderland. Housed in a former bank, the Last Bookstore has mazes of shelves, rooms situated inside old vaults, and even a ghost (reportedly a night watchman who fell down an elevator shaft in 1927), but the book tunnel, a gravity-defying arch built from vintage hardbacks, is always a hit on social media.

2 CENTRAL LIBRARY

630 W. Fifth St.

You may not have a library card, but don't let that keep you from visiting the Los Angeles Public Library system's main branch. The building's jaw-dropping rotunda is lined with murals by Dean Cornwell that tell the story of California, and a highly photogenic chandelier hanging from the ceiling features a glowing stained-glass globe surrounded by all the signs of the zodiac.

3 THE BROAD

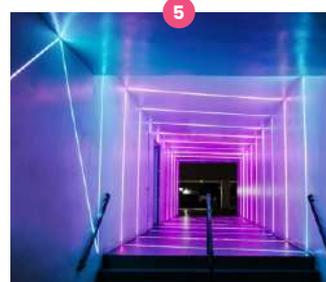
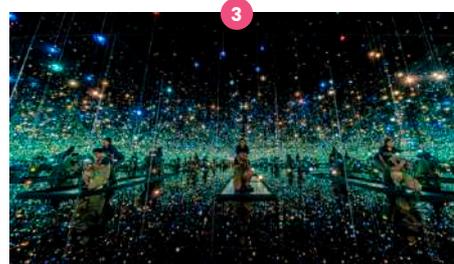
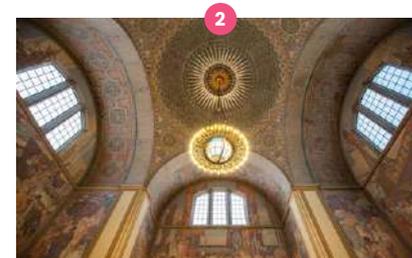
221 S. Grand Ave.

Duck into this shrine to modern art to immerse yourself in two of Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama's Infinity Mirror Rooms, where you can capture the sparkle-ensconced selfie of a lifetime. *The Souls of Millions of Light Years Away*, the walk-in room on the museum's ground floor, requires an additional ticket for admission, but all visitors can head up to the third floor to snap *Longing for Eternity*, an LED-filled chamber you simply pop your head into.

4 THE BLOC

700 S. Flower St.

If you visit the Bloc, a cool outdoor mall with a Macy's, a Uniqlo, and an Alamo Drafthouse indie movie theater, you probably won't be able to resist posing in front of the iconic angel wings mural on Flower Street, a collab between ubiquitous street artists Colette Miller and WRDSMTH.



5 WELLER COURT

123 Astronaut Ellison S. Onizuka St.

On your way to grab ramen or curry inside the Weller Court shopping center in Little Tokyo, stop for a snap inside *Portal*, the colorful, glowing installation by artist Akiko Yamashita. Originally commissioned to spruce up the walkway leading into the mall, the tunnel has become a destination in its own right.

6 GRAND CENTRAL MARKET

317 S. Broadway

Challenge yourself to snap before you eat at this historic food hall that's home to trendy culinary destinations like Eggslut, Wexler's Deli, and Lucky Bird. Before you leave, stop for a photo with Lisa Schulte and Brendan Donnelly's neon mural.

METHOD

Driving/Biking/Metro

ALSO CHECK OUT

Broadway has the highest concentration of movie palaces in the world. Look for these standouts:

- **Los Angeles Theatre**
- **The Orpheum Theatre**
- **Rialto Theatre** (now an Urban Outfitters)
- **Tower Theatre** (now an Apple Store)

DID YOU KNOW?

The Bradbury Building at 304 S. Broadway has been immortalized in everything from *Double Indemnity* to *Blade Runner*. Today, it's home to a NeueHouse coworking space.

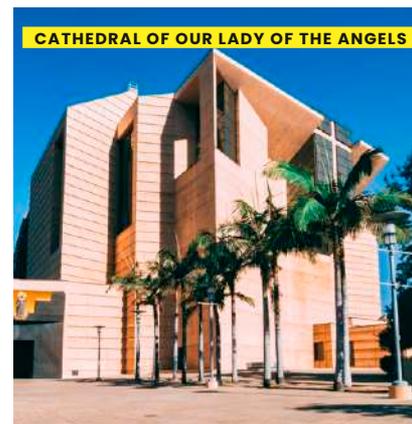
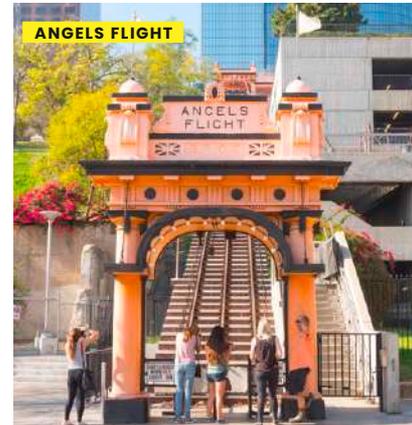
For even more to explore in Downtown LA, scan the code below.



GET AN EYEFUL OF DOWNTOWN'S MOST STUNNING ARCHITECTURE

Across Downtown, structures tell the story of the city. Buckle up for a visual trip through history.

LA doesn't get the credit it deserves for its incredible architecture, and there's no better place to see the sheer variety of styles than Downtown. Have a cocktail at **TRAXX** or shoot a game of shuffleboard inside the soaring art deco confines of **HOMEBOUND BREW HAUS** while you wait for your train to leave **UNION STATION** (800 N. Alameda St.). The mammoth Spanish Colonial Revival transit center is no less stunning than it was when it opened in 1939, particularly when the golden-hour light strikes the hand-painted tiles that line the walls. The station is always a bustling hub of activity, but you'll notice lots of Dodger blue on game days, when fans come in via rail and hop shuttles to the stadium. Over on Temple Street (named for a cattle rancher, *not* a place of worship), go underground to explore the crypt beneath **CATHEDRAL OF OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS** (555 W. Temple St.), a more recent addition to the landscape that opened in 2002. The postmodern masterpiece of golden stone and alabaster is the final resting place of movie star Gregory Peck, Archbishop John Joseph Cantwell, and third-century martyr Saint Vibiana. From holy to hospitable, journey to the futurist **WESTIN BONAVENTURE HOTEL & SUITES** (404 S. Figueroa St.) for drinks and views of the city in the revolving BonaVista Lounge up on the thirty-fourth floor. The Westin's mirrored-glass towers may not be as old as some of Downtown's historic buildings (the hotel opened in the mid-1970s), but its cavernous atrium, protruding conversation pits, and glimmering reflecting pools are time capsules in their own right.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

ANGELS FLIGHT

350 S. Grand Ave.

Take a trip on the historic Angels Flight, the short funicular railway that opened in 1901. Originally built to transfer busy Angelenos up and down Downtown's steep hills, this Beaux Arts-style car is a fun way to experience the city for just a buck each way. (Keep in mind that it's 120 years old and may be getting a tune-up when you visit.)

WALT DISNEY CONCERT HALL

111 S. Grand Ave.

See Gustavo Dudamel and the LA Philharmonic inside this Frank Gehry-designed marvel. The stainless steel stunner is considered the most sophisticated acoustic space in the world.

THE MILLENNIUM BILTMORE

506 S. Grand Ave.

This Beaux-Arts stunner was the pride of LA's burgeoning high society when it opened in 1923. Over the years, it's hosted the Oscars, six US presidents, and the alleged ghost of Elizabeth Short, a.k.a. the Black Dahlia, who was allegedly spotted here before her infamous murder in 1947.

THE THEATRE AT ACE HOTEL

929 S. Broadway

The gorgeous Spanish Gothic theater inside this hip boutique hotel consistently hosts a slate of marquee acts suited to a sit-down audience. When it opened in 1927 as the flagship United Artists Theatre, it signaled that LA was indeed the movie capital of the world. And you don't have to shell out for a room or a ticket to a show to grab a drink at the hotel's rooftop bar.

Speakeasy Does It:
**DOWNTOWN'S UNDERGROUND,
HIDDEN, AND ROOFTOP BARS**

These funky bars have secret passwords, hidden entryways—and really good drinks.

1 THE VARNISH

118 E. Sixth St.

There's somewhere cool to grab a drink on nearly every block in Downtown LA. You'll have to work a little harder to find these joints, but it's worth the effort—in fact, being in the know is part of the fun. Slip into this underground speakeasy situated inside Cole's, Downtown LA's oldest bar and the contested creator of the famed French Dip sandwich. Opened in 2009, the moody mixology mecca has a more sophisticated vibe than its sandwich-slinging sister bar and is credited with kick-starting LA's craft cocktail scene. If you're having trouble settling on a drink from the vintage-inspired menu, you can leave it to the experts and order "bartender's choice."

2 PERCH LA

448 S. Hill St.

There's a cozy garden oasis hiding on the roof of a building catty-corner from popular Pershing Square. Take an elevator to the fifteenth floor and another

to the sixteenth floor for drinks, bites, and unreal views of the skyline at Perch. Grab a seat on one of the cushioned couches for live music among locals toasting the end of another work day, or make a reservation in advance for dinner or brunch in the French bistro a floor down.

3 THE SLIPPER CLUTCH

351 S. Broadway

Make sure you're packin' a pocket full of quarters when you visit this punk-rock spot with a secret entryway inside the no-frills Chatterbox Bar. Besides single-mixer cocktails, cheap well shots, and a flattering red glow, the bar has pinball machines, arcade games, and a pool table to keep you occupied. To find it, look for the neon sign that says "highballs."

4 LILLY ROSE

813 Flower St.

The Wayfarer hotel has a hidden gem of a rooftop, but head downstairs to hit up this bizarre-by-design drinking den. The



basement bar serves classic cocktails, creative originals, and flights of everything from bourbon to amari. Make a reservation for their high tea to really go down the rabbit hole: the Alice in Wonderland-themed affair (reservation required) includes hot drinks, finger sandwiches, and champagne or high balls, depending on the package you pick. Venture up to the twelfth floor for cushy booths and cocktails like the Bad Bunny, a concoction made with your pick of aged tequilas.

5 DEATH & CO

818 E. Third St.

Candles set the mood inside this subterranean speakeasy in the Arts District. Once you find the nondescript entrance (look for a plaque by the door), you'll step down into a dimly lit haven where the craft cocktails live up to the swanky surroundings. Try something spritzzy from the "Fresh & Lively" section of the drink menu or look to the "Boozy & Honest" section for something stronger.

SPOTLIGHT ON... LITTLE TOKYO

Sip, slurp, shop, and sing in this vibrant Downtown neighborhood.

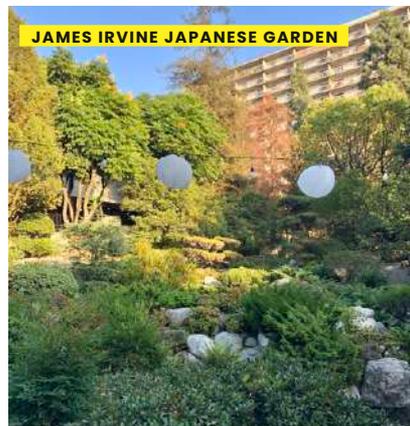
Line up for incredible udon or splurge at the Sanrio store in this quaint ethnic enclave that dates to the late nineteenth century. As early as 1885, a sailor from Japan named Charles Hama opened the Kame Restaurant in the area, and throughout the decades, as Japanese laborers streamed into LA, many settled in apartments and boarding houses in the neighborhood. Little Tokyo's story came to a grinding halt during WWII, when many of its thirty-five thousand residents were sent to American concentration camps. After the war, Japanese-Americans returned to the area and slowly rebuilt a cultural confluence that continues to thrive today.

PLACES TO VISIT

MILK+T (310 E. Second St.): Slurp tapioca pearls from the bottom of a bottle of milk tea at this boba spot that originated as an LA food truck. You'll find boba nearly everywhere you turn in LA, but Milk+T ups the ante by topping drinks with a scoop of vanilla, coffee, or cookies-and-cream ice cream.

JAPANESE AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM

(100 N. Central Ave.): Make time to explore the permanent exhibit *Common Ground* at this museum, the first in the US to focus solely on the Japanese-American experience. Inside, you'll find a preserved barracks from a WWII-era concentration camp in Wyoming, a stunning reminder of our not-so-distant past.



JAMES IRVINE JAPANESE GARDEN

(244 S. San Pedro St.): Explore a lush secret garden smack in the middle of urban LA, a true hidden gem complete with a waterfall on the grounds of the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center. Be sure to check their website before you drop by.

LITTLE TOKYO GALLERIA (333 S. Alameda St.): On the second floor of this three-story mall—also home to the amazing grocery store it's named after, Little Tokyo Market Place—duck into Max Karaoke and see about renting a room for you and your travel buds. And don't worry about a stale selection—Max adds new songs to its lists every month, including the latest JPop and KPop jams.

