

# Los Angeles

Despite the bad rep this city sometimes gets for its smog and congestion, it's almost impossible not to fall in love. It's a city that swallows you whole and feels a million miles away from its east-coast rival New York: LA is constantly sunny, perennially laidback and enjoys an enviable location, sandwiched between mountain and ocean. It's easy to see why it lures creative talent from across the US – and visitors from across the globe – in droves.

## Need to know

Get to grips with the basics

- 01 **Get your honk on:** Nowhere is driving so common as in LA. In theory, rush-hour times on weekdays are 06.00 to 10.00 and 15.00 to 19.00, though on Friday afternoon it's busy from 14.00 until 21.00.
- 02 **Taking sides:** The city is divided by the 405 freeway. The west is the place for those seeking a beach-friendly vibe; the east, while not as polished as Santa Monica, makes up for it with creativity and charm.
- 03 **Rules of engagement:** Angelenos are uptight about making plans; if you're looking to have dinner or drinks, a minimum of three days' notice is required.
- 04 **Here's a tip:** Whether you're showing thanks for your Moon Juice Brain-Tonic or trying to get into that new club, don't be shy with your cash – it can get you a taste of the high life.
- 05 **LA living:** Downtown used to be an unprepossessing neighbourhood. But over the past 10 or so years it's undergone a transformation, with flagship art and performance venues, a lively restaurant and bar scene and some smart hotels.

## Hotels

Homes away from home

- ① **The Ace, Downtown**  
*LA landmark*

This hotel in the historic United Artists tower solidified the Downtown renaissance when it opened in 2014. The rooftop can be a scene and the jaw-dropping theatre is not to be missed.  
929 South Broadway, 90015  
+1 213 623 3233  
acehotel.com

- ② **Chateau Marmont, West Hollywood**  
*Famously infamous*

Plenty of mischievous nights have been had at Chateau Marmont – including Led Zeppelin riding their motorcycles through the halls.  
8221 Sunset Boulevard, 90046  
+1 323 656 1010  
chateaumarmont.com

- ③ **Hotel Covell, Los Feliz**  
*Chapter house*

You won't find another hotel near here and you certainly won't find another like it in LA.  
4626 Hollywood Boulevard, 90027  
+1 323 660 4300  
hotelcovell.com

## Food and drink

Savouring the city

- ① **Broken Spanish, Downtown**  
*Mexican with a twist*

It takes guts to open a restaurant in a quiet part of Downtown but that's what chef Ray Garcia has done, serving hearty Mexican cuisine with a refined twist. The tortillas are mind-blowing.  
1050 South Flower Street, 90015  
+1 213 749 1460  
brokenspanish.com

- ② **Ostrich Farm, Echo Park**  
*Elegant comfort food*

This restaurant, opened in late 2014 by husband-and-wife team Jaime Turrey and Brooke Fruchtman, is a place to linger. The simplicity of the space combined with comforting dishes keep it welcoming despite the potential waiting time.  
1525 West Sunset Boulevard, 90026  
+1 213 537 0657  
ostrichfarmla.com

- ③ **Gjelina, Venice**  
*Brunch bonanza*

This is something of a Venice institution and a brand in its own right. Good for brunch, the menu is extensive – think everything from porridge to pizza – meaning you're sure to find something toothsome.  
1429 Abbot Kinney Boulevard, 90291  
+1 310 450 1429  
gjelina.com

- ④ **Farmshop, Santa Monica**  
*California cuisine*

Set in the quaint Brentwood Country Mart, Farmshop is part restaurant, part speciality grocer. It serves California-inspired food, from crispy artichokes with burrata and pesto to marinated Pacific sardines.  
225 26th Street, Suite 25, 90402  
+1 310 566 2400  
farmshopca.com

- ⑤ **Café Stella, Silver Lake**  
*Starry nights*

It may be a little sceney but Café Stella is still one of the best bars on LA's eastern side. With its constantly evolving roster of potent, seasonal cocktails you would be hard-pushed to put a foot wrong with your drinks selection.  
3932 Sunset Boulevard, 90029  
+1 323 666 0265  
cafestella.com

## Retail

Best in store

- ① **Poketo, Arts District**  
*Creative collective*

Poketo's simple wooden shelves are decked with well-chosen homeware, books, jewellery, clothing and its own line of stationery. It has worked with more than 200 international artists on exclusive products for the shop, and brands such as Nike and SF Moma.  
820 East 3rd Street, 90013  
+1 213 537 0751  
poketo.com

- ② **Mohawk General Store, Silver Lake**  
*A shop for all*

Mohawk General Store has two side-by-side shops on Silver Lake's main drag: one for menswear and another for women (plus a location in Pasadena). Beyond Mohawk's own line there are clothes from labels such as Dries Van Noten, Lemaire, Issey Miyake and Acne Studios.  
4011-4017 West Sunset Boulevard, 90029  
+1 323 669 1602  
mohawkgeneralstore.com

- ③ **Tortoise General Store, Venice**  
*Slow but steady expansion*

Tokyo natives Keiko and Taku Shinomoto moved to LA in 2003 and shortly after opened a homeware shop. The pair pack the general store with hard-to-find kitchenware, stationery and grooming tools.  
1208 Abbot Kinney Boulevard, 90291  
+1 310 314 8448  
tortoisegeneralstore.com

- ④ **American Rag Cie, La Brea**  
*Denim and more*

American Rag Cie is a one-stop shop stocking Ddugoff, Engineered Garments, Opening Ceremony and much more. There's even a hefty portion of the shop devoted solely to denim.  
150 South La Brea Avenue, 90036  
+1 323 935 3154  
americanrag.com

## Vocabulary

Local lingo

- 01 **Animal style:** A "secret" menu style at burger chain In-N-Out
- 02 **CPT:** Compton
- 03 **Dank:** Really good, excellent
- 04 **PCH:** Pacific Coast Highway
- 05 **SoCal:** Southern California
- 06 **The Valley:** San Fernando Valley



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