



Relocation Guide

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IOR makes every effort to ensure that the information contained in this guide is as current as possible. If you notice errors, or information which is no longer accurate, please contact us immediately so that we may correct the issue.

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WELCOME AND OVERVIEW



Photo courtesy of [Wikimedia Commons](#)

The city of Los Angeles (also known simply as L.A., and nicknamed the "City of Angels") is the most populous city in California. Located on a broad basin in Southern California, the city is surrounded by vast mountain ranges, valleys, forests, beautiful beaches along the Pacific Ocean, and nearby desert. The metropolitan area is the second-most populous in the United States and home to over 17 million people who hail from all parts of the globe. Los Angeles is an important center of culture, business, media, and international trade, but it is most famous for being the center of the world's television, motion picture, and recording industry, which forms the base of its status.

The sprawling city we see today began as a small settlement by the Tongva Indians. It initially was part of Spain, then Mexico and finally became part of the United States in 1847 after the Battle of Rio San Gabriel. Soon after becoming part of U.S. territory, LA and the California area was flooded with settlers due to the Gold Rush. By 1950, Los Angeles' population hit 1,970,358, surpassing Detroit as fourth in the nation, first attracting some "folks" from the Midwest and East Coast with warm winters, and then

becoming a gateway to a remarkable diversity of immigration from throughout the Pacific Rim and Latin America.

Today, many parts of the city have changed compared to 20 years ago. The economy is no longer based on manufacturing, aerospace activity has moved and so has a large portion of the entertainment industry in order to avoid high taxes. In addition, there has been a huge inflow of immigrants from the Pacific Rim and Latin America in search for employment opportunities. This has led to an increasing gap between the rich and the poor, making Los Angeles one of the most socioeconomically divided city in the United States. Despite these issues, LA still is a vibrant city with many attractions that keep on alluring people from all over the world and remains one of the most substantial economic engines within the United States.

City of Los Angeles Overview

- [Official Website of the City of Los Angeles](#)
- [Mayor of the City of Los Angeles](#)
- Population: 3,857,799
- Land Area: 502.7 square miles (1,302 km²)
- Los Angeles is divided into over 80 districts and neighborhoods
- 9 % sales tax in the city of Los Angeles.
- [Los Angeles Parks and Recreation Department](#)
- [Los Angeles Public Library](#)
- [Weather Today in Los Angeles](#)
- [Recycling in Los Angeles](#)

History of Los Angeles

- [Historical Timeline of Los Angeles](#)
- [UCLA - A Short History of Los Angeles](#)
- [Los Angeles City Historical Society](#)

Recommended Reading (available in print and on www.amazon.com):

- *Frommer's Los Angeles* (Frommer's Complete Guides) by Tara di Lis
- *Lonely Planet Los Angeles San Diego & Southern California* by Benson, Bender and Skolnick
- *The Kid's Guide to Los Angeles County* (Kid's Guides Series) by Eileen Ogintz

What to See, Sightseeing Tours, Value Packages and Passes, Tourist Information

- [Los Angeles Visitors Center](#)
- [Information on attractions](#)
- [Save money on attractions](#)
- [Los Angeles for free](#)
- [Los Angeles with kids](#)

Where to Find Arts & Entertainment

- [Los Angeles Times](#)
- [LA Weekly](#)
- [Theatre tickets and schedules](#)
- [Museums/ Art Galleries](#)
- [Cinema listings and schedules](#)

Where to Eat

- [Yelp](#)
- [Los Angeles Restaurants Dining Guide](#)
- [Epicurious](#)

- [Zagat](#)
- [Food Blog Links](#)
- [Make online restaurant reservations](#)

[LA Restaurant Week](#) DineLA's Restaurant Week is a 14-day dining event showcasing Los Angeles as a premier dining destination, highlighting the diversity of culinary experiences LA has to offer. Locals and visitors have the opportunity to enjoy a selection of specially priced prix fixe lunch and dinner menus from some of LA's best restaurants.

EMERGENCY

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY DIAL 911 FOR FIRE, POLICE & AMBULANCE

Emergency Personnel will ask for the following information so keep this page close to your phone:

NAME _____
ADDRESS _____
PHONE _____

If you accidentally call 911, please do not hang up. The police will automatically be dispatched to your home to make sure there are no problems. Explain to the Operator the call was an accident.

[POISON CONTROL 1-800-222-1222](tel:1-800-222-1222)

[ANIMAL POISON CONTROL 1-888-426-4435](tel:1-888-426-4435)

Other Important Numbers:

PRIMARY CARE PHYSICIAN _____
WORK PHONE NUMBER _____

DIAL 311 to reach any City of Los Angeles agency, or to request a City Service (such as replacing a broken street-lamp or removing an abandoned vehicle).

Hospital & Clinics

- [Cedars-Sinai Medical Center](#)
- [Huntington Memorial Hospital](#)
- [Keck Hospital of USC](#)
- [Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center](#)
- [University of California Irvine Medical Center](#)

Other Resources

- [Primary Care Physicians List](#)
- [US News Best Hospitals for LA](#)
- [Yellow Pages directory of medical clinics](#)

Veterinary Clinics Los Angeles

- [VCA Animal Hospitals](#)
- [Animal Emergency Clinics](#)
- [spcaLA](#)

Pharmacies

There are several major pharmacy chains in Los Angeles, found on nearly every block on commercial streets. Click on “Store Locator” and enter your zip (postal) code to find the pharmacy near you. Several pharmacies are open 24 hours. Check for hours of operation. Also the main grocery stores like Ralphs, Vons, Albertsons, Pavilions, Target, and Wal-Mart have full service pharmacies.

- [Walgreens](#)
- [CVS](#)
- [Rite Aid](#)
- [List of pharmacies in Los Angeles area](#)

US Leasing/Housing Guide

A lease is an agreement that outlines the obligations of the owner and the tenants of a house or apartment. It is a legally binding document, so it is important for you to know the exact terms of the lease agreement before you sign it. Please do not sign a lease without reviewing it with your IOR DS Consultant.

Renter's Rights

Tenants who lease or rent property are protected against discrimination by [The Fair Housing Act](#). If you think your rights have been violated, you may write a letter or telephone the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) office nearest you. You have one year after the alleged violation to file a complaint with HUD, but you should file as soon as possible.