SUEHIRO CAFÉ (337 E. First St.): Get late-night gyoza or a hamburger steak at this homey diner that's been serving Japanese comfort food for half a century. There might be a line, but the wait is worth it—especially after a night of sake and karaoke.



**SILVER LAKE/
ECHO PARK/
CHINATOWN**

METHOD
Walking

ALSO CHECK OUT

Thank You Coffee: A sunny coffee shop with matcha lattes and paper goods to browse

Sesame LA: A true neighborhood market with a carefully curated selection of pantry items

Pearl River Deli: Get the Macau pork chop bun at this deli in Far East Plaza

DID YOU KNOW? Nashville hot chicken destination Howlin' Ray's got its start as a food truck. Today, you'll frequently find people waiting in line in Far East Plaza for upwards of an hour for their famous sandwiches.

For even more to explore in Silver Lake, Echo Park, and Chinatown, scan the code below.

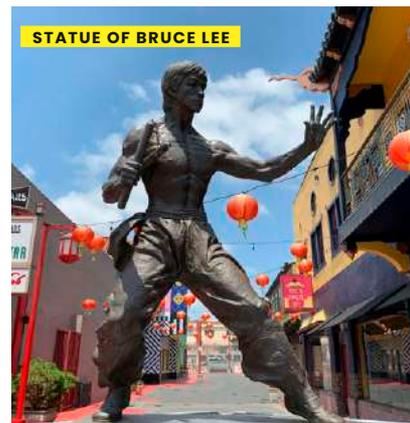
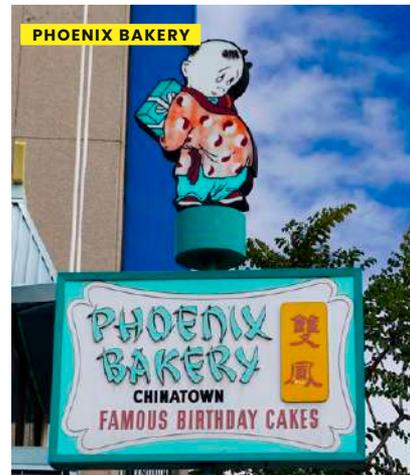


WHAT TO EAT, SEE, AND DO IN CHINATOWN

This Downtown-adjacent cultural enclave has a long history—and a long list of things to do.

“Forget it, Jake. It’s Chinatown.”

The neighborhood nestled between Downtown, Elysian Park, and the LA River may have gotten a bad rap in Roman Polanski’s 1974 neo-noir classic, but the Chinatown of today is a vibrant mix of old and new, where neon-lit pagoda-style roofs light up the night sky and paper lanterns loft in the SoCal breeze. In historic (and frequently filmed) **CENTRAL PLAZA**, you’ll want to treat yourself to something sweet at **PHOENIX BAKERY** (969 N. Broadway), which has been cooking up traditional Chinese pastries since 1938. The neighborhood staple serves steamed buns, sesame cookies, and sticky-sweet wontons called Sugar Butterflies, but locals swear by the bakery’s luscious strawberry whipped cream cake, which you can get by the slice if a whole cake isn’t in the cards. Do some people watching on Sun Mun Way, where a seven-foot-tall bronze **STATUE OF BRUCE LEE** (Sun Mun Way, across from Grand Star Jazz Club) has become a destination for people with itchy Instagram fingers. Fun fact: the legendary actor and martial arts master once had a dojo in the neighborhood (628 W. College St.), and it was recently revived by a protégé of one of Lee’s apprentices. Take in an exhibit, or at least make time to peek in the windows, on Chung King Road, a hub for local contemporary art galleries. You can even take a class in the art of perfumery at the **INSTITUTE FOR ART AND OLFACTION** (932 Chung King Rd.), but be sure to check their calendar in advance.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

JADE WOK
625 W. College St., #109

It would be pretty weird to visit Chinatown and not grab some Chinese food, right? This old-school gem tucked away from the neighborhood’s main drag is best known for its special tofu dish, but don’t snooze on the chef’s specials—both the lemon chicken and the sizzling beef steak make for a memorable meal.

THIEN HAU TEMPLE
756 Yale St.

Around Lunar New Year, which falls in late January or early February, this Taoist temple teems with people who come to make offerings to various deities and watch traditional lion dancers wend their way through the neighborhood, but it’s worth a stop any time of year for its gorgeous architecture alone. Inside you’ll find glittering altars to the sea goddess Mazu, military figure Guan Yu, and earth god Fu De.

PHILIPPE THE ORIGINAL
1001 N. Alameda St.

Philly has the cheesesteak; LA has the French Dip. Philippe the Original—one of two local restaurants that claim to have invented the Dip—has been serving the gravy-dunked, baguette-bound roast beef sandwich in a classic space on the edge of Chinatown since 1918. Do as the locals do and order yours double-dipped.

Going Up:

LA'S HIDDEN STAIRWAYS

The area's many hillside staircases offer art, great views of the city, and a good butt workout—if you know where to find them.

1 MICHELTORENA STEPS

Micheltorena Street and Sunset Boulevard

In a practical sense, LA's various hillside stairways serve to get people where they need to go, namely from a low road up to neighborhoods perched above the city. But climbing stairs has become a weekend pastime too—there's even a group called SoCal Stair Climbers that organizes excursions just to go up and down stairs. Located just steps off Sunset Boulevard, across the street from Micheltorena Street Elementary School, this staircase is one of the city's most celebrated for its concrete steps emblazoned with candy-colored hearts. You might have to dodge a few Instagram models on the way up, but the view is worth the trek.

2 MURRAY STAIRS

Sunset Boulevard between Micheltorena Street and Descanso Drive

Across Sunset from the Micheltorena steps, you'll find this ninety-step staircase, which is better known to locals as the Piano Stairs for the black-and-white

keys painted on their front-facing surfaces. They're another throwback to a time when streetcars ruled the city and rail commuters needed a quick way to get home from the boulevards below.

3 CLINTON STREET STAIRWAY

Glendale Boulevard between Bellevue Avenue and Santa Inez Street

Echo Park Lake is beautiful at ground level, but you can take in a bird's-eye view of the swan boats by climbing the Clinton Street Stairway. You'll find this double staircase on Glendale Boulevard, across from the park, where the steps rise uphill. To find it, look for the mural of the runner facing the street.

4 LAVETA TERRACE STAIRS

Laveta Terrace

In Echo Park, veer off Sunset to climb the Laveta Terrace Stairs. With its wide, short steps, this is one of the more manageable stairways in the city—plus, you'll catch a nice view of Downtown from the top. To find these steps, walk up Laveta Terrace from Sunset.



5 BAXTER STREET STAIRS

1501 Baxter St.

With well over two hundred steps, the Baxter Street Stairs are a popular destination for the area's stair climbers. Locating them can be tricky, but your best bet is to find your way to Elysian Heights Elementary and then walk up Baxter, past Avon Street.

6 MUSIC BOX STEPS

923 Vendome St.

Maybe you haven't seen the 1932 Laurel and Hardy movie this staircase appeared in and is named after, but you'll still enjoy breaking a sweat scaling its 133 steps and ten landings. If you've had enough exercise for one day, you can just check out the plaque embedded in the first step.

METHOD
Driving

ALSO CHECK OUT

Millie's Café: This neighborhood breakfast staple with sidewalk seating is a great place to take in the action on Sunset.

Konbi: Get the egg salad or pork katsu at this Japanese sandwich shop.

All Day Baby: The biscuits at this breakfast-to-dinner spot will blow your mind.

Did You Know?

You can get a behind-the-scenes look at Dodger Stadium by booking a tour of the legendary ballpark. You'll visit the field and even view the team's World Series trophies.

Scan the code below for more on what to eat and drink in Historic Filipinotown.



SEEING THE SIGHTS OFF SUNSET

To really experience the neighborhoods that unfold between Hollywood and Downtown, be sure to venture off the main drag.

The stretch of Sunset Boulevard that winds through Silver Lake and Echo Park is packed with restaurants, cute coffee shops, and lots of amazing shopping—we particularly love **ECHO PARK TIME TRAVEL MART** (1714 W. Sunset Blvd.)—but take a detour from the main drag to connect with the area's nature, history, and culture. A weekend hiking hot spot for locals, **ELYSIAN PARK** is the city's oldest public green space and a popular locale for birthday picnics, quinceañeras, and even lowrider meetups. Grab a slice of quiche at **VALERIE** (1665 Echo Park Ave.) or a sandwich at **LADY BYRD CAFÉ** (2100 Echo Park Ave.) on Echo Park Avenue, then make your way up to **ANGEL'S POINT** via a 2.8-mile loop with incredible views of **DODGER STADIUM**. If you're looking for a stroll instead of a climb, head to **ECHO PARK** and hit the trail along the lake's perimeter, or use your legs another way in one of the rentable swan boats (reserve one in advance to make sure you don't miss out). If all that pedaling works up a hunger, **SLC BOATHOUSE BISTRO** (751 Echo Park Ave.) has coffee, sandwiches, and all-day breakfast. Unless you like the look of handcuffs, you can't hit the water at the **SILVER LAKE RESERVOIR**, but you can join the crowds who head here on weekends to bird-watch, sprawl out on blankets on **SILVER LAKE MEADOW**, and jog the 2.2-mile walking path that encircles the human-made lake, which is more beautiful than what you picture when you picture a human-made lake.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

HERITAGE CENTER AT FOURSQUARE CHURCH

1801 Park Ave.

Did you know that around the turn of the last century LA was a cradle of the Evangelical movement? Tap into that unlikely aspect of the city's history at this hidden museum across the street from Echo Park Lake. The former parsonage of charismatic preacher and proto-televangelist Aimee Semple McPherson contains an illustrated history of her fascinating life and times (Charlie Chaplin was a friend and Anthony Quinn played in her church's band before he was famous) and offers guided tours (call ahead to schedule).

THE LYRIC HYPERION

2106 Hyperion Ave.

The Lyric Hyperion is one of the city's coolest venues for comedy and underground theater, and—big bonus points—it serves wine and beer, unlike many other small black box theaters. The venue recently underwent renovations and relaunched in late 2021.

HISTORIC FILIPINOTOWN

Temple Street

Off Sunset and on the other side of the 101 Freeway you'll find this cozy neighborhood that's home to a vibrant collection of beloved local businesses. Stop into Bloom & Plume (1638 W. Temple St.) for a cup of coffee or one of Maurice Harris's jaw-dropping floral arrangements, savor barbecued meats with Filipino flair at the Park's Finest (1267 W. Temple St.), or sample authentic Filipino street food at Dollar Hits (2422 W. Temple St.), where the snacky skewers really do cost one dollar.

Points of Pride:

LGBTQ+ LANDMARKS OFF SUNSET

From a hidden stairway to a legendary artist’s bungalow, these must-visit spots illuminate the city’s place in gay history.

1 MATTACHINE STEPS

2355 Cove Ave.

West Hollywood may lay claim to LA County’s most raucous gay nightlife scene, but you’ll want to head east to see where the local gay rights movement got its start. Climb the Mattachine Steps in Silver Lake for history with a view. The staircase is named after the Mattachine Society, a groundbreaking gay rights group founded by activist Harry Hay in 1950. While the group was secret, it became one of the earliest organizations to form in response to the homophobia that was prevalent in the mid-twentieth century. From the top of the staircase, which scales the hill where Hay used to live, you can see Silver Lake Reservoir from above and, on a clear day, the mountains beyond.

2 THE BLACK CAT

3909 W. Sunset Blvd.

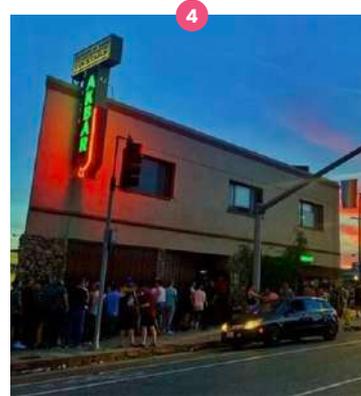
Stop for a mule at this Sunset Junction hot spot, which also happens to be a historical and cultural monument. In 1967, when the Black Cat was a gay bar, Los Angeles police staged a raid as guests exchanged New Year’s kisses.

This led to a protest outside of the bar the following month and, after that, a significant court battle. The recently expanded patio is a chill place for an evening cocktail, but be sure to check out the historical photos that hang on the walls inside.

3 TOM OF FINLAND HOUSE

1421 Laveta Ter.

If NSFW art won’t have you groping around for pearls to clutch, make an appointment to take a tour of the Tom of Finland House in Echo Park. The unassuming Craftsman bungalow has become a shrine to detailed drawings of leather-clad beefcakes by the groundbreaking Finnish artist, who frequently wintered in LA until his death in 1991. His bedroom—complete with the artist’s notebooks and tall leather boots—has been preserved like a museum piece, and other gay artists often show their work inside the house too. Email in advance for info about tours.



