



# Los Angeles

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## Best Places to Eat

- » Bottega Louie (p559)
- » Osteria Mozza & Pizzeria Mozza (p559)
- » Ivy (p561)
- » Bazaar (p561)
- » Gjelina (p562)

## Best Places to Stay

- » Standard Downtown LA (p556)
- » Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel (p556)
- » Beverly Hills Hotel (p557)
- » Casa Del Mar (p558)
- » Queen Mary Hotel (p558)

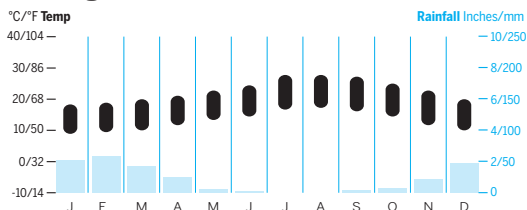
## Why Go?

Ah, Los Angeles, land of starstruck dreams and Tinseltown magic. You may think you know what to expect from LA: celebrity worship, plastic surgery junkies, endless traffic, earthquakes, wildfires...And true, your waitress today might be tomorrow's starlet and you may well encounter artificially enhanced blondes and phone-clutching honchos weaving lanes at 80mph, but LA is intensely diverse and brimming with fascinating neighborhoods and characters that have nothing to do with the 'Industry' (entertainment, to the rest of us). Its innovative cooking has pushed the boundaries of American cuisine for generations. Arts and architecture? Frank Lloyd Wright to Frank Gehry. Music? The Doors to Dr Dre and Dudamel.

So do yourself a favor and leave your preconceptions in the suitcase. LA's truths are not doled out on the silver screen or gossip rags; rather, you will discover them in everyday interactions. Chances are, the more you explore, the more you'll enjoy.

## When to Go

### Los Angeles



**Feb** The red carpet is rolled out for the Academy Awards. Prime time for celeb-spotting.

**Apr & Sep** Most tourists visit when the sun shines the brightest on LA's golden sands.

**Oct–Nov & Jan–Mar** The region's two distinct wet seasons.

## DID YOU KNOW?

At nearly 10 million people, LA is America's largest county in population. It would be the eighth-largest state on its own.

## Fast Facts

- » **Population of LA** 3.8 million
- » **Average temperature low/high in LA** Jan 47/66°F, July 62/82°F
- » **LA to Disneyland** 26 miles
- » **LA to San Diego** 120 miles
- » **LA to Palm Springs** 110 miles

## Planning Your Trip

Reserve hotels in prime locations at least three weeks out, especially for summer weekends. Two weeks out, make reservations for popular restaurants. Weekends are toughest, but primo nights for celeb sightings at dining hot spots are actually Tuesday through Thursday.

## Resources

- » California Division of Tourism ([www.visitcalifornia.com](http://www.visitcalifornia.com))
- » California Department of Transportation (☎800-427-7623; [www.dot.ca.gov/](http://www.dot.ca.gov/))

## Actually, Some People do Walk in LA

'No one walks in LA,' the '80s band Missing Persons famously sang. That was then. Fed up with traffic, smog and high gas prices, the region that defined car culture is developing a foot culture. Angelenos are moving into more densely populated neighborhoods and are walking, cycling and taking public transportation.

You may not need a car during your visit if you stay near one of the arty stations on the Metro Red Line, which connects Union Station in Downtown LA to the San Fernando