While you can generally expect the same service from landlords, it's important to know your state's laws. Each state and most major cities have their own tenant rights, laws and protections. Here are [Los Angeles'](#).

You can also visit the [HUD website here for a full guide to renters' rights by states](#).

If your rental property ever suffers any defects that make your place uninhabitable, your landlord has a duty to fix it. While some apartments let you make online requests for repairs, as well as provide a phone number for "emergencies," always make sure you document your request in writing. The landlord will then have a certain amount of time to make those repairs.

Privacy

You have the right to privacy. While the landlord owns the property, they can't access it anytime they want. All states have laws stating renters have a right to privacy while renting. Pretty much the only time the landlord can come into your rental without permission or notice is when they're responding to an emergency that threatens injury or property damage. Any other time the landlord wants to enter your apartment, they need to have your permission and in most cases give you 24-hours' notice before entering.

What to expect from the landlord:

In most states, you are legally entitled to:

- Safe structural elements including floors, walls, roofs and secure doors and windows.
- Privacy as described above.
- All electrical, plumbing, heating and air conditioning systems function.
- Working hot and cold water.
- Exterminating infestations of rodents and other insects.
- Access to trash receptacles.
- Landlords cannot discriminate based on race, gender, sexual orientation, or disabilities.
- Apartment buildings sometimes come with laundry and dryer machines in the basement.

- Water, electricity and gas bills are up to you to pay. **Your IOR DS consultant will assist you with this process.**

Utilities and Appliances

Your IOR DS Consultant will assist you or provide information on connecting your utilities. It is possible some will be included in your rent, but typically most are not.

Recycling

Los Angeles provides [recycling services](#) for accepted products to residents.

The Lease Process

Review your housing budget with your IOR DS Consultant

Your IOR DS Consultant can help you understand what kind of property you can afford. You also need to take into account that you may be responsible for some of the utility costs of your rental.

Know what you want

What are you looking for in a property? Do you want a studio or a single bedroom? Maybe you want to rent a single family home? Do you need the property to come with appliances, including washer and dryer? Do want it to be close to school or your work? Do you want it to be within walking distance of retail, like groceries or coffee shops? Are you looking for a child friendly area?

Keep in mind that outside of the city center in major cities, there is not much public transportation and most locals drive everywhere.

Identify potential apartments

IOR offers home finding services to aid you with this process. Your consultant may work with a local broker who will help to organize appointments and visit properties. They will also assist in the rental application and the leasing process.

Common Abbreviations and Acronyms used in rental housing listings

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
24-hr mtn	24-hour emergency maintenance
AC or A/C	Air conditioning
Appls	Appliances
Apt	Apartment
BA	Bathroom
BR	Bedroom
Bsmt	Basement

<u>Acronym</u>	<u>Meaning</u>
LA	Living area
LR	Living room
MBR	Master bedroom
MBTH	Master bathroom
Neg	Negotiable
Ofc	Office
OSP	Off-street parking

CAC	Central air conditioning
DA	Dining area
Det	Detached
Dk	Deck
DR	Dining room
Dw (D/w)	Dishwasher
Eff	Efficiency
EiK	Eat-in kitchen
Fin bsmt	Finished basement
FDR	Formal dining room
FHA	Fair Housing Act
FMR	Fair market rent
FP	Floorplan
Gar	Garage
H/A	Handicapped accessible
H/W	Hardwood floors
Hi ceil	High ceilings
HVAC	Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning

Pkg	Parking
PM	Property manager (management)
Pvt	Private
Pwdr rm	Powder room (1/2 bath)
RE	Real estate
Renov	Renovated
Rf	Roof
Rm	Room
SF	Single-family
SFA	Single-family attached
SFD	Single-family detached
Sp, Pl (S/p)	Swimming pool
Sq. ft	Square feet
Th (T/H)	Townhouse
Vw (vu)	View
W/A	Wheelchair accessible
W/W	Wall-to-wall carpeting

Visit

Make this process as efficient as possible by visiting as many potential properties as you can in one or two days. Try to go sometime during the week if possible. Your IOR DS consultant will work with you to set an appropriate schedule and to ensure that the properties you visit meet your needs as closely as possible.

What to do once you're there

As you look at the rental unit, be sure to ask a lot of questions. While you should keep small concerns to yourself about the unit while looking at it, feel free to ask the landlord or apartment manager any questions you might have that will help in your decision. Here are some possible questions you may consider asking:

- What's the monthly rent?
- Are any utilities included with the rent?
- How much is the security deposit?
- When is rent due? Do you have auto-pay?
- What's the make-up of the other tenants? Are they mainly younger students? Married couples with families? Older folks?
- What's the parking situation like? Do you pay for a parking spot?
- Do you take care of small maintenance issues or am I responsible for some of the repairs in the property?
- Am I able to re-paint the walls or make other modifications?

Again, be friendly and polite when you ask these questions.

The Application

The next step in the leasing process for an apartment is to submit a rental application for the location you want. The manager or landlord will be able to give you the application as well as anything else that they may need to have filled out. Your IOR DS Consultant will assist with this process. For a single family home there will likely be a rental application.

You will need your passport, Social Security number, Visa, and proof of employment. Some landlords may charge you an application fee which could be between \$20 to \$400 dollars, depending on the landlord. This could be a combination of an application fee and move-in fee.

Once you've done this, it can take up to a few days to hear back from the property manager. Once your application has been approved the lease approval process will begin with IOR and likely your employer.

Signing the lease

DO NOT SIGN THE LEASE until your IOR DS consultant has reviewed it in full and given their approval.

The lease is a binding contract, so it is very important to pay attention as a leasing agent goes over it with you. It is perfectly normal for you to take your time and read all the fine print for yourself. If you are working with an IOR DS consultant, make sure to talk with them and receive approval before signing. You will also be given a copy of the lease to take with you and keep for your records, but it is very important to know everything included in your lease from the start.

Some things to look for in a lease:

- Term of the lease and any important dates such as when the rent is due.
- Extra fees for parking spaces or storage, garbage collection and pets.

- Information regarding utility providers and whether you or the landlord is responsible for those bills.
- Notification requirements in case of renewal.
- Requirements/responsibilities of the tenants to do routine repairs such as lawn maintenance, cleaning or notification of repairs.
- Clauses that allow the landlord to change the terms of the lease after it is signed.
- Restrictions that would prevent you from living normally or comfortably in the home.