4 AKBAR

4356 Sunset Blvd.

Depending on the night of the week, this twenty-five-year-old gay bar at the busy intersection of Sunset and Fountain can be rowdy or it can be loungy, but it’s always a good time. An east-of-Hollywood alternative to WeHo’s scene, this seventies-basement-chic bar hosts DJ nights, stand-up comedy, bingo—even a craft night. Pop in for a drink and see where the night takes you.

5 CASITA DEL CAMPO

1920 Hyperion Ave.

In business since 1962, this Pepto-pink Mexican restaurant has vintage-kitsch appeal and lots of cheese-drenched combination plates, but be sure to see what’s going on at Cavern Club. The restaurant’s basement theater hosts queer theater and some of the best drag shows in town.

SPOTLIGHT ON... FROGTOWN

Did you know you can kayak the LA River? This hip neighborhood is a great place to start.

Up until the 1970s, neighbors say that hordes of tiny amphibians used to hop out of the riverbed and invade the streets of Elysian Valley. Even though they were likely toads—baby Western toads, according to one expert—the neighborhood picked up the name Frogtown. The frogs are no more, but you'll see plenty of other urban wildlife inhabiting the marshy stretch of the LA River that runs through this cool enclave as you explore by foot, bike, skateboard, or even kayak.

PLACES TO VISIT

LA RIVER KAYAK SAFARI

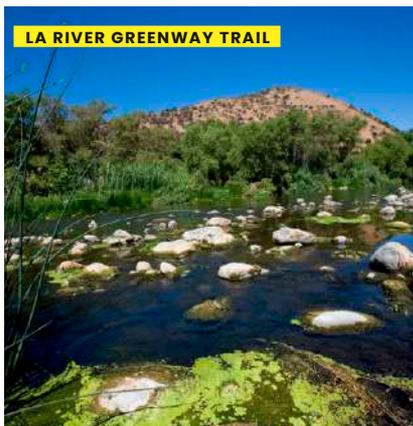
(2825 Benedict St.): You can paddle your way through a small stretch of the LA River thanks to LA River Kayak Safari, which offers afternoon and sunset tours that combine biking and kayaking with local history. Kayaking season runs from Memorial Day through Labor Day, and the two-and-a-half-hour tour is open to all skill levels.

LA RIVER GREENWAY TRAIL:

The LA River is fifty-one miles long, but the stretch you'll encounter in Frogtown is called Glendale Narrows. Stroll along the Atwater Riverwalk, ride the bike path, or relax in one of the multiple parks and pocket parks that pop up along the river in Atwater Village and Elysian Valley.



LA RIVER KAYAK SAFARI



LA RIVER GREENWAY TRAIL



SPOKE BICYCLE CAFÉ



FROGTOWN BREWERY



SALAZAR

SPOKE BICYCLE CAFÉ (3050 N. Coolidge Ave.): OK, so the bike path is calling your name but you don't have wheels. Stop by this cute outdoor café, where you can grab a rental for just ten bucks an hour (fifteen for the first hour) most days of the week. It's also a great place for a vegan-friendly lunch and a cup of Frogtown-roasted Trystero Coffee.

FROGTOWN BREWERY (2931 Gilroy St.): Tucked away on an otherwise industrial street, this cute craft brewery offers a rotating selection of house-brewed beers inside its steampunk-inspired taproom and dog-friendly beer garden. The taproom opens at noon on weekends, making it the perfect spot for a drink after a morning on the river.

SALAZAR (2490 Fletcher Dr.): Salazar has become a weekend brunch favorite among locals, but you can also hit up this popular Mexican restaurant for bites and margaritas before heading to a show at Zebulon. You may have to wait for a table on its sprawling, cactus-lined outdoor patio, but the shrimp cocktail is worth it.



FAIRMONT CENTURY PLAZA

WESTSIDE

METHOD

Driving

ALSO CHECK OUT

Hammer Museum:

Film fans should keep an eye on the calendar for cool screenings at this Westwood museum operated by UCLA. And make time for lunch at Lulu, a collaboration between famed chefs David Tanis and Alice Waters.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can visit screen legend Marilyn Monroe at Pierce Brothers Westwood Village Memorial Park & Mortuary. Say hi to Hugh Hefner while you're there—he bought the tomb next to hers in the nineties.

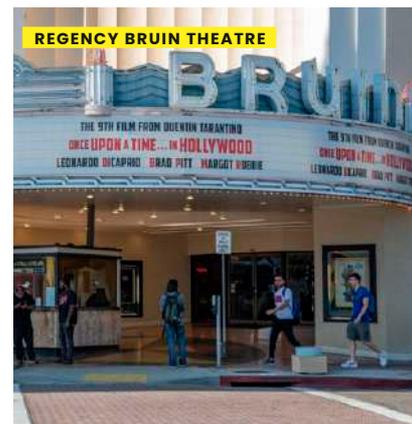
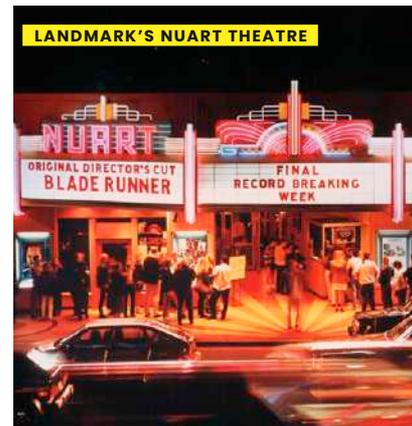
For even more to explore on LA's Westside, scan the code below.



ENJOY THE SILENCE: A GUIDE TO THE WESTSIDE'S CLASSIC MOVIE THEATERS

See a movie or see where one was made at these local landmarks.

During the Golden Age of Hollywood, splashy single-screen movie houses sprouted up all across Los Angeles, and today you'll still find relics from that era continuing to fire up their projectors throughout the Westside every day. In Santa Monica, **AERO THEATRE** (1328 Montana Ave.) is a go-to for repertory cinema programmed by the cinephiles at American Cinematheque, a nonprofit started by director Sydney Pollack. The Streamline Moderne theater's name nods to its origins—it was built by Douglas Aircraft Company for employees who worked nearby—but it's gotten major upgrades in recent years thanks to Cinematheque members. Check the plaque on the seat in front of you to see if it was graciously donated by a celebrity. Scream at the screen at a Saturday night showing of *The Rocky Horror Picture Show* at **LANDMARK'S NUART THEATRE** (11272 Santa Monica Blvd.), a tradition complete with a performance by an experienced shadow cast (to know, you have to go). The theater, which opened in 1930, still shows indie, foreign, art house, and revival cinema on its single screen every day.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

REGENCY VILLAGE THEATRE AND REGENCY BRUIN THEATRE
961 and 948 Broxton Ave.

The most LA thing of all LA things: two movie theaters right across the street from one another. Regency Village Theatre, an old-school gem with a jaw-dropping 170-foot Spanish Revival tower and an art deco neon sign, has hosted a load of glitzy premieres since it opened in 1931 as the Fox Theatre. Just recently, it was the site of the LA premiere of Paul Thomas Anderson's LA-set coming-of-age comedy *Licorice Pizza*. And just across the street, Regency Bruin Theatre might be recognizable for its turns on-screen. Back in 1937, prolific movie theater architect S. Charles Lee designed the Bruin with a wraparound Streamline Moderne marquee that happens to look damn good on camera—it's made cameos in everything from Fatboy Slim's "Praise You" music video to Quentin Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time... in Hollywood*.

SONY PICTURES STUDIO TOUR
10202 W. Washington Blvd., Culver City

If you're looking for something more immersive than what a darkened theater provides, take the Sony Pictures Studio Tour. A guide will lead you through the Sony Pictures Museum and sound stages, where you can pose behind a *Jeopardy!* podium, get up close and personal with the Ecto-1 from *Ghostbusters*, and spy the ninety-four-foot-tall rainbow that arcs over the studio, a tribute to *The Wizard of Oz*, which was filmed on the lot back when it was MGM. Check their website for tour availabilities.

Face the Strange:

THE WESTSIDE'S UNIQUE MUSEUMS

Expand your mind—or, you know, just snag some free cookies—at these beloved cultural landmarks.

1 THE MUSEUM OF JURASSIC TECHNOLOGY

9341 Venice Blvd.

Hiding in a blink-and-you'll-miss-it storefront on busy Venice Boulevard, this cabinet of curiosities, which blurs the line between academic pursuit and art project, is without a doubt LA's weirdest museum. Meander through the dimly lit labyrinth of artifacts to find an ethereal portrait of Soviet space dog Laika, horns from animals (and humans?), and a statue of Pope John Paul II in the tiny eye of a needle. Once you've made your way through the twelve-thousand-square-foot "museum," climb the stairs to the tranquil rooftop garden for some free tea and cookies at the end of your journey.

2 THE CENTER FOR LAND USE INTERPRETATION

9331 Venice Blvd.

Next door to the Museum of Jurassic Technology, you'll find another quirky gem that's practically impossible to

pigeonhole, a research center dedicated to "the increase and diffusion of information about how the nation's lands are apportioned, utilized, and perceived." Past exhibits have included a fascinating look at US presidents' homes and tombs, one on Amazon's retail distribution network, and another about the landscape of golf in America.

3 DIORAMA-MUSEUM OF BHAGAVAD GITA

3764 Watseka Ave.

Get a crash course in Hinduism without cracking a book at this museum run by the International Society for Krishna Consciousness (a.k.a. the Hare Krishnas). Inside you'll find eleven large-scale dioramas that depict the story of the Hindu scripture the Bhagavad Gita, featuring incredibly detailed clay dolls in ornate costumes, with animatronic movements synchronized with music, lights, and visuals. Late Beatle George Harrison called it "better than Disneyland, really."



4 THE WENDE MUSEUM

10808 Culver Blvd., Culver City

See a piece of the Berlin Wall, Soviet-era cars, spy equipment, and vandalized busts of Vladimir Lenin at this free museum, which holds the world's

largest and most eclectic collection of artifacts from the Cold War era. The museum itself occupies a piece of history: In 2017, it moved into the US National Guard Armory Building, which was originally built in response to the Cold War.

SPOTLIGHT ON... SAWTELLE JAPANTOWN

This gem of a neighborhood is a hub of Asian culture.

A dozen or so miles west of Downtown's Little Tokyo, another hub of Japanese heritage comes alive along Sawtelle Boulevard. Long known as Little Osaka to locals, what's now called Sawtelle Japantown started taking shape in the 1920s, when Japanese immigrants—many of them farm laborers—began settling and setting up shop in the neighborhood. Today, Japanese-American influence is everywhere you look, from shops specializing in Asian pop culture to a seemingly endless supply of noodle and sushi spots.

PLACES TO VISIT

HASHIMOTO NURSERY (1935 Sawtelle Blvd.): At the dawn of the 1940s, just prior to America's entry into WWII, there were more than two dozen Asian-owned plant nurseries in the Sawtelle area, according to one local historian. Hashimoto Nursery is the oldest and biggest nursery in a neighborhood that's still a destination for plant lovers. On a sunny day, strolling through the sprawling outdoor showroom is as good as being at a botanical garden. Also check out Yamaguchi Bonsai Nursery (1905 Sawtelle Blvd.), another legacy business with a veritable forest of carefully crafted miniature trees.

GIANT ROBOT STORE (2015 Sawtelle Blvd.): There's always something cool on the walls at this store-slash-art gallery, which shares a name with the influential Asian pop culture magazine that preceded it. Creators from all over the country



submit pieces for their shows, where the works join the store's stock of toys, T-shirts, and tchotchkes (a recent show celebrated beloved Studio Ghibli character Totoro). A few storefronts down and across the street, the brand also operates GR2 Gallery (2062 Sawtelle Blvd.), a dedicated gallery that's home to the annual *Post-It Show*, an exhibit of affordable (and highly collectable) drawings and paintings by indie and world-famous artists on those little yellow sticky notes.

TSUJITA LA ARTISAN

NOODLE (2057 Sawtelle Blvd.): Dip and slurp your way through a bowl of tsukemen at this ramen spot that specializes in the noodles-on-the-side variety. In its first couple of years in business, the Tokyo-born restaurant's rich, tasty soup developed such a fervent fan base that the team went ahead and launched Tsujita Annex (2050 Sawtelle Blvd.) right across the street. If you're in the mood for something even richer, Menya Tigre (2012 Sawtelle Blvd.) is the only spot in the area that specializes in curry ramen.

KARAOKE BLEU (2064 Sawtelle Blvd.): Life is full of tough choices, but is there any decision that feels more consequential than what song you'll sing at karaoke on a Friday night? Well, settle on a song and sidle up to the mic at this vintage karaoke spot. There are no private rooms here, just a stage in the main room where you sing for people sipping cheap drinks at the bar. Hey, maybe you'll be discovered—it is LA.

