

# Los Angeles

Few cities reinvent themselves as frequently as Los Angeles. If it's been a while between visits, you will find that much has changed in the City of Angels. New neighbourhoods – such as Downtown LA, with its grand old buildings and hip bars and cafes – are thriving. Meanwhile, the expanding metro system makes the city easier to navigate than ever before: you can now ride it all the way to Santa Monica. Throw in a blossoming food scene that is considered one of the best in the United States, and you have plenty of reasons to revisit LA. Follow in the footsteps of **UTE JUNKER** to discover what makes this city tick.

## EAT

It seems like an odd dining destination, but local foodies have long known that **The Original Farmers Market** is home to some top eateries, including legendary taco joint **Loteria**. The new kid on the block, **Moruno**, ups the ante. Its southern Spanish menu specialises in Moorish flavours cooked over an open flame: the squid-stuffed squid is a must.

Don't be surprised if there is a queue at **Gjelina** at Venice Beach – just join the end before it gets any longer. This all-day diner's menu is always full of temptation, from kale salad with fennel, ricotta and breadcrumbs to the squash blossom pizza. Leave room for a dessert – perhaps the mulberry parfait with lemon curd?

If you're planning a special night out, book a table at seafood specialist **Providence**. Chef Michael Cimarusti is known for creating delicate dishes that are as beautiful as they are flavour-packed, such as lightly poached spot prawns with prawn jelly, roe, prawn crackers and ossetra caviar. The wine list is also superb.



[morunola.com](http://morunola.com)



[gjelina.com](http://gjelina.com)



[providencela.com](http://providencela.com)



Moruno at the Farmers Market



Gjelina at Venice Beach

## DRINK

There's something very Californian about a glass of chilled vino as the sun heads towards the horizon, and there's no better place to enjoy it than **AOC Wine Bar**. Guests can choose from no fewer than 20 wines by the glass, principally from small-batch biodynamic wineries. A couple of small plates from the menu are the perfect accompaniment. It doesn't get more hipster than this: a bar designed for whisky lovers, hidden away above a Mexican restaurant in the heart of Downtown LA. **Seven Grand** is not just the name of the bar, it's also the address (corner of Seventh and Grand Streets). Find the secret stairs inside **Mas Malo** restaurant (follow the tartan carpet) and treat yourself to a 40-year-old Glenfiddich.

A trip to LA is not complete without at least one balmy evening spent in a rooftop bar. We love the Moroccan feel at **Upstairs**, perched above the **Ace Downtown Hotel**. Settle into a comfy wicker armchair and enjoy the DJ beats and superior cocktails. Try the White Rabbit: cognac, scotch, vermouth, yellow chartreuse, bitters and mint.



[aocwinebar.com](http://aocwinebar.com)



[acehotel.com/losangeles/upstairs](http://acehotel.com/losangeles/upstairs)



AOC Wine Bar



Upstairs is the sky-high urban oasis at Ace Hotel Downtown Los Angeles

## MUSEUMS

The good news is that LA's newest museum is free, although you will need to book your ticket well in advance. The **Broad Museum** has plenty of big names in its collection – think American artists Jean Michel Basquiat and Jeff Koons – but the highlight is Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama's Infinity Mirrored Room. There's a separate queue for this exhibit, but the experience is definitely worth it.

Around the corner from the Broad, **The Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles**, has grown from humble beginnings to become one of the town's cultural heavyweights, with about 7000 artworks in its collection. The room lined with American artist Mark Rothko's paintings is worth the price of admission alone.

Just reopened after a US\$125 million renovation, the **Petersen Automotive Museum** now has a sexy new façade and a lot more exhibition space. You don't have to be a rev head to enjoy the Hollywood Gallery (displays include the Batmobile and the Pontiac Aztek from *Breaking Bad*) and the racing car simulators.



[thebroad.org](http://thebroad.org)



[petersen.org](http://petersen.org)



The Broad, a new art museum in Downtown Los Angeles



The Petersen Automotive Museum is one of biggest automotive museums.



Santa Monica Pier, Ferris Wheel



Top: The Hollywood sign overlooking Los Angeles. The iconic sign was originally created in 1923  
Bottom: Hollywood Boulevard



## SHOP

Housed in a grand converted bank, **The Last Bookstore** is heaven for bibliophiles. The impressive collection of new and used books spreads over two floors. Keep an eye out for the artworks made of books, including a tunnel of tomes you can walk through. For those with a shoe fetish, **Re-Mix** is the place to go. Known for its quality reproductions of vintage shoes for men and women – everything from 70s wedges to classic wingtips – Re-Mix is a celebrity favourite, so see if you can spy famous faces browsing the racks.

Fancy a cuppa? At **Chado Tea Room**, shoppers are spoiled for choice. There are more than 250 varieties of tea on sale, including 15 kinds of darjeeling alone. Looking for something different? Try the Assam Jungle Cabernet, a concoction of assam black tea, liquorice root, cinnamon and cabernet, or the pomegranate bai mu dan, a white tea flavoured with safflowers and pomegranate.

 [lastbookstorela.com](http://lastbookstorela.com)

 [remixvintageshoes.com](http://remixvintageshoes.com)

## STAY

Here's the thing about Koreatown's **Hotel Normandie**: while it is not exactly near anything, its central location, hard by a metro stop, means it's easy to get just about anywhere. Need more convincing? Restored 1920s interiors and an eminently reasonable room rate make this one of the City of Angels' best bargains.

West Hollywood location? Check. Luxe interiors? Check. Rooftop pool? Check. The **Petit Ermitage** is the sort of glam, under-the-radar hideaway that makes you feel like a celeb in seclusion. Top off your stay with an in-room spa treatment or treat yourself to one of the suites, complete with butler service.

 [hotelnormandiela.com](http://hotelnormandiela.com)

 [petitermitage.com](http://petitermitage.com)

## WALK

Los Angeles may be known for its car culture, but it's also a haven for hikers. Join **Bikes and Hikes LA's** Hollywood Hills tour to see a different side of the city. The trail will take you past hip neighbourhoods, such as Silver Lake, and icons such as Forest Lawn Cemetery. You will even have the opportunity to take a selfie with the Hollywood sign.

The epicentre of LA's street art scene is the burgeoning Arts District in Downtown LA, where street artists from around the world are creating massive murals. Sign up for a walking tour with **LA Art Tours** and you may find your guide has actually created some of the works you see.

Among LA's most exciting discoveries are its ethnic neighbourhoods, packed with fabulous eateries. **Six Taste Tours** specialises in walking tours of these foodie-friendly enclaves. For instance, during the 3.5-hour Japantown outing, you can graze on gourmet treats from poke bowls and Korean sausages to rice cake-wrapped ice cream.

 [bikesandhikesla.com](http://bikesandhikesla.com)

 [laarttours.com](http://laarttours.com)

 [sixtaste.com](http://sixtaste.com)



Bikes and Hikes walking tour.



LA Art Tours