Sometimes landlords will ask for a security deposit before you sign the lease. This is normal, but you shouldn't pay in cash. Make sure all payments are made out as a check or money order just in case.

What to expect from the lease

Most leases in the United States include the following or a variation thereof:

- Your employer requires that all leases include a Break Clause in case you are transferred for work or personal needs.
- Contracts will often be for periods of a year or more.
- Minimum stay. Typically three fourths of your lease contract time. If you choose to move out before this date, you will lose your security deposit. If you move out afterwards, you are still required to give a specified number of days notice.
- Security Deposit. Landlords will expect you to leave them with a deposit (usually about one to two month's rent) that they will hold for the duration of your lease. You will receive your security deposit back at the end of the lease provided you don't break any specific clauses in your lease, such as moving out without proper notice, not paying rent, causing damages to the property, etc.
- Landlords should not be given unchecked access to your apartment. If there isn't anything in your lease about landlord's rights to enter the leased premises, suggest the following clause:

Entry by the Landlord. Landlord or his agent will not enter Tenant's home except to deal with an emergency; to make necessary or agreed repairs; to supply necessary or agreed services; or to show the unit to potential purchasers, tenants, or repair persons. Unless there is an emergency, Landlord will give Tenant at least 24 hours' written notice of the date, time and purpose of the intended entry and will schedule entries during normal business hours, Monday–Friday.

Most landlords will be hard-pressed to say no to such a reasonable clause. If the landlord refuses, it's a sure sign that he won't be reasonable in other respects, too. Continue on in your housing search.

Moving In

On your selected move-in date, after the lease has been signed, and deposits have been paid...you should be given your keys and more than likely a move-in form to fill out. Your IOR DS consultant will assist you with an initial walk through of your apartment. Look for dings in the walls, cracked windows or other irregularities and report them on this form. This will indicate that these things were there before you moved in and you will not be held responsible for them at the end of the lease term.

Get Renter's Insurance

Renter's insurance covers any loss to your personal property due to robbery or accidents. It also covers any damage you might cause to other tenant's property. For example, let's say your washing machine springs a leak and water seeps through the floor and ruins your neighbor's antique dresser. Renter's insurance would cover that.

Renter's insurance will cost approximately about \$15-125 a month, less if you tack it onto another policy (like auto) you have with an insurance company. A few popular options are [Allstate](#) and [StateFarm](#).

DRIVER'S LICENSE

Obtaining a Driver's License

If you are a visitor in California over 18 and have a valid driver license from your home state or country, you may drive in this state without getting a California driver license as long as your home state license remains valid.

If you become a California resident, you must get a California driver license within 10 days. Residency is established by voting in a California election, paying resident tuition, filing for a homeowner's property tax exemption, or any other privilege or benefit not ordinarily extended to nonresidents.

To apply for an original driver license if you are over 18, you will need to do the following:

- Make an appointment before visiting a DMV office (walk-ins are only accepted at our [Driver License Processing Centers](#)).
- Complete application form DL 44 (An original DL 44 form must be submitted. Copies will not be accepted.)
- Give a thumb print
- Have your picture taken
- Provide your social security number. It will be verified with the Social Security Administration while you are in the office.
- Verify your [birth date and legal presence](#)
- [Provide your true full name](#)
- [Pay the application fee](#)
- Pass a vision exam
- Pass a traffic laws and sign test. [Sample Test](#))

Note: To allow you sufficient time for testing DMV will not be administering written or audio exams after 4:30 p.m.

- Steps for applying for a California driver's license [here](#)
- For general information and to find an office near you, see general California [DMV website](#)

For general information and instructions on how to obtain an official state ID card or driver's license, [visit the website of the California DMV](#).

Your Destination Services Consultant will also assist you with the proper procedure.

SCHOOLS IN YOUR AREA

In a city as sprawling as Los Angeles, education options are in no short supply. Second largest in the nation, the Los Angeles Unified Public School District (LAUSD) enrolls more than 640,000 students in kindergarten through 12th grade, at over 900 schools, and 187 public charter schools. The boundaries spread over 720 square miles and include the mega-city of Los Angeles as well as all or parts of 31 smaller municipalities plus several unincorporated sections of Southern California.

Parents will need to carefully evaluate their priorities, and then choose an institution that can best satisfy their preferences. The following are useful links on schools in Los Angeles. For more information contact your local IOR DS Consultant.

Los Angeles and Surrounding Area - Public Schools Districts

Most of the districts listed below offer Magnet School choice options, such as IB programs, language immersion, STEM, Arts, and Technology focus.

- [Los Angeles Unified School District](#)
- [Santa Monica-Malibu Public School District](#)
- [Orange County Public Schools](#)
- [Conejo Valley Unified School District](#)
- [Ventura County Unified School District](#)
- [Las Virgenes Unified School District](#)
- [School Report Card](#)

Private Schools in the LA area

There are some very good public schools in LA County. But if, for whatever reason, you are looking into sending your child to a private or parochial school, the city has some top ranking education choices -- from experimental arts schools to single-sex prep schools.

- [Catholic Schools](#) - More than 250 Catholic schools serve three counties in the Greater Los Angeles Region; Los Angeles County, Santa Barbara County and Ventura County.
- [Catholic Schools of the Diocese of Orange County](#)
- [Southern California Montessori School](#) – pre K to age 7
- [International School of Los Angeles](#) (Lycée International de Los Angeles)
- List of [private schools](#) in Los Angeles County
- List of [private schools](#) in Orange County
- List of [private schools](#) in Ventura County

General Information on LA Area Schools

- [California Public and Private Schools](#)
- [LA Magazine Best High Schools](#)
- [US News and World Report Best High Schools](#)

Informative Resources:

[Top-Rated Los Angeles Public Schools](#)

The Great Schools website (linked above) also provides excellent information about private schools in the area, from early childhood to grade 12. They include schools with religious affiliations, international schools, and schools with special programs.