Pretty Fly:

WHAT'S CLASSIC, WHAT'S NEW, AND WHAT'S COMING SOON TO LAX

With its space-age architecture, eye-popping public art, and impressive collection of top-notch restaurants, LAX can be a destination as much as a waypoint—and there's even more cool stuff on the horizon at one of the country's busiest airports. Here's a peek at some of LAX's longtime landmarks, recent additions, and future upgrades that will make traveling into and out of LA even better. Just be sure you don't miss your flight.

PAST

THE THEME BUILDING

Every day, thousands of travelers touch down a stone's throw from LA's glittering beaches, the brand-spanking-new SoFi Stadium, and one of the city's most recognizable architectural landmarks, the Theme Building.

Designed by famed LA architect Paul Revere Williams and completed in 1961, the Googie-style structure is known for its Jetsons-era feel and its 135-foot-high parabolic arches. This centerpiece of the airport's loop of terminals housed a restaurant until 2013; today, it's home to LAX's Guest Services division.

IN-N-OUT

Grabbing a Double-Double after you land at LAX is tradition for locals and visitors alike. Exit toward Sepulveda Boulevard to find the local chain's most conveniently located outpost, and watch jets take off and land while you down a classic LA lunch.

THE KINETIC LIGHT INSTALLATION

During the day, you might not notice the twenty-six glass pylons that make up artist Paul Tzanetopoulos's untitled large-scale installation, but at night the structures put on quite a show as they illuminate and cycle from red to green to blue. The glowing towers have been a favorite feature at the airport since 2000.

PRESENT

PS

There's plenty to love about the bustle of an airport (really, is there any better place for people watching?), but travelers seeking a more exclusive experience can arrange to fly out of LAX's swanky semi-private terminal. PS offers private suites, a cushy semiprivate waiting area called the Salon, and even a chauffeur service that will take you directly from your plane to your home or hotel.

REVAMPED TERMINALS

Several terminals at LAX have recently undergone upgrades—and that means even more dining options for hungry travelers. Is there an iconic local restaurant you didn't get to hit up during your visit? Well, you just might be able to squeeze in a meal before you board your flight home. In Terminal 1 you'll find Reilly's Irish Pub and Urth Caffé & Bar; Terminal 7 features ¡Loteria! Grill and B Grill by Boa Steakhouse; and Tom Bradley International Terminal is home to LAMILL Coffee and Mary Sue Milliken and Susan Feniger's landmark Mexican spot Border Grill.



FUTURE

THE AUTOMATED PEOPLE MOVER

Finally, LAX is getting a train. Come 2023, an electric monorail called the Automated People Mover will connect travelers to Metro's rail transit system so they'll no longer have to bribe friends and family to pick them up at the terminal. In the meantime, the airport's FlyAway bus service is a great—and affordable—way to make it to or from the airport, with pick-up-and-drop-off sites at Union Station and in Van Nuys. There's also LAX-it, the airport's streamlined rideshare system.



BEACH CITIES

METHOD

Driving/Biking/
Skating/Walking

ALSO CHECK OUT

If you're not traveling with a board or a bike, there are plenty of places that rent out gear.

Surfboards: Rider Shack

Bikes: The Bicycle Whisperer

Electric Scooters: Boardwalk Skate & Surf

Chairs & Umbrellas: Perry's

DID YOU KNOW?

In addition to the pool and mini-bowl, one of the highlights of Venice Beach Skate Park is the seventies-style undulating concrete snake run.

For a roundup of LA's best beaches, scan the code below.



SOAK UP THE BEACH CITIES' SKATE AND SURF CULTURE

The days when the Z-Boys ruled Dogtown may be long gone, but boardsports still define LA's oceanfront.

In the sun-drenched 1970s, a section of the Westside that straddles Venice and Santa Monica became a playground for a new generation of extreme athletes. A group of surfers known as the Z-Boys, denizens of Dogtown, picked up skateboards and took to land, shredding empty backyard swimming pools and creating the vertical style we now see at the X Games and Olympics.

The neighborhood has changed *a lot*, but that surf and skate heritage is still everywhere you turn. Post up near **VENICE BEACH SKATEPARK** (1800 Ocean Front Walk) and watch today's skateboarders perfect their drop-ins and handplants at this sixteen-thousand-square-foot concrete playground where palms sway in the ocean breeze. Pro skateboarder Jesse Martinez spent two decades rallying for the park to be built, and it's been a destination for both skaters and onlookers since it opened in 2009. Steps away, you can buy delightfully tacky T-shirts and dodge roller skaters on the two-mile pedestrian drag known as **VENICE BEACH BOARDWALK** (Ocean Front Walk and Rose Avenue), even though it isn't, um, made of boards. Since it was founded in 1905, the boardwalk has become a bohemian epicenter, attracting street performers, palm readers, and jewelry and art vendors. If wheeled locals are giving you FOMO, rent a pair of skates by the hour and head over to the **VENICE BEACH SKATE DANCE PLAZA** (across from the Sidewalk Café at 1401 Ocean Front Walk). Back in the seventies, Venice was one of the most popular spots for roller disco dancers, and the hobby is having a major resurgence at the moment. At this outdoor rink, the tradition continues as folks gather to skate, get free lessons, and watch Instagram-famous shufflers like Neon Keon and Kels McGriff do their thing.

VENICE BEACH SKATEPARK



VENICE BEACH BOARDWALK



SANTA MONICA PIER



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

SANTA MONICA PIER

200 Santa Monica Pier

Ride the solar-powered Pacific Wheel to get a bird's-eye view of surfers catching waves in Santa Monica Bay. The old-school attraction is a throwback to a time when seaside amusement parks dotted the California coast.

RIP CITY SKATES

2709 Santa Monica Blvd. #A

This forty-four-year-old skate shop is a primo place to browse for decks, trucks, and wheels, but it's a treasure trove of history too. Go inside to check out the vintage decks and photos that adorn the walls of this tiny institution, Santa Monica's longest-running skate store.

DOGTOWN COFFEE

2003 Main St.

Grab a Salty Dog (an iced coffee with caramel and sea salt foam) and a breakfast burrito at this beachy café located in a space that used to house Jeff Ho Surfboards and Zephyr Productions and served as the Z-Boys' HQ. Outside, on a wall facing the parking lot, you'll find artist Dvate's mural dedicated to late skate legend (and youngest Z-Boy) Jay Adams, who passed away in 2014.

Dive In:

COASTAL LA'S CLASSIC RESTAURANTS AND WATERING HOLES

From a Prohibition-era speakeasy to a bar where the Beach Boys drank, these places have history (and beer, naturally).

1 THE GALLEY

2442 Main St., Santa Monica

Even if you've already explored Hollywood's classic haunts (see page 36), old-school spots on the Westside have a totally different vibe. Slide into a cozy booth for a Mai Tai Matey or some surf and turf amid glittering Christmas lights and kitschy glowing puffer fish at this nautical-themed bar-restaurant, Santa Monica's oldest. You might be tempted to make more room for seafood by skipping the salad at this local hideaway, in biz since 1934, but don't: according to owner Ron Schur, getting the closely guarded salad dressing recipe was part of the reason he bought the place.

2 CHEZ JAY

1657 Ocean Ave., Santa Monica

Grab some free peanuts to go with your beer at this Santa Monica institution: lore has it that astronaut Alan Shepard brought one of the bar's gratis legumes with him to the moon. This throw-your-shells-on-the-floor dive,

established in 1959, has been a hang for everyone from the Rat Pack to the Beach Boys, and it's still a chill place to grab a seat at the bar for a burger or do some sun-soaked day drinking on the patio.

3 BIG DEAN'S OCEAN FRONT CAFÉ

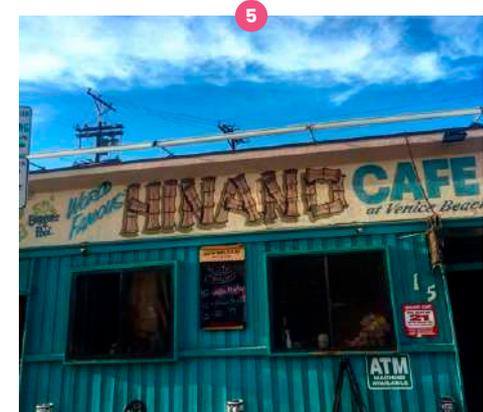
1615 Ocean Front Walk, Santa Monica

This open-air neighborhood favorite launched in the seventies in a building that predates the Santa Monica Pier, and it's still a trusty spot to grab burgers, tacos, and beer and watch a big game.

4 TOWNHOUSE

52 Windward Ave.

There's an honest-to-god Prohibition Era basement hideaway in this century-plus-old spot, the oldest saloon in Venice. Have a craft cocktail at the upstairs bar or head downstairs for live music and DJs (check the calendar) in the dimly lit Del Monte Speakeasy, where both Talib Kweli and Feist have graced the stage.



5 HINANO CAFÉ

15 Washington Blvd.

Bring quarters for pool when you stop by for cheap pitchers at this beloved dive, which original owner Joe Oarson opened in 1962 after he went on a sailing trip to Tahiti. Back in the day, Jim Morrison and Bonnie Raitt were known to kick back here. Today, it's a go-to for its "world famous" burger, served in a cardboard boat with a bag of chips.

METHOD

Biking

ALSO CHECK OUT

The Lighthouse

Café: This jazz-club-turned-restaurant was featured in the movie *La La Land*.

The Strand House:

Take in the sunset and sip wine on this restaurant's outdoor decks.

DID YOU KNOW?

The Marvin Braude Bike Trail is named after LA's third-longest-serving city council member, who was in office from 1965 to 1997.

For more to see along the Marvin Braude Bike Trail, scan the code below.



HIT THE STRAND AND SEE THE SOUTH BAY ON TWO WHEELS

Lots of visitors never venture south of Venice when they visit LA's coast. They're missing out.

A beachside bike ride is one of the best ways to take advantage of LA's perennially pleasant weather without actually hitting the sand. The Marvin Braude Bike Trail—popularly known as the Strand—stretches down the coast from Pacific Palisades to Torrance Beach, and you'll find plenty of opportunities to rent bikes, roller skates, and other wheeled modes of transport at the shacks that line the concrete path. Park in Playa del Rey and enjoy a chill eight-mile jaunt along its southernmost stretch, but be sure to hop off the trail for lots of local history and culture.

DOCKWEILER STATE BEACH

12000 Vista del Mar

You may be tempted to zone out and watch the waves roll in when you stop by this laid-back beach, but locals know to look up instead. Because of its location in the landing path of LAX, Dockweiler is a hot spot for a community of real-deal "plane spotters," aviation enthusiasts who've made a pastime of watching planes take off and land. Dockweiler also happens to be one of the only places in LA that permits bonfires, but if you want to spark up, it's best to get there early since the pits are first come, first served.

ERCOLE'S 1101

1101 Manhattan Ave., Manhattan Beach

You'll have to contend with a bit of a hill to get from the Strand to this one-hundred-year-old Manhattan Beach dive, but, believe us, their burger is worth the effort. Their take is as classic as it gets—lettuce, tomato, onion, ketchup, mayo,



DOCKWEILER STATE BEACH



ROUNDHOUSE AQUARIUM

mustard—but the patty, charbroiled at a grill right beside the bar, is unbelievably tasty and juicy. Paired with a cheap beer, it's excellent fuel for the rest of your bike adventure.

ROUNDHOUSE AQUARIUM

Manhattan Beach Pier

Pop into this tiny hexagonal aquarium at the end of the Manhattan Beach Pier to ogle at eels, octopuses, moon jellies, and more. Kids (and adults!) can get up close and personal with the critters in its touch tanks. And the best part? Admission is totally free.

BRUCE'S BEACH

2600 Highland Ave., Manhattan Beach

A commemorative plaque stands in the park overlooking this historic beach, which was purchased by Willa and Charles Bruce in 1912 and was for many years the only beach resort for Black people in LA. In the twenties, the

city of Manhattan Beach used eminent domain to commandeer the land, but it was recently approved to be transferred back to the Bruces' living descendants.

REDONDO BEACH PIER

Fisherman's Wharf, Redondo Beach

Queue up for freshly steamed seafood alongside hungry locals or just go for a stroll on this wonderfully weird pier, which juts out into the ocean and loops back around like an arm bent at the elbow. It's practically impossible to resist picking up a pound of peel-and-eat shrimp once you spy someone else's Styrofoam tray stacked high with shellfish from **QUALITY SEAFOOD**, a South Bay landmark since the fifties. Another throwback, **TONY'S ON THE PIER**—a.k.a. "Old Tony's"—serves salmon chowder and a famous mai tai in a midcentury dining room with panoramic views of the ocean.

Butterfly Effect:

**THE SOUTH BAY'S
GORGEOUS OUTDOORS**

From hidden beaches to a botanical garden where you can literally get in touch with nature, go green at these under-the-radar spots.