Colleges and Universities

- [California State University Los Angeles](#)
- [Los Angeles City College](#)
- [Occidental College](#)
- [The Art Institute of California- Los Angeles](#)
- [University of California Los Angeles](#)
- [University of Southern California](#)
- [Loyola Marymount University](#)
- [Claremont Colleges](#) - 5 consortium colleges



[University of Southern California](#)

Checking and Savings Accounts

To open a checking or savings account you will need the following information:

- Two forms of picture identification including but not limited to your passport, driver's license, or work ID.
- Social security number.
- Local mailing address. You may use your office address as your mailing address, but be prepared to call your bank branch as soon as you have your permanent address.
- Letter of Employment
- Cash for the initial deposit can range from \$25-\$150 dollars.

Major US Banks

Below is a list of links to some of the larger U.S. banks. In some cases you may find that the local bank is a better option for you than some of the larger banks. Your IOR DS Consultant can help you in selecting a bank by sharing the various options available locally.

- [Bank of America](#)
- [JP Morgan Chase](#)
- [Citibank](#)
- [HSBC](#)
- [TD Bank](#)
- [US Bank](#)
- [Wells Fargo](#)
- [List of local banks in Los Angeles](#)

Driving in Los Angeles

Residents of Los Angeles County spend an estimated 4 days of each year stuck in traffic. However, since there is no real effective alternative for getting around for the vast majority of trips outside the downtown core, traffic is an inescapable part of the Los Angeles lifestyle. When traveling on a Los Angeles freeway it is important to remember slower traffic keeps the right. Many LA drivers do well over 20 mph of the posted speed limit and cutting them off or remaining in the fast lane at a slow pace will cause frustration with other drivers.

Despite the infamy of Los Angeles' traffic situation, people from other major cities may not be surprised. The real issues are the sheer length of the rush hour period and the volume of traffic therein. The assertions of driving difficulty and danger will most likely seem unfounded to residents of large cities, especially comparatively frantic northeastern locations such as New York, Philadelphia, Boston and Washington, who often see Los Angeles traffic as relatively easy-going. Indeed, the New Jersey Turnpike, the Beltway and the Schuylkill Expressway offer easily comparable volume and far less forgiving conditions.

[Los Angeles Interactive Traffic Map](#)

Public Transportation

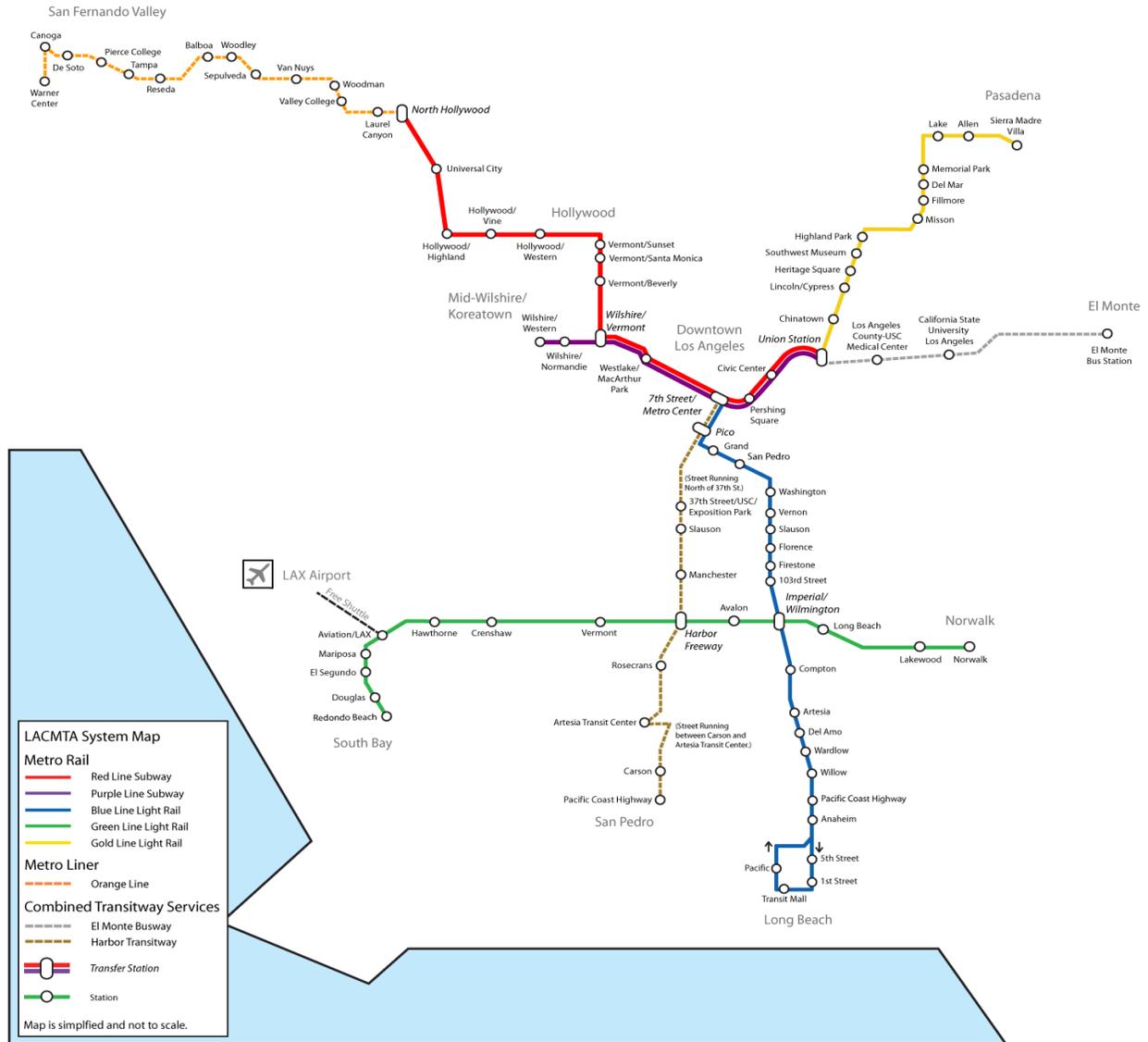
Although the Los Angeles area has numerous bus routes, several transit agencies, a fairly new subway and elevated network to boot, this is still not adequate enough considering the region's population and size. For instance, a few bus routes may have service every 15 or 20 minutes, while others (especially away from the main tourist areas) may have service every 30 to 90 minutes. Also keep in mind there is not a bus line to reach every nook and cranny, and as such, it is not uncommon to find yourself walking up to a mile or so to your destination after you've gotten off the bus at the closest stop.

Los Angeles also has a medium-sized, and expanding, subway/light rail system to help speed up journeys around the city. The [Metro Rail](#) station may suffice to take you to some of the tourist areas such as Hollywood, Universal Studios, Chinatown and Long Beach. However, those who plan to go to outlying areas would have to take multiple buses.

The other rail system is [Metrolink](#). Metrolink is a commuter rail system that reaches as far as Ventura, Lancaster, San Bernardino, and Oceanside (northern San Diego County) but runs limited night and weekend service. Metrolink does not accept Metro passes and requires the purchase of separate tickets.

Another option to the railways is the Metro Rapid buses. They come more frequently and make fewer stops than local buses and should be used when possible. Remember that many cities in the metro area (including Santa Monica, Culver City, Long Beach, Santa Clarita, and Ontario to name a few) operate their own bus agencies, independent of the Metro, thus charging different fares.

- [Metro Rapid Bus and Rail](#) – Major operator of bus and rail service in Los Angeles.
- [MetroLink](#) – A commuter rail system that links Los Angeles to the surrounding areas.



LA Metro Map courtesy of [Wikimedia Commons](#). Find the full resolution map [here](#)

Taxis

Taxis can be expensive in LA. You cannot flag them down on the street, but can call one of the taxi companies to send a cab to pick you up. You may have to wait awhile for a taxi to get to you depending on where you are. Remember, this city generally experiences a lot of traffic and is very spread out. Thus the overwhelming majority of citizens have their own vehicles; hence, cabs are expensive and less involved in the movement of people than in cities like New York, Chicago or Washington, DC.

Taxi companies:

- [Yellowcab](#)
- [Taxicab LA](#)

Taxi Alternatives/Car Rentals

There are number of car rental companies operating in Los Angeles. Many of these companies have locations close by the airport. Some of the following are suggestions depending on your budget.

- [Dollar Rent A Car](#) or [Budget Rent A Car](#)
- [Hertz](#) and [Avis](#) are generally more expensive.
- [Zipcar Rental](#)
- [LA Times Car Rental Tips and Tricks](#)

Bicycle

Cycling in Los Angeles accounts for less than one percent of all work commutes. This small number despite the mild weather is mainly due to the roads. There are not enough cycle lanes and the city is way too big. Recently, the city unveiled a new 2.2-mile bike lane stretching along 7th Street from Catalina Avenue in Korea town to Figueroa Street downtown. Similarly you can bike along the Hollywood Walk of Fame or one of Los Angeles's famous beaches. In order to get to these places, both the Metro Bus and Metro Rail services are bicycle accessible. For Los Angeles bike maps, click [here](#).

Airports

The Los Angeles metro area is served by five major commercial airports and more than a dozen private airports. Three of the major airports are in LA County proper while the other two are nearby. **Los Angeles International Airport** is one of the major ports of entry for international flights to the United States as well as a major destination for domestic flights so it can be quite busy, especially around holidays. Most of the major airlines as well as some smaller regional airlines fly into LAX. All of the major rental car agencies have a location near the airport with hundreds of cars available for rent. **Bob Hope Airport** has Alaska, Delta Airlines, JetBlue, US Airways, Southwest, and United Airlines as their carriers and the airport is located north-east of Downtown. Alaska Airlines, Delta, US Airways, and JetBlue Airways fly into **Long Beach Airport** airport located in southern Los Angeles County. **Ontario International Airport** is a 40 minute drive east of Downtown Los Angeles and **John Wayne Airport** is Located 40 mi (64 km) and a 45 min drive south-east of Downtown Los Angeles.

- [Los Angeles International Airport](#)
- [Bob Hope Airport](#)
- [Long Beach Airport](#)
- [John Wayne Airport](#)
- [Ontario International Airport](#)

Map Websites

- www.expedia.com
- www.mapquest.com
- www.mapblast.com

Transportation “App” Options

Several web based phone applications to secure a driver are available throughout the area. The driver knows your approximate location based on your phone GPS. Payment is automatic through the app and fares may be cheaper than a taxi.

- [Uber](#)
- [Lyft](#)

AAA Travel Protection

AAA is a membership organization that offers benefits such as roadside service and towing, discounts on car products and services, maps, reference materials, etc.

Call 1-800-352-5382 for additional information and cost. www.aaa.com

PET RESOURCES

[The Department of Animal Care and Control](#) requires under California law that all dogs over the age of four months be vaccinated against rabies and licensed through the local animal care and control agency. The County of Los Angeles (County) requires the same AND that all dogs be spayed/neutered and microchipped. Cats are also required to be vaccinated for rabies at four months of age and licensed.

Licensing is an important means of identification and can help to return lost pets to their owners quickly. Additionally, license revenues are a vital means of support to help the Department promote and protect human and animal safety. Failure to license your pet may result in fines or penalties.

The DACC also offers specialized adoption programs and frequent off-site adoption events that help the Department successfully place animals into forever homes. [The Society of the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals](#) is also very active in the LA area for adoptions.

Dog Parks

There are 10 [off-leash dog parks](#) in Los Angeles. However, there are some [rules and guidelines](#).

Veterinary Clinics Los Angeles

- [VCA Animal Hospitals](#)
- [Animal Emergency Clinics](#)

[ANIMAL POISON CONTROL](#) 1-888-426-4435

TV, Cable, Telephone, and Internet

The main service providers for TV cable, landline telephone and internet all offer combination packages. They are in stiff competition with each other, so special offers change monthly, sometimes even weekly.

- [AT&T](#)
- [Comcast](#)
- [DirectTV](#)
- [Dish](#)

Mobile Phones

There are four major wireless carriers in the area.

- [AT&T Wireless](#)
- [Verizon Wireless](#)
- [Sprint](#)
- [T-Mobile](#)

Computers, Electronics, Cameras

- [Fry's Home Electronics](#)
- [Best Buy](#) is a national chain: Apart from sales, their [Geek Squad](#) repairs PC computers.
- [Apple Stores](#)

Housewares and Furniture

- [Bed Bath & Beyond](#)
- [Ikea](#)
- [Pottery Barn](#)
- [Williams-Sonoma](#)
- [Rooms to Go](#)
- [The Container Store](#)

Food Shopping

The people in Los Angeles go to a wide range of places to shop for groceries: open air farmers markets, large gourmet markets, small specialty shops and conventional supermarkets. The main conventional supermarkets are **Ralph's, Von's, Albertson's, Pavilion's, Gelson's, Bristol Farm and Trader's Joes**. They are located all over town and the surrounding areas.