1 SOUTH COAST BOTANIC GARDEN

26300 Crenshaw Blvd., Palos Verdes Peninsula

The South Bay may be best known for the hulking tankers offloading containers of cargo at the Port of Los Angeles, but it's also home to some of the city's prettiest nature destinations. At the South Coast Botanic Garden, you can wander along the mile-long Tram Road and into a variety of themed collections, including a cactus garden, a banyan forest, and a "garden for the senses," which encourages you to actually engage with the plants. This natural treasure trove was built on the site of a former sanitary landfill—a glow-up for the ages.

2 EL SEGUNDO BLUE BUTTERFLY PRESERVE

Vista Del Mar Boulevard and Imperial Highway

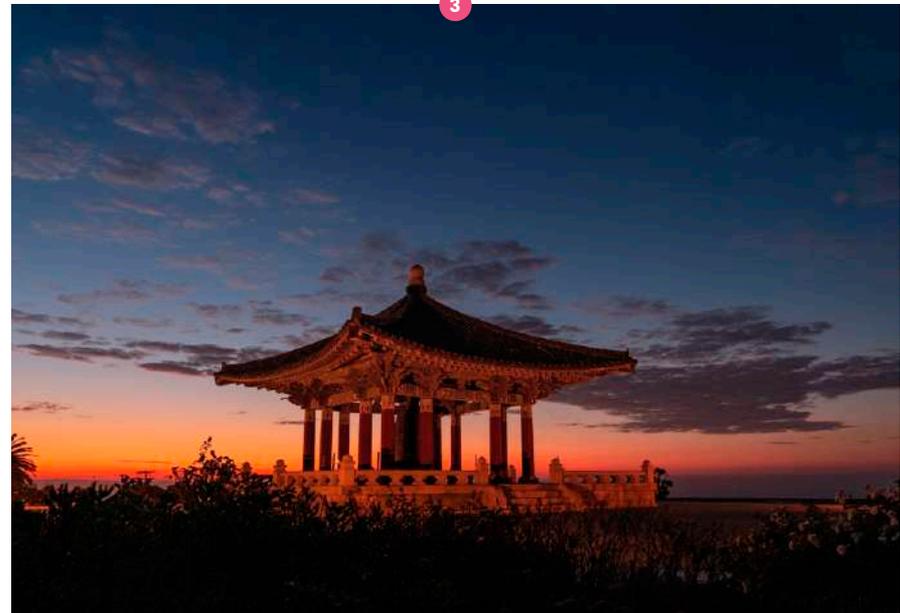
This preserve is closed to the public to protect its winged residents, but you

can catch glimpses of the rare (and, sadly, endangered) El Segundo Blue Butterfly from a path around the park's perimeter. During the summer months, an estimated 125 thousand of the tiny, delicate creatures take flight from the preserve's dunes.

3 ANGELS GATE PARK

3601 S. Gaffey St.

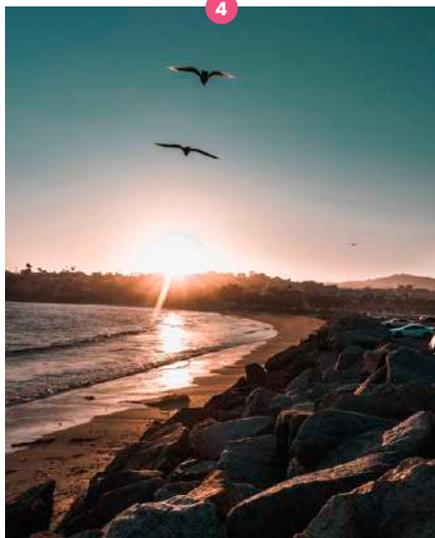
Perched along an oceanside cliff, the basketball court at Angels Gate Park is without a doubt the most dramatic place in the city to play a game of pickup. In the center of the park, you'll find the intricately decorated pavilion that houses the Korean Bell of Friendship, a seventeen-ton gift sent from South Korea for America's 1976 bicentennial. The twelve-foot-tall bell's thunderous ring is something to behold, and you can hear it on the first Saturday of every month at 11:30 a.m.



4 CABRILLO BEACH

3720 Stephen M. White Dr.

Going to the beach in the middle of the night probably sounds weird, but that's the only way to catch a grunion run. On certain nights from March through September, from around 10 p.m. to 2 a.m., thousands of silvery fish beach themselves to lay eggs in the wet sand. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife keeps a schedule on its website that lays out when the bizarre phenomenon is expected to take place.



5 THE COVES OF PALOS VERDES

In a city of almost four million people, the coves tucked along the jagged coastline of the Palos Verdes Peninsula may be as close as you can get to “secret” beaches. Head to **ABALONE COVE SHORELINE PARK** to explore teeming tide pools, take a hike around the trails at **GOLDEN COVE**, or do some snorkeling at **HONEYMOON COVE**. Afterward, treat yourself to dinner and views at one of the excellent restaurants at **TERRANEA RESORT** (pictured at right).



ABALONE COVE SHORELINE PARK



GOLDEN COVE



HONEYMOON COVE



METHOD
Driving

ALSO CHECK OUT

San Pedro is home to lots of great dive bars where you might sidle up next to a seaman.

- Godmother's
- Alhambra Cocktail Lounge
- The Spot
- Harold's Place

DID YOU KNOW?

Ports O' Call Village is no more, but a new waterfront complex that includes a promenade, an amphitheater, and restaurants breaks ground in 2022.

For even more to explore in the South Bay and Beach Cities, scan the code below.



TAKE A DIVE INTO THE CITY'S MARITIME AND MILITARY HISTORY

A battleship with a dog for a mascot is among the sights to see near one of the country's busiest ports.

It may not have the pizzazz of Hollywood, but the Port of Los Angeles—the busiest port in the Western Hemisphere—is what made it possible for LA to develop into the sprawling metropolis it is today. Take a deep dive into the life of Phineas Banning, dubbed the “Father of the Port of Los Angeles,” at the **BANNING MUSEUM** (401 E. M St., Wilmington), a meticulously preserved Greek Revival mansion built in 1864. Call in advance to get a guided tour of the grounds, which include a schoolhouse, a stagecoach barn with a display of historical horse-drawn carriages, and a lush rose garden. Check out the Gatling gun, a circa 1860s square Steinway piano, and maybe a ghost or two at the **DRUM BARRACKS CIVIL WAR MUSEUM** (1052 N. Banning Blvd., Wilmington), LA's only surviving Civil War-era military facility. Rumor has it the Army's onetime West Coast HQ is haunted by the spirits of officers past. Head seaward toward San Pedro and you'll find a memorial to a community displaced during another US war. At **TERMINAL ISLAND JAPANESE MEMORIAL** (1124 S. Seaside Ave.) a bronze sculpture pays tribute to Fish Harbor, a Japanese fishing village that was demolished after many of its inhabitants were forced into internment camps during World War II.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

BATTLESHIP IOWA

250 S. Harbor Blvd.

You can take a behind-the-scenes guided tour of this massive Navy vessel that served in both WWII and the Korean War. Be forewarned: you're liable to fall in love with Vicky, a mixed-breed pup who once served as the ship's mascot and logged 205 thousand miles on the boat during WWII.

FORT MACARTHUR MUSEUM

3601 S. Gaffey St.

Trace the history of coastal defense from the big-gun era to the missile era at this former Army outpost in San Pedro. If you happen to be in town in February, the museum stages a reenactment of an air raid that happened in 1942.

CRAFTED AT THE PORT OF LOS ANGELES

112 E. Twenty-Second St.

Every weekend you can shop handmade art, jewelry, and housewares by local makers at this massive indoor craft fair with more than one hundred vendors. Nestled in restored WWII-era warehouses on the San Pedro waterfront, Crafted also offers classes in pottery throwing, glass art, succulent gardening, and more—check their calendar for details.

SAN PEDRO FISH MARKET

1190 Nagoya Way

Wrap up the day with a shrimp tray at San Pedro Fish Market, an iconic seaside eatery that started out as a small family business and evolved into a sprawling seafood complex on the San Pedro Waterfront. The restaurant's most famous dish is the shrimp tray—and people love the micheladas too.

SPOTLIGHT ON... PLAYA DEL REY

Get a taste of laid-back life in this beachside community a stone's throw from the airport.

LA has no shortage of cool coastal communities, but with its dive bars, beach culture, and elevated dining, Playa del Rey has a cozy feel all its own. Developed in the 1920s as a wealthy beachside playground that movie stars like Cecil B. DeMille and Charles Bickford called home, its spectacular swells began to attract surfers from throughout the Southland in the fifties and sixties. Named after the “hang ten” maneuver, its northernmost beach—a.k.a. “Toes Beach”—was beloved by the Beach Boys’ Dennis Wilson. Today, the waves have died down due to erosion prevention measures, but the relaxed surf vibes live on.

PLACES TO VISIT

BALLONA CREEK BIKE PATH:

Hop on a bike or skateboard to cruise through the peaceful wetlands that surround the Ballona Creek Bike Path, a 6.7-mile asphalt trail that starts in Culver City and terminates at the ocean in Playa del Rey. Thanks to an ongoing restoration project, the Ballona Wetlands habitat is slowly being revived, so keep an eye out for egrets, turtles, lizards, and other native fauna and flora.

PLAYA PROVISIONS (119 Culver Blvd.): Grab some small-batch ice cream or savor a snifter of good bourbon at this seven-thousand-square-foot culinary complex from *Top Chef* winner Brooke Williamson and her husband, Nick Roberts. Modeled after local country marts, Playa Provisions houses four dining experiences in one. In addition to the



BALLONA CREEK BIKE PATH



PLAYA PROVISIONS



PRINCE O' WHALES

ice cream shop and backroom whiskey bar, you can sit down to a casual breakfast or lunch at King Beach or plunk down twenty-four dollars for a killer lobster roll at Dockside.

PRINCE O' WHALES (335 Culver Blvd.): If your favorite sport is in season, catch a game at this cozy dive with a sea-blue paint job. Opened in 1955 as the Bowsprit, Prince O' Whales—P.O.W. to locals—is the oldest sports bar in LA, but non-sports fans will find plenty of other things to keep them occupied, including darts, karaoke, pinball, and, of course, strong, cheap drinks.

THE SHACK (185 Culver Blvd.): Indulge in funnel cake “fries” or a burger topped with a Louisiana sausage link at this iconic local haunt, which has been operated by the same owners since '72. Its classic surf-shack atmosphere and unique offerings set it apart from your average dive bar, and the back patio is a great place to kick it in your board shorts after a long day in the sun.



THE SHACK

HARBOR ROOM (195 Culver Blvd.): With just seven stools, this classic watering hole gives new meaning to the word “cozy.” In fact, it's the smallest bar in LA County and the third smallest in the entire country.



SOUTH LOS ANGELES

METHOD
Driving

ALSO CHECK OUT

Hawkins House of Burgers: This decades-old burger joint is a local legend, cooking up patties piled with pastrami, chili, and more.

DID YOU KNOW?

Central Avenue used to be the heart of the West Coast's jazz scene. Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington, Count Basie, and Bessie Smith all either stayed at or performed at the Dunbar Hotel, which still stands today.

Scan the code for a roundup of Black-owned businesses across the city.



IMMERSE YOURSELF IN LA'S BLACK HERITAGE AND CULTURE

From a contemporary art museum to a venue that celebrates the blues, there's a lot to see and do in South Los Angeles.

From Hollywood to the South Bay, you won't find a corner of LA that hasn't been shaped by Black Angelenos, but South Los Angeles has been the area most closely associated with Black culture since the Second Great Migration of the 1940s. Just south of the 10 Freeway in Exposition Park, the **CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM** (600 State Dr.) has been celebrating Black artists since 1977. If you happen to be in town when an exhibit is opening, catch one of their "Can't Stop, Won't Stop" dance parties with DJs, food trucks, and good vibes. On Crenshaw Boulevard, not far from Debbie Allen's dance studio, check out a performance at **LULA WASHINGTON DANCE THEATRE** (3773 Crenshaw Blvd.), where the in-house ensemble—helmed by wife-husband duo Lula and Erwin Washington—performs a fusion of modern, hip-hop, jazz, and African dance. There's plenty to see all year, but their free Dance All Day Festival in October and their annual Kwanzaa Concert in December are highlights. In the Black cultural hub of Leimert Park (see page 110 for more), see what's on display at **ART + PRACTICE** (3401 W. Forty-Third Pl.), one of the city's best contemporary art galleries, with museum-quality public programs that are typically free. Speaking of free art, there's about to be a lot more to see when **DESTINATION CRENSHAW** launches along Crenshaw Boulevard in the coming months. The 1.3-mile open-air museum will celebrate "the extraordinary culture and contributions of Black Los Angeles" and feature works by important artists like Kehinde Wiley, Alison Saar, and Brenna Youngblood.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

BARBARA MORRISON PERFORMING ARTS CENTER
4305 Degnan Blvd. #101

Stop in for a Monday blues night or a Tuesday singing lesson at this intimate venue founded in 2011 by local legend Barbara Morrison, a renowned jazz and blues singer who has performed with luminaries like Ray Charles and Etta James. Morrison is also the founder of the California Jazz & Blues Museum (also in Leimert Park), which is closed until further notice—but keep an eye out for its return.