[The Grand Central Market](#) offers fresh fruits, vegetables, meats, poultry and fresh fish from California and around the world. The Grand Central Market has been a hub of bustling activity since 1917 and is a great place to experience the international diversity of Los Angeles.

[Whole Foods Market](#) specializes in organic products and has several locations.

[Farmers Markets](#): For those looking to get their goods directly from the producer, there are a growing number of farmers markets popping up across LA. From fresh produce to prepared foods, here you can find popular places doing the mobile market concept right.

List of Ethnic/ International Markets in Los Angeles:

- [Yellowpages](#)
- [Food Lover's Guide to Los Angeles](#)



Sightseeing

It would take several lifetimes to experience all the activities that the city of Los Angeles has to offer. There are world famous theme parks like Universal Studios Hollywood, Six Flags Magic Mountain and Disneyland, while there are also studios like Universal, Warner Brothers, Paramount Pictures and Sony Pictures that offer the ultimate movie and TV fan experience. Attractions like the USS Iowa and the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library offer something for the entire family. Shop at retail meccas like The Grove and the Beverly Center, or browse eclectic shopping neighborhoods and bargain outlets. Recreational activities include spectacular beaches, hundreds of miles of hiking and biking trails, and relaxing at LA's top spas.

The sights of Hollywood are great places to check out in Los Angeles. There are Hollywood landmarks located throughout the city, including Grauman's Chinese Theater, the Hollywood Sign overlooking the area, and the Hollywood Walk of Fame where more than 2,400 five-pointed terrazzo and brass stars are embedded in the over 15 blocks. If you have a celeb obsession, walking in the glamorous neighborhoods of Beverly Hills, West Hollywood, and Malibu may increase your chances of running into one of them. Even if you don't, the area is a great area to see the glamorous celebrity mansions and fancy restaurants.



For those more into the history of LA will also have a great time going through Olvera Street in Downtown. Olvera Street is the site of the original *pueblo* (village) the city derived its name from (*Nuestra Señora la Reina de Los Ángeles* - Our Lady the Queen of the Angels) and is the historic central of LA. The oldest building in the city is also located here and is open to visitors, as are a number of Mexican restaurants and shops. Across the street is another historic site: Union Station, the main railway hub for the city.

- [Beverly Hills](#)
- [Grauman's Chinese Theatre](#)
- [Hollywood Sign](#)
- [Hollywood Walk of Fame](#)
- [Malibu](#)
- [Olvera Street](#)
- [West Hollywood](#)



Photo of Chinese Theatre

Arts and Culture

One of the best ways to experience Los Angeles is by visiting its incredible cultural attractions. LA has more museums and theaters than any U.S. city, and a thriving music and gallery scene. The LA Philharmonic performance at Walt Disney Concert Hall is a must-see, as well as an outdoor concert at the Hollywood Bowl and shows at other famous music venues. LA's world class museums include the stunning Getty Center in Brentwood and the Los Angeles County Museum of Art on Museum Row. Monthly art walks take place throughout the city, including popular events in Downtown LA and Venice Beach. And of course, when it comes to film and television, LA is the entertainment capital of the world.

One venue you cannot miss is the Walt Disney Concert Hall at the Music Center. It is considered to be an architectural masterpiece by world-renowned architect Frank Gehry, and is a modern marvel/ Los Angeles icon. It is a dynamic, 293,000-square-foot concert hall that features a wavy, steel exterior designed to look like a ship with its sails at full mast. The arena stage, allows for seating on all four sides of the stage. It was designed to be one of the most acoustically sophisticated concert halls in the world, providing both visual and aural intimacy for an unparalleled musical experience. Currently, it is home of the LA Phil and the Los Angeles Master Chorale, a perfect location to experience the acoustic and vocal range of these world-famous performing companies.

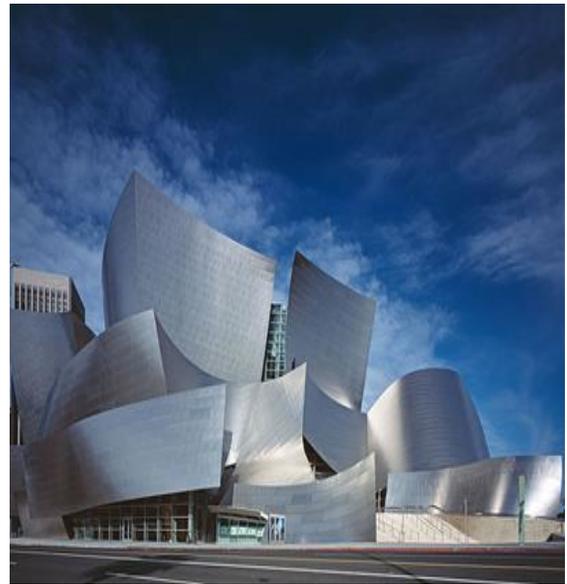


Photo of Walt Disney Concert Hall

There are also other venues that host excellent performing arts in Los Angeles. Theater is a huge deal in LA and has the highest number of theaters in the US and more than 1,500 productions per year. At the top of the theater companies lay the Center Theater Group, producing world-class dramas and musicals at the Mark Taper Forum and the Ahmanson Theatre located at the Music Center. Iris by Cirque de Soleil is also a fun option. IRIS is a lyrical, fanciful, kinetic foray through the world of cinema bringing together dance, acrobatics, live video and filmed sequences and takes spectators on a fantastic voyage through the history of cinema and its genres. IRIS is performed exclusively at the world-renowned Kodak Theatre at Hollywood & Highland Center.

World class cultural attractions are also located throughout Los Angeles. LA has more museums than any other city in America. Downtown LA's Exposition Park includes the California Science Center, the Natural History Museum and the California African American Museum. Museum Row features the LA County Museum of Art, the La Brea Tar Pits and the Petersen Automotive Museum. The collections of the J. Paul Getty Museum can be viewed at the Getty Center in Brentwood and the Getty Villa in Malibu. Pasadena is home to the Norton Simon Museum and the Pacific Asia Museum, while history buffs can tour the

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum in Simi Valley. LA's thriving gallery scene can be experienced in Chinatown, Bergamot Station and the NoHo Arts District, as well as monthly artwalks.