WOODY'S BAR-B-QUE
3446 W. Slauson Ave.

If food is an art form (and it is), then Woody's has been a prominent South Los Angeles cultural institution since 1975 that's long gotten raves for its oak-smoked meats cooked in brick ovens. Order the pork ribs, which legendary critic-about-town Jonathan Gold once described as "spurring with juice."

ALTA ADAMS
5359 W. Adams Blvd.

West African and California cuisines collide at Chef Keith Corbin's fine-dining destination. Pair soul food classics like black eyed pea fritters, shrimp and grits, and collard greens with a glass of really good wine. (See page 102 for more to see, do, and eat in the West Adams neighborhood.)

Go West:

WHAT TO SEE AND DO IN WEST ADAMS

From landmark homes to modern Mexican food, this ever-changing neighborhood has hidden gems galore.

1 WEST ADAMS HEIGHTS & SUGAR HILL

In the 1930s and forties, African American high society flourished in this neighborhood known for its stunning Mediterranean mansions and gorgeous bungalows. At 2203 S. Harvard Blvd., you'll find the Period Revival residence where Oscar winner Hattie McDaniel hosted salon nights and huge Hollywood bashers; Ray Charles, Little Richard, Louise Beavers, and Ethel Waters also called the neighborhood home. Other noteworthy sights include the former Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Building (1999 W. Adams Blvd.), designed by legendary architect Paul R. Williams on behalf of neighborhood pioneer Norman O. Houston, and the Britt House (pictured, 2141 W. Adams Blvd.), a Classical Revival estate housing the LA84 Foundation and a sizable sports-history library.

2 PEACE AWARENESS LABYRINTH & GARDENS

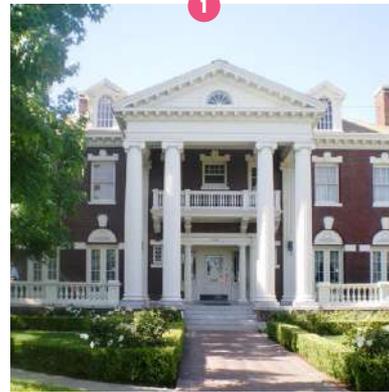
3500 W. Adams Blvd.

There's a good chance you'll blink and miss the entrance to this urban

hideaway, a meditation garden set on the grounds of a 1910 Italian villa that serves as the HQ of the nondenominational Church of the Movement of Spiritual Inner Awareness. Tours of the mansion have been put on hold, but you can still unwind amid the garden's stalks of bamboo, sixteen water fountains, and koi pond, or trace your steps through the circular stone labyrinth (just be sure to book your tour in advance for only five dollars).

3 JOHNNY'S WEST ADAMS
4327 W. Adams Blvd.

You'll find old-school pastrami stands all over LA, but this one has a secret weapon in Danny Elmaleh. The Mizlala chef bought the unassuming mom-and-pop fast-food joint in 2020 and started serving up smoky, decadently thick pastrami sandwiches that set his spot apart from the many places that slice it thin. Drop by for a quick lunch, or kick back with a cocktail and live music on the patio of the swanky bar next door.



4 REPARATIONS CLUB

3054 S. Victoria Ave.

Browse books recommended by owner Jazzie McGilbert (think James Baldwin and Pasadena native Octavia E. Butler) at this stylish store and creative space, where the motto is "Shop Local. Buy Black." Check the calendar for book signings and author talks, queer game nights, and Saturday morning cartoons.

5 BEE TAQUERIA

5754 W. Adams Blvd.

You're going to want to try the beet tinga at this colorful taco stand hiding behind a fence on busy West Adams Boulevard. Chef Alex Carrasco, formerly of Osteria Mozza and Scratch Bar, earned a Michelin Bib Gourmand nod for his take on Mexican omakase, but the laid-back vibes keep the locals coming back for more.

METHOD

Driving

ALSO CHECK OUT

The Serving Spoon:

Order the chicken and waffles at this legendary breakfast spot.

Three Weavers Brewing Company:

Sip the house-brewed beer on this massive outdoor patio.

Sunday Gravy:

Old school meets new school at this red-sauce Italian joint.

DID YOU KNOW?

Construction workers dug up seven million cubic yards of dirt to build SoFi Stadium, which sits one hundred feet below ground level.

For a guide to seeing the Rams and Chargers at SoFi Stadium, scan the code below.



WHAT TO DO IN AND AROUND SOFI STADIUM

There's a lot more to do than watch a game when you visit this modern marvel of sports fandom.

In what seemed like the blink of an eye, LA went from having zero NFL teams to having two NFL teams, and with them came the venue of every pigskin junkie's dreams: SoFi Stadium. The five-billion-dollar, seventy-thousand-seat behemoth opened its gates to fans for the very first time in August 2021; just a few months later, it invited the world inside when it hosted Super Bowl LVI. Go behind the scenes with a sixty-minute guided **SOFI STADIUM TOUR**. For around fifty bucks, you can check out the stadium's private suites and clubs, go inside both the Rams' and the Chargers' locker rooms, run through the sixty-foot tunnel the players traverse on game days, and even try your hand (er, foot) at kicking field goals on the gridiron. Whether you're there for a game or a tour, you'll want to dig into the stadium's **LA EATS DINING PROGRAM**, which goes beyond hot dogs from a roller grill or heat-lamp-warmed nachos. Curated by Jon & Vinny's chefs Jon Shook and Vinny Dotolo, the food offerings at the stadium are themed around LA neighborhoods and streets. For instance, Olvera Street leans Mexican with barbacoa and chicken tinga burritos, while the Sawtelle Boulevard offerings include Asian-influenced dishes like tater tots topped with furikake, togarashi, and Kewpie mayo. But don't get so wrapped up in the action inside the stadium that you snooze on exploring the outside. Walk through a grove of palm trees to explore **LAKE PARK**, a lush urban oasis complete with a pond that went in where Hollywood Park Racetrack used to stand (fun fact: the park is open to visitors even when there's nothing going on at the stadium).



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

YOUTUBE THEATER

1011 S. Stadium Dr., Inglewood

In its short existence, SoFi has already hosted some of the biggest bands on planet earth—the Stones, BTS—but there's room for more intimate shows at YouTube Theater, a six-thousand-seat venue adjacent to the seventy-thousand-seat stadium. And, yes, there will be YouTubers: the theater's sponsor is planning on hosting events that cater to fans of YouTube personalities.

THE FORUM

3900 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood

Long before SoFi was a glimmer in anyone's eye, the "Fabulous" Forum was the place to be. Home to the Lakers from 1967 until 1999, the Roman coliseum-style structure now hosts huge artists like John Mayer, Bad Bunny, and The Weeknd.

RANDY'S DONUTS

805 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood

Heed the call of the gigantic doughnut that beckons from the roof of this landmark, the small local chain's seventy-year-old flagship location. Or, if you're craving third-wave coffee over doughnut-stand drip brew, try Hilltop Coffee + Kitchen (170 N. La Brea Ave.), which counts Issa Rae among its partners and serves a really good breakfast sandwich on brioche.

the sporting life



1 ROSE BOWL STADIUM
1001 Rose Bowl Dr., Pasadena
• UCLA Bruins football

2 DODGER STADIUM
1000 Vin Scully Ave.,
Los Angeles
• Dodgers baseball

3 CRYPTO.COM ARENA
1111 S. Figueroa St.,
Los Angeles
• Lakers basketball
• Clippers basketball
• Sparks basketball
• Kings hockey

**4 LOS ANGELES
MEMORIAL COLISEUM**
3911 S. Figueroa St.,
Los Angeles
• USC Trojans football

**5 BANC OF CALIFORNIA
STADIUM**
3939 S. Figueroa St.,
Los Angeles
• Los Angeles FC soccer
• Angel City FC soccer

6 SOFI STADIUM
1001 S. Stadium Dr., Inglewood
• Rams football
• Chargers football

**7 DIGNITY HEALTH
SPORTS PARK**
18400 S. Avalon Blvd., Carson
• LA Galaxy soccer

Project Ex:

THE SECRETS OF EXPOSITION PARK

This 160-acre park a stone's throw from USC has a rich history, a lot of culture, and a surprise around every corner.

1 NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM OF LOS ANGELES COUNTY

900 Exposition Blvd.

Founded as an agricultural park in 1872, Exposition Park is now home to some of the city's best cultural institutions, all conveniently clustered together and full of surprising stuff. For instance, you're probably familiar with the Natural History Museum's jaw-droppingly lifelike dioramas of African and North American animals in their habitats, but did you know the museum is the only place in the world where you can simultaneously see a *Tyrannosaurus rex* in baby, juvenile, and sub-adult forms?

2 CALIFORNIA SCIENCE CENTER

700 Exposition Park Dr.

After traveling nearly 123 million miles and going on twenty-five missions since launching in 1992, the space shuttle *Endeavour* found a permanent home at the California Science Center, arriving after a piggy-back ride on a Boeing 747 in 2012. It was a fitting homecoming: all of NASA's space shuttles were built

in Southern California (in Palmdale, to be precise). See the awe-inspiring, 122-foot spacecraft up close and personal, and learn about a piece of local and national history.

3 LOS ANGELES MEMORIAL COLISEUM

3911 S. Figueroa St.

You're probably familiar with the iconic cauldron that sits high atop the entryway to the LA Coliseum, but if you look beneath it, under the peristyle arch, you'll find a "mystery mural," a stunning blue and gold-leaf painting of two Olympic torches and a flaming sun. The origins of the fresco were lost until 2017, when a local teenager discovered that the mural had been painted in 1969 as part of the city's unsuccessful bid to host the 1976 Olympics. In 2028, the Coliseum will become the only stadium to have hosted three Summer Olympics.

4 ROSE GARDEN

701 State Dr.

This seven-acre garden, home to one hundred varieties of roses and two



hundred other plants, is one of the most tranquil spaces in a bustling neighborhood, but its origins might make you look at it a little differently. Back when Expo Park was called Agricultural Park, it was a sort of unsavory place with a racetrack and even a brothel. The rose garden was planted in the 1920s to class up the area—guess you could say it worked.

5 CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM

600 State Dr.

Along with groundbreaking temporary exhibits, the California African American Museum frequently sources from its permanent collection, which houses five thousand objects, many of which illuminate Black art in California and the American West. (See page 100 for more to do at CAAM.)

SPOTLIGHT ON... LEIMERT PARK

Spend an afternoon browsing books or looking at art in this culturally rich neighborhood.

Once called “the Black Greenwich Village” by *Boyz n the Hood* filmmaker John Singleton, this South Los Angeles neighborhood has long been a hub of Black art, music, and culture—but it wasn’t always that way. Back when it was founded in 1927, racist housing covenants kept Black people from moving in and buying homes in what was LA’s first planned community, designed by famed landscape architects the Olmsted Brothers. In the late forties, the Supreme Court decided such covenants were unenforceable, and Leimert Park began growing into the vibrant neighborhood you see today, where you might catch an energetic African drum circle or, on the last Sunday of the month, the neighborhood’s long-running art walk.

PLACES TO VISIT

ESO WON BOOKS (4327 Degnan Blvd.): Both Barack Obama and Maya Angelou have held signings at this beloved bookstore, where locals have been browsing Black literature since 1990. Stop in to say hi to owners James Fugate and Tom Hamilton, pick up Colson Whitehead’s latest, and find out why the shop was a 2021 finalist for *Publishers Weekly’s* Bookstore of the Year.

HOT AND COOL CAFÉ (4331 Degnan Blvd.): This Black-owned coffee shop, which helped the neighborhood by becoming a community kitchen during the pandemic, is killing the vegan bar food game. Try a Beyond Meat slider slathered in burger sauce or an order of spinach-chip nachos draped in gooey vegan nacho cheese.



ACKEE BAMBOO (4305 Degnan Blvd.): Order the oxtails at this family-owned Caribbean restaurant, a neighborhood favorite since 2004. If you’ve never had it, also try the festival bread, a cross between a dumpling and a cornmeal fritter, and grab one—or a few—of their Jamaican beef patties to go.

VISION THEATRE (3341 W. Forty-Third Pl.): This art deco theater has been closed for renovations since 2018, but it’s a beautiful throwback to an era when movie houses were anchors of American town squares. Purchased by actor Marla Gibbs in the early nineties, the theater has since been transferred to the stewardship of the city’s Department of Cultural Affairs. When the theater reopens in 2022, be sure to check out the main stage curtain by artist Wendell Wiggins, whose design won a vote that was open to the community.



MID-CITY

URBAN LIGHT BY CHRIS BURDEN AT LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART

METHOD

Walking/Driving

ALSO CHECK OUT

La Brea Avenue is a mecca for cool vintage finds. Shop these spots:

- **The Way We Wore**
 - Golyester
 - Golden Age
 - Jet Rag
- American Rag Cie.

DID YOU KNOW?