Cultural Attractions

- [California African American Museum](#)
- [California Science Center](#)
- [Center Theater Group](#)
- [Getty Center](#)
- [Iris by Cirque de Soleil](#)
- [La Brea Tar Pits](#)
- [LA Philharmonic](#)
- [Los Angeles Master Chorale](#)
- [Los Angeles County Museum of Art on Museum Row](#)
- [Monthly art walks](#)
- [Natural History Museum](#)
- [Norton Simon Museum](#)
- [Petersen Automotive Museum](#)
- [Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum](#)

Parks/ Studios

The glam and attraction of LA also comes from the top-notch amusement parks and shows in the area. Universal City is home to the Universal Studios Hollywood theme park, while nearby Burbank is home to the Warner Brothers Studios and NBC Studios, among others. On the West Side in Culver City, you will find the historic Culver Studios and Sony Pictures. In Fairfax, CBS Television City, and the headquarters of 20th Century Fox in Century City. Walt Disney Land is located 30 minutes from the city in Anaheim and Six Flags Magic Mountain is up north 40 minutes in Valencia. With so many diverse amusement parks, it is most likely that there is a park just fit for you and your family's needs. Browse away and find the best one just for you!



- [Universal Studios Hollywood theme park](#)
- [Walt Disney Land](#)
- [Six Flags Magic Mountain](#)
- [Warner Brothers Studios](#)
- [Culver Studios](#)
- [Sony Pictures](#)

Festivals and Holidays

Los Angeles is famous for their music festivals. They are divided by genres and held mostly over the spring and summer. The following are some of the festivals; L.A. Live is three days and nights of the most popular music and entertainment today held in June. The Ragga Muffins Festival takes place every February at the Long Beach Convention Center. It features two full days of entertainment from top reggae acts from around the world, as well as related Rasta vendors and food. The Sunset Strip Music Festival is a 3-day multi-venue event that takes place in August at clubs and Saturday on outdoor stages on the Sunset Strip through West Hollywood. The Central Avenue Jazz Festival takes place annually in July in South Los Angeles. The free, family-friendly event features, jazz, blues and Latin jazz from high school bands to internationally renowned musicians.

There are other festivals surrounding arts such as the Los Angeles Film Festival. It is the best of American and international independent cinema and includes panels, seminars, music video showcases, high school programs, family-friendly activities, and numerous special events, including everything from gala premieres to free outdoors screenings. The Los Angeles International Short Film Festival held in September is also interesting as it is the largest short film festival in the world. The festival screens over 400 short films with informational panel discussions, workshops, and a development market.

As a multiethnic area there is no absence of international festivals. There are huge Chinese New Year celebrations accompanied by the Golden Dragon Parade. The Latino Community also has various events such as the largest celebration of Cinco de Mayo within the United States. Olvera Street and Fiesta Broadway are some examples of where this ethnic street festival takes place. The Japanese Community also sponsors festivals such as Japanese New Years and Children's Day.



In addition, all nationwide holidays are celebrated extravagantly with LA flare such as 4th of July at various points throughout the city, the Hollywood Christmas Parade during the Holiday seasons, New Year's Rose parade followed by the countdown in downtown. Due to an abundance of events and festivals going on in the area, it is impossible to list all. Go to the events sites below and look for ones that best fits your taste!

- [Chinese Community](#)
- [Cinco De Mayo LA](#)
- [LA Film Festival](#)
- [Los Angeles International Short Film Festival](#)
- [Los Angeles Music Festivals List](#)

- [L.A Live](#)
- [List of events](#)

Spectator Sports

LA has great opportunities for seeing live pro sports. For baseball lovers there is the major league baseball team, **LA Dodgers** playing at the Dodger Stadium. Who wouldn't want to grab a Dodger Dog and enjoy watching a game of baseball in this venerable stadium which opened in 1962 and home of 6 time world champions? Also, you can get all-you-can-eat hot dogs, sodas, and nachos at the Right Field Pavilion.

Those who have passion for basketball there is the NBA team, **LA Lakers** playing at the Staples Center. Ticket prices are very high (the most expensive ticket in the NBA) but you will rarely be disappointed with the team and the beautiful Staples Center. LA has a second NBA team, **LA Clippers**. The Los Angeles Clippers are a rising NBA team and tickets are slightly cheaper than Lakers tickets. The basketball season runs from late October to June. For those looking for more basketball to follow, LA also has a women's team, the **LA Sparks**. The Sparks are a good, inexpensive family outing and a chance to be shown that women are just as capable of dazzling the crowd with their athletic prowess as men!!

LA also boasts an amazing hockey team, **the LA Kings**. They are one of the NHL's brightest young teams. The game guarantees a fun hockey experience and a great, affordable way to experience the Staples Center. The city also has two soccer teams—**Chivas USA** and the **LA Galaxy** of Major League Soccer play at the Home Depot Center in Carson.



Participant Sports

Los Angeles surprisingly offers various outlets to exercise and be involved in the community. There are number of parks both large and small throughout the city. One great park in the area for hikes, picnics or hanging around with friends is **Griffith Park**. It is the second largest park within a city in the whole country (and in LA, where you'd least expect it!) and the hiking trails lead up to Mulholland Drive, and provide great views of the city. Griffith park has several options for kids, including the L.A. Zoo, "Travel Town" which is a free exhibition of old trains and model trains with trains rides for children, the Autry western museum, pony rides, a golf course, driving range, horseback riding, a Christmas light drive in December (expect traffic), and The (Space) Observatory.

In addition, LA's 75 miles of coastline include world famous beaches from Malibu to Santa Monica, the South Bay and San Pedro where people can engage in activities like swimming, skateboarding and surfing. Skate boarding is especially a big sport in Los Angeles with many impressive [skate parks](#) featuring ramps, bowls and rails. Some to note are Belvedere Skatepark, Culver City Skatepark and the cove.