There used to be an amusement park where the Beverly Center now stands. Beverly Park—which had pony rides, bumper cars, and a mini train—is said to have inspired Walt Disney.

For more to shop for, see, and do along Melrose Avenue, scan the code below.



THERE'S LOTS TO SPEND ON AND SEE AT THESE SHOPPING HUBS

From classic eats to the freshest streetwear, the middle of the city is the place to be.

Pop culture may have made Rodeo Drive one of Southern California's most iconic shopping districts (looking at you, *Pretty Woman*), but a more eclectic experience awaits in Mid-City, where you can spend big or just browse to your heart's content. Situated at the corner of Third and Fairfax, the **ORIGINAL FARMERS MARKET** (6333 W. Third St.) is a treasure trove of shops and classic food vendors. Sit down to breakfast at **DU-PAR'S**, a diner that's been slingin' stacks of the city's best pancakes since 1938; grab coffee and a doughnut at **BOB'S**, a go-to since 1947, for less than three bucks; or feast on a platter of oysters, mussels, scallops, shrimp, and lobster at **MONSIEUR MARCEL GOURMET MARKET & RESTAURANT**. Right next door to the Farmers Market, hop an old-timey trolley to get to the Apple Store at the **GROVE** (189 The Grove Dr.), LA's most iconic outdoor mall. Sip a drink at the Fountain Bar and watch the dancing water fountain—the mall's centerpiece—put on its hourly show. Original works by Pablo Picasso are hanging near the Grand Lobby. If you see stylish Gen Zers lined up on **FAIRFAX AVENUE**, that means one of the drag's many street wear stores is releasing a limited-edition hat, shirt, or pair of sneakers the kids have to have. Even if you don't have time to queue up, be sure to stop into **SUPREME** (439 N. Fairfax Ave.) to watch skateboarders drop into the bowl that's been built into a platform in the back of the store—after a bowl of matzo ball soup at **CANTER'S DELI** (419 N. Fairfax Ave.), of course.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

MELROSE TRADING POST

7850 Melrose Ave.

Every Sunday, one of LA's best flea markets sets up shop at Fairfax High School, which counts actor Timothy Hutton, guitar god Slash, and a few Red Hot Chili Peppers among its famous grads. Shop cool handmade goods like clocks made of books, succulents planted in old beer bottles, and splatter-painted clothes and sneakers from Colored by Joey. Even if you just want to walk around, the vibrant scene is well worth the five-dollar price of admission.

MELROSE AVENUE

The stretch of Melrose Avenue between Fairfax and La Cienega has been a counterculture shopping hub since the eighties. Nowadays, you can't visit the area without stopping by the Paul Smith wall. The candy-pink exterior of the British designer's store has become a hot spot for Instagrammers—and a really good place to people-watch for us noninfluencers.

BEVERLY CENTER

8500 Beverly Blvd.

Shop Gucci, Louis, Dolce, and Fendi at this upscale mall at the corner of Beverly and La Cienega boulevards. Come hungry: the mall's dining options include beloved breakfast spot Eggslut, luxury seafood restaurant Angler, and ABSteak, a Korean steakhouse from Michelin-starred chef Akira Back. It'll ruin food courts for you for life.

Culture Trip:

MIRACLE MILE'S UNEXPECTED FINDS

There's a lot more to Mid-City's museums than what you think you know.

1 THE ACADEMY MUSEUM OF MOTION PICTURES

6067 Wilshire Blvd.

Some of the most famous artifacts from film history are housed in this new addition to Miracle Mile, but make time to explore relics that predate cinema altogether. The museum is home to late author-documentarian Richard Balzer's collection of inventions that set the stage for the movies we watch today. One of the precinema projectors in the collection—called a Bull's Eye Magic Lantern—dates to the eighteenth century. (For more, see page 16.)

2 PETERSEN AUTOMOTIVE MUSEUM

6060 Wilshire Blvd.

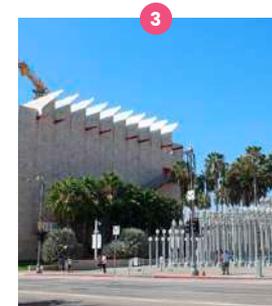
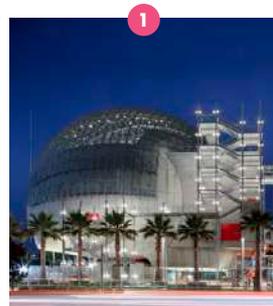
The museums that line the mile-long stretch of Wilshire Boulevard between Fairfax and La Brea may be as famous as the celebs who call the city home, but each one is full of unexpected treasures if you know where to look. On the western end of Miracle Mile, this shrine to car culture is known for its rotating exhibits of everything from souped-up low-riders to vintage vehicles from the

James Bond movies (not to mention the undulating ribbons of steel that cover the building). No matter what's on display on the upper levels, be sure to splurge on a ninety-minute tour of the underground Vault, where the museum keeps upwards of two hundred of the rarest cars on earth. You'll have to resist the urge to document your visit to the underground garage: photos are prohibited.

3 LOS ANGELES COUNTY MUSEUM OF ART

5905 Wilshire Blvd.

Chris Burden's iconic *Urban Light*—an installation of 202 antique street lamps in the museum's welcome plaza—has served as the backdrop for untold numbers of engagement photos and quinceañera shoots, but a less celebrated (but no less incredible) work by the artist is awaiting its close-up inside LACMA's Broad Contemporary Art Museum. In Burden's kinetic sculpture *Metropolis II*, 1,080 miniature vehicles cycle through eighteen roadways at 240 scale miles per hour (closer to four miles per hour in actual speeds), channeling the bustle of the restless city outside the museum's confines.



4 LA BREA TAR PITS

5801 Wilshire Blvd.

On your walk eastward from LACMA, you can check out the oily, black La Brea Tar Pits from the sidewalk on either Wilshire or Sixth Street, but go inside to see Project 23, one of the museum's active excavation sites. You can actually watch scientists uncovering fossils from batches of soil where a near-complete skeleton of a Columbian mammoth was discovered. (For more, see page 18.)

5 CRAFT CONTEMPORARY

5814 Wilshire Blvd.

Get an eyeful of works by underrepresented artists at this museum that

celebrates crafts and folk art and their place in the world of fine art. Before you leave, be sure to browse the gift shop, a treasure trove of functional (and affordable) handmade works of art like bowls, planters, and jewelry.

6 KOREAN AMERICAN NATIONAL MUSEUM

Opening in 2022

Four miles east of Miracle Mile, something cool is coming soon. The seventeen-thousand-square-foot Korean American National Museum will spotlight the history and achievements of Americans with Korean ancestry.

METHOD
Driving

ALSO CHECK OUT

In the mood for something sweet? Try these spots:

- Mochi Day
- SomiSomi
- Bumsan Organic Milk Bar
- Oakobing

DID YOU KNOW?

A scene in the movie *Chinatown* was filmed in a restaurant in Koreatown. The Prince (3198 W. Seventh St.), a glamorous throwback that serves killer Korean fried chicken, has also been featured on *Mad Men* and *New Girl*.

For more to eat and do in Koreatown, scan the code below.



EAT YOUR WAY THROUGH KOREATOWN'S GREATEST HITS

Immerse yourself in foodie culture straight out of Seoul at these must-try restaurants.

LA's most densely populated neighborhood is also its most delicious. Koreatown is home to hundreds of restaurants that serve the cuisine's staples, but it always helps to know where the locals dig in. If it's a hot day, head to **YUCHUN** (3185 W. Olympic Blvd.) for the cold noodle soup naengmyeon. The strip mall spot with a no-frills dining room is known for bowls of thin, refreshing buckwheat strands submerged in a broth that's kept nice and cold with crushed ice.

For something warmer, stop at **JEON JU** (2716 W. Olympic Blvd. #101) for dolsot bibimbap, a rice bowl topped with a variety of shredded vegetables and served with a crunchy, charred bottom for great texture. You'll find this spot—named for a district in South Korea that's famous for bibimbap—on the bottom floor of a strip mall packed with Korean businesses. Settle in for dong chi mi gook su at the **CORNER PLACE** (2819 James M. Wood Blvd.), one of Koreatown's oldest restaurants. The key to their take on this cold noodle dish is the tangy, sweet broth, a closely guarded secret they've kept under wraps since '82.

For barbecue and boatloads of banchan, you've got options—a lot of them—but locals swear by **PARK'S BBQ** (955 S. Vermont Ave.), hailed for its high-quality meats, from bulgogi to galbi to rib eye. For party vibes, head to **KANG HO DONG BAEKJEONG** (3465 W. Sixth St. #20), the BBQ joint launched by Korean wrestler-comedian-restauranteur Kang Ho Dong in 2012. To find its lively (and always packed) dining room, look for the corrugated metal awning in historic Chapman Plaza, a hub for Korean eats that goes off on Friday and Saturday nights.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

TOE BANG CAFÉ
3465 W. Sixth St. #110

Soak up your beer with some Korean fried chicken, kimchi pancakes, or spicy rice cakes and noodles (rabokki) at this drinking house with party vibes. During the pandemic, the space essentially doubled in size with the addition of a cozy, tented outdoor dining room.

BCD TOFU HOUSE
3575 Wilshire Blvd.

For a no-nonsense but reliable and tasty spicy tofu soup available at all hours of the day or night, go to BCD Tofu House and order the soondubu. Just be ready to specify the heat level—which ranges from plain to “danger”—when ordering.

SUN NONG DAN
3470 W. Sixth St. #7

This gem is known for its outstanding braised short ribs, or galbi jjim. Order it with cheese and your server will come out with a blowtorch to melt it on top of the dish. It's a fast-paced diner with hearty food and a touch of theatrics—great for a night out in Ktown.

SPOTLIGHT ON... LITTLE ETHIOPIA

Sip honey wine between bites of injera in this African enclave on Fairfax.

Heaps of injera and platters of tibs await on this three-block stretch of Fairfax Avenue, the only of LA's two dozen official ethnic enclaves to represent an African nation. In the late 1980s, businessman Fekere Gebre-Mariam moved his restaurant to a section of the city once dominated by Jewish-owned businesses. Over the next two decades, Ethiopian expats opened up restaurants, markets, jazz lounges, and clothing stores in the neighborhood, and in 2002 the area officially got a name to match the food and culture it's known for.

PLACES TO VISIT

ROSALIND'S (1044 S. Fairfax Ave.): Take sips of tej (Ethiopian honey wine) in between bites of doro wat (a fiery chicken and egg dish) on the chill patio at the neighborhood's flagship restaurant, open since '88. If you're an Ethiopian food newb, this is the perfect place to take your first bite of beef, chicken, or lamb tibs, a rich, spicy stew made with cubed meat.

BUNA ETHIOPIAN RESTAURANT & MARKET (1034 S. Fairfax Ave.): You'll want to order some freshly brewed yirgacheffe at this cute Ethiopian café and market that gets its name from the Amharic word for coffee. The floral, lemon-forward coffee from southern Ethiopia is the signature sip here—and you can even take a bag of it home, along with spices, incense, or five packs of freshly made injera, the tangy, spongy flatbread that serves as a vehicle for a variety of dishes.



RAHEL ETHIOPIAN VEGAN CUISINE (1047 S. Fairfax Ave.): Dig in to stews made with lentils, pumpkin, and chickpeas beneath inverted umbrellas at the neighborhood's only all-vegan restaurant, which even meat eaters swear by. If you have a travel buddy in tow, order one of their feasts for two, a bargain that lets you try a grab bag of dishes.

MERKATO (1036½ S. Fairfax Ave.): TV fans might recognize this late-night joint's neon signage from cameos it made in a pair of episodes of Issa Rae's *Insecure* or from a 2018 episode of *Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown*. This family-owned restaurant and market is bursting with traditional prints, paintings, and masks for browsing, and it's also a great place to sit down to a plate of gored gored.

HANSEN'S CAKES (1060 S. Fairfax Ave.): Snag a cupcake from this century-old Danish bakery that once served up sweets to stars like John Wayne and Bob Hope. Today, Hansen's is known for outrageously designed specialty cakes—even if you're maxed out on sugar, take a peek inside to see what they're working on.

THE
Valley



**SAN
FERNANDO
VALLEY**

METHOD

Driving

ALSO CHECK OUT

A stretch of Ventura Boulevard has become a destination for sushi, which became trendy in the United States in the sixties. Try some of these spots on Sushi Row:

- Asanebo
- Katsu-ya
- Daichan
- Iroha Sushi of Tokyo

DID YOU KNOW?

Open since 1971, Six Flags Magic Mountain in nearby Valencia holds the world record for the most roller coasters in one amusement park.