Hiking

There are also many [hiking trails](#) in the area. Most of the hikes in the list below are easy to moderate, so it's not necessary to be an experienced hiker to enjoy them. However, it's always wise to keep a few things in mind when you're planning an excursion. Wear sturdy hiking shoes, carry plenty of drinking water, use sunscreen and wear sunglasses. Take along a camera, make sure you stay on the trails and have fun.



Golf

Finally, Los Angeles is also home to beautiful [public golf courses](#). For example Trump National Golf Club Los Angeles is the pinnacle of the luxury public golf experience. Located on the luxurious Palos Verdes Peninsula, Trump National serves as a perfect getaway for the busy executive. The grand 45,000 square foot clubhouse offers stately locker rooms, a stunning pro-shop, three dining options, secluded conference rooms, and a magnificent grand ballroom. It's a great getaway from everyday life and where everyone can spend a special moment.

Shopping and Dining

Shopping is one of the best activities in Los Angeles, whether it's digging through vintage stores or window-shopping for extravagant luxury goods. The Los Angeles shopping experience begins in the sprawling LA Fashion District in Downtown LA, and from there it's choosing from top shopping centers like [The Grove](#), Beverly Center, Hollywood & Highland, The Americana at Brand, Third Street Promenade or Santa Monica Place. Eclectic shopping neighborhoods can be found throughout Los Angeles, while the city's numerous museum gift shops offer a variety of unique cultural gifts. If you've got deep pockets, Rodeo Drive and Robertson Blvd. are must-sees, while bargain hunters will want to check out the outlets in Camarillo, the Citadel, Desert Hills and Ontario Mills.

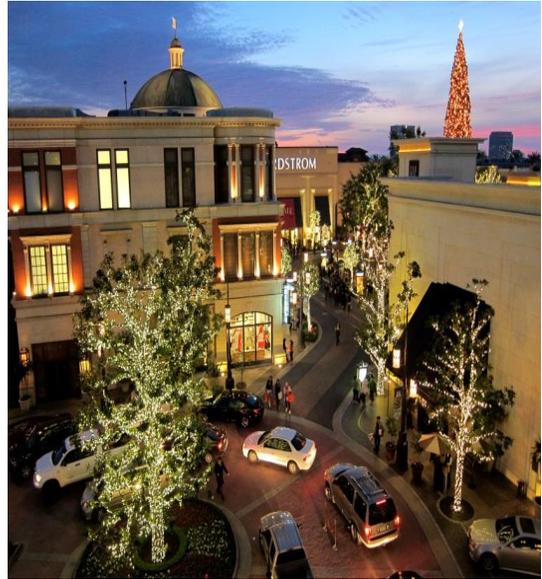


Photo of The Grove

In terms of dining, Los Angeles has one of the most dynamic dining scenes in the country, offering everything from street food to 5-star restaurants. From California cuisine to organic ingredients, food trucks, and dine LA Restaurant Week, LA's culinary influence can be felt across the country. Food aficionados can experience the fine dining of Wolfgang Puck, Thomas Keller and Nobu Matsuhisa, as well as a new generation of culinary stars like Kogi BBQ Truck founder Roy Choi, Top Chef champion Michael Voltaggio, and Ricardo Zarate, named Food & Wine's Best New Chef in America. Global kitchens can be found in culinary neighborhoods across the city, while LA's beach cities offer some of the best oceanfront dining in Southern California.



Photo courtesy of [Wikimedia Commons](#)

Volunteer Opportunities

- [Volunteer Match](#)
- [United Way](#)

Parent & Children Resources

- [Mom's Clubs](#) - social groups offering events and outings with mothers and their young children.

Smart Phone Apps for Travel:

- [Uber](#) : Similar to a taxi service but all web based. Payment also handled online, do not pay or tip driver directly. Uber driver knows your approximate location based on your phone GPS.
- [Lyft](#) : Wherever you're headed, count on Lyft for rides in minutes. The Lyft app matches you with local drivers at the tap of a button. Just request and go.
- [Apple Maps](#) : Map by direction
- [Map Quest](#) : Map by direction
- [Waze](#) : Community based traffic & navigation with alternate route suggestions
- [CityMaps2Go](#) : The #1 travel app lets you discover exciting new places. Beautiful photos and insider tips at the touch of a button. You will receive stories about places you like and can instantly save and find them on your maps and in your lists.

Smart Phone Apps for Communication:

- [WhatsApp](#) : Free local & international Real Time messaging
- [Line](#) : Exchange free instant messages with friends whenever and wherever with one-on-one and group chats. LINE is available on all smartphone devices (iPhone, Android, Windows Phone, Blackberry, Nokia) and even on your PC.
- [Viber](#) : Free text, calling, photo messages and location-sharing with Viber users. No registration, alias or invitations required. Instantly integrates with your own contact list. Best-quality mobile calls using 3G or Wi-Fi.
- [Skype](#) : Stay in touch with your family and friends for free on Skype. Download Skype today to chat and call on desktop and mobile.

Smart Phone Apps for Local Information/Reviews:

- [Angie's List](#) : Referrals for doctor, dentist, child care, maid, mechanic, painter, plumber, etc.
- [Yelp!](#) : Find local businesses, restaurants, bars, clubs, events, etc. with map, lists, and reviews
- [Next Door](#) : Neighbors share community events, items for sale, recommendations for babysitters, doctors and handymen, crime reports, ideas about how to improve their neighborhood and more.
- [Meet Ups](#) : Meetups are neighbors getting together to learn something, do something or share something. Cultural groups advertise gatherings here as well.

Smart Phone Apps for Weather:

- [WTHR13](#) : Local weather and closings; includes radar and forecast
- [Weather Channel](#) : National and international time, temperature & weather
- [Tornado](#) : Set up tornado alerts & siren

LOS ANGELES COUNTY MAP



[Interactive Neighborhood Map of Los Angeles](#) courtesy of LA Times

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS

[Federal Holidays listed through 2020](#)

[California Legal Holidays](#)

The following are legal holidays in California and need to be treated as such by employers:

- New Year's Day January 1*
- Martin Luther King Jr.'s Birthday January 21
- Good Friday March 29
- Memorial Day Last Monday in May
- Independence Day July 4*
- Labor Day First Monday in September
- Veterans' Day November 11*
- Thanksgiving Day Fourth Thursday in November
- Christmas Day December 25*

*If a holiday falls on a Sunday, the day following is observed as the legal holiday.