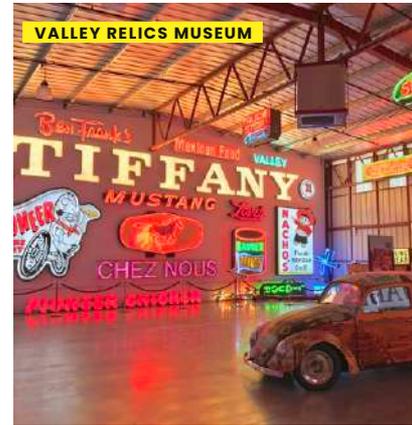
For more on the history of Bob's Big Boy, scan the code below.



THESE SAN FERNANDO VALLEY LANDMARKS ARE A TRIP BACK TO MIDCENTURY LA

The Valley may be a few degrees hotter than the rest of the city, but it couldn't be cooler.

The San Fernando Valley might be most closely associated with the “valley girl” trope of the eighties, but its sunbaked streets are still defined by the homes and businesses that sprang up during the post–World War II population boom, when architects like Joseph Eichler, Edward Fickett, and William Mellenthin changed the landscape forever. For a crash course in Valley history, carve out time on a Saturday or Sunday to visit the **VALLEY RELICS MUSEUM** (7900 Balboa Blvd., Van Nuys). Located inside a pair of hangars at Van Nuys Airport, this shrine to Valley history is packed with cool things to peruse, from beautifully preserved neon signage that tells the story of the area's bygone businesses to display cases packed with old photos and even local high school yearbooks. In Studio City, you can cruise by one of the most famous mid-century homes in America, or anywhere really: the **BRADY BUNCH HOUSE** (11222 Dilling St., North Hollywood). The 1959 home, which was used for establishing shots on the classic sitcom, was purchased by HGTV for \$3.5 million in 2018 and turned into a replica of the sitcom's original set by the show's surviving stars. You can't go inside, but you'll be pleased to discover that it doesn't actually have an Astroturf yard. On Ventura Boulevard, a cruising destination for teens in the seventies, stop for one of Rafael Vega's classic margaritas at **CASA VEGA** (13301 Ventura Blvd.), an iconic Mexican spot that's been operated by the Vega family since 1956. With its red vinyl booths and oil paintings of matadors taking on *toros*, the restaurant was able to seamlessly play itself circa 1969 in Quentin Tarantino's *Once Upon a Time . . . in Hollywood*.



CONTINUING YOUR JOURNEY:

BOB'S BIG BOY

4211 W. Riverside Dr., Burbank

Their pudgy, fiberglass namesake may be more legendary than their food, but you should grab a double-deck cheeseburger at the oldest remaining Bob's Big Boy in America. If you can still move after your extra-thick milkshake, snap a selfie with the overalls-clad mascot out front, said to be modeled after a customer who did chores around the restaurant in exchange for burgers. Not a bad deal for pop-culture immortality.

SMOKE HOUSE

4420 Lakeside Dr., Burbank

Three words about this classic steakhouse across the street from Warner Bros. Studios™: garlic cheese bread. The restaurant has been a go-to for slabs of grilled meat and celebrity sightings since the 1940s—well before it stood in for a nightclub called Lipton's in *La La Land*—but you can't visit without ordering a basket of the signature carb. The restaurant's wood-paneled walls, plastered with celeb headshots, horseshoe-shaped vinyl booths, and cozy fireplaces, set the mood for a night of throwback fun.

TONGA HUT

12808 Victory Blvd., North Hollywood

Slide into a booth and order up a Painkiller or a Scorpion Bowl at LA's oldest Tiki bar, open since 1958 and still every bit the kitschy Polynesian hideaway it ever was. You might even run into a member of the Loyal Order of the Drooling Bastard, a club that consists of regulars who've ordered one of each of the seventy-eight drinks on the bar's menu in a twelve-month period.

Saddle Up:

WHERE THE OLD WEST MEETS MODERN-DAY LA

From missions founded in the 1700s to a western bar from the 1950s, here's where to see a wilder version of the city you know today.

1 CAMPO DE CAHUENGA

3919 Lankershim Blvd., Studio City

Way before it was known for neon-lit Googie diners and “birdhouse” ranch homes, the San Fernando Valley was a sprawling collection of farms, ranchos, and missions where LA’s early history took shape. At this park and museum in the shadow of the thirty-five-story skyscraper that’s home to NBC, you can actually view the Treaty of Cahuenga, a document signed in 1847 that ended the conquest of California, a conflict between the United States and Mexico. Stop by for an open house the first and third Saturday of each month to tour the museum, or enjoy this history-making site—now a public park—anytime.

2 MISSION SAN FERNANDO REY DE ESPAÑA

15151 San Fernando Mission Blvd.

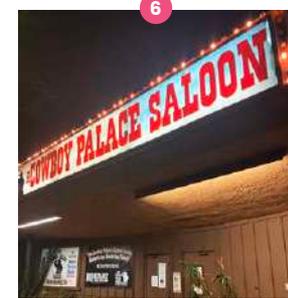
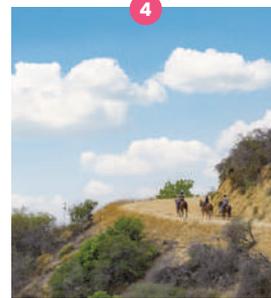
You’ll want to wear good walking shoes to explore the grounds of California’s seventeenth mission, founded in 1797 by Father Fermín Francisco de Lasuén,

nearly thirty years after the San Fernando Valley was first “discovered” by explorers. The mission’s convento, or long building, served as a guesthouse for visitors and was completed in 1822, after a dozen years of construction. The impressive colonnade structure has more than twenty rooms, a chapel, and a winery, and there’s also a library and a museum to check out.

3 LEONIS ADOBE MUSEUM

23537 Calabasas Rd., Calabasas

Take a day trip to the farthest reaches of the Valley and explore an 1844 adobe at this landmark in the heart of Old Town Calabasas. It’s one of the oldest surviving buildings in the LA area (it’s rumored to be haunted, of course) thanks to a 1960s campaign that saved it from demolition. Book a tour to learn more about the place that wealthy rancher Miguel Leonis, a.k.a. the “King of Calabasas,” once called home—and if you visit in the spring, you might spot a baby lamb on the grounds.



4 LA HORSE RENTALS

1820 Riverside Dr., Glendale

In Glendale, where Griffith Park meets the Valley, you can saddle up for a guided ride on the park’s tree-canopied trails and mountain paths, no riding experience necessary. Tours start at around forty dollars per hour, a small price to pay for an authentic LA experience—just don’t get too distracted by the killer views.

5 IT’S A WRAP!

33315 W. Magnolia Blvd., Burbank

If you need help dressing the part, check out this secondhand store, which sells nearly new wardrobe pieces from Hollywood productions. You could pick

up some western wear that an honest-to-god movie cowboy wore.

6 THE COWBOY PALACE SALOON

21635 Devonshire St., Chatsworth

Have a cold domestic beer, shoot a game of pool, or do some line dancing to a live band at this country-and-western joint that’s been open since 1954. Cowboy Palace calls itself “the last real honky tonk,” and, sadly, the name rings true—the San Fernando Valley used to be home to iconic country music destinations like the Palomino Club, which shuttered back in 1995 after hosting everyone from Patsy Cline to Willie Nelson. Hey, you can still check out their sign at the Valley Relics Museum (see page 124).

taco map



- 1 GUISADOS**
2100 E. Cesar E. Chavez Ave., Los Angeles
Try the braised chicharrones or mole poblano (or both).
- 2 MARISCOS JALISCO**
3040 E. Olympic Blvd., Los Angeles
The deep-fried shrimp taco has become an LA staple.
- 3 GUERRILLA TACOS**
2000 E. Seventh St., Los Angeles
Try the sweet potato taco with almond and cashew chile.
- 4 GOAT MAFIA @ SMORGASBURG**
777 S. Alameda St., Los Angeles
Order their birria taco "LA style" to get it with a cheesy crust.
- 5 SONORATOWN**
208 E. Eighth St., Los Angeles
Get the bean and cheese burrito, served on a house-made tortilla.
- 6 RICKY'S FISH TACOS**
3061 Riverside Dr., Los Angeles
LA's favorite Baja-style fish and shrimp tacos.
- 7 TACOS 1986**
7235 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles
This spot is famous for Tijuana-style tacos heaped with guac.
- 8 LEO'S TACO TRUCK**
1515 S. La Brea Ave., Los Angeles
Try the al pastor topped with a slab of fresh pineapple.
- 9 SKY'S GOURMET TACOS**
5303 W. Pico Blvd., Los Angeles
Try the crawfish taco at this spot that fuses Mexican and soul food.
- 10 BEE TAQUERIA**
5754 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles
Opt for the unique omakase experience Chef Alex Carrasco offers.
- 11 TITO'S TACOS**
11222 Washington Pl., Culver City
The hard-shell tacos here have been a hit since the fifties.
- 12 CONI'S SEAFOOD**
3544 W. Imperial Hwy., Inglewood
Try the smoked marlin tacos at this seafood mecca.

SPOTLIGHT ON... NOHO ARTS DISTRICT

This pocket of the Valley is an artsy pedestrian paradise with tons to do and see.

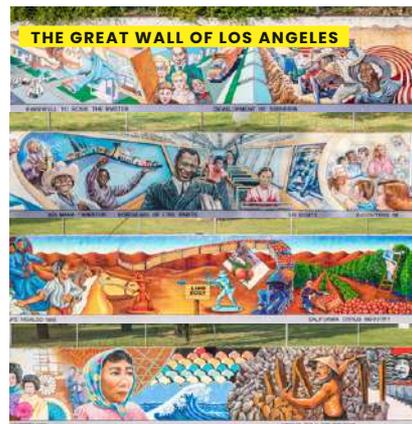
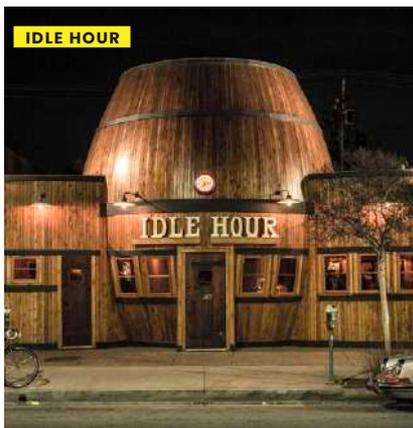
Long a hub for actors, artists, and other creatives, the square-mile swath of North Hollywood known as the NoHo Arts District has become one of the Valley's most vibrant neighborhoods. Hop off the Metro B Line (formerly the Red Line) at the North Hollywood stop and you'll find tons to do within walking distance.

PLACES TO VISIT

IDLE HOUR (4824 Vineland Ave.): Have a beer inside a big ol' barrel at this perfectly preserved piece of programmatic architecture (buildings designed to look like what they're named after or sell) on Vineland Avenue. On the patio, you can pose for a photo with a re-creation of Bulldog Café, a circa-1920s tamale stand shaped like a pipe-smoking dog.

PLAYER ONE (5126 Lankershim Blvd.): Play some Mario Kart while you sip a Pinkie Paloma at this massive retro arcade bar. If you're into pinball, they have a mean selection of Stern machines, or, if you're not in the mood to burn through a roll of quarters, keep an eye out for recurring events like bingo and trivia nights.

VICIOUS DOGS (5231 Lankershim Blvd.): Get your encased-meats fix at this neighborhood fave that serves creative takes on your average hot dog. Play it safe and get a dragged-through-the-garden Chicago dog,



or try an "adventurous" wiener, like their bacon-wrapped dog slathered with peanut butter or the Krusty Krab, a bacon-wrapped dog topped with a crab patty and tartar sauce.

THE ROAD THEATRE COMPANY (10747 Magnolia Blvd.): Headquartered in a unique housing community for senior artists, this venue has been putting up socially and politically relevant shows for thirty years. Check the calendar at the historic **EL PORTAL THEATRE** (5269 Lankershim Blvd.), where the main stage is dedicated to Hollywood legend Debbie Reynolds. Or, if you're into the outré, take in a performance at **ZOMBIE JOE'S UNDERGROUND THEATRE** (4850 Lankershim Blvd.), a strip-mall theater that hosts burlesque and horror-themed shows. NoHo is known for indie theater, so you'll be glad you planned on seeing a show while you're in the area.

THE GREAT WALL OF LOS ANGELES (12900 Oxnard St.): One of the city's most iconic works of public art is just a short drive from this artsy nook of a neighborhood. Designed by legendary Chicana artist Judith F. Baca and completed over the course of five summers starting in the mid-1970s, this half-mile-long mural traces the history of ethnic people of California from prehistory to the 1950s. A must-see for LA history buffs.

ABOUT ATLAS OBSCURA

Atlas Obscura is the definitive guide to the world's hidden wonders, with a mission to inspire curiosity about the incredible world we all share. Our first two books, *Atlas Obscura: An Explorer's Guide to the World's Hidden Wonders*, and *Gastro Obscura: A Food Adventurer's Guide*, were *New York Times* best sellers. We co-created this guide to LA in partnership with Los Angeles Tourism for anyone who seeks the wondrous side of LA. The city awaits.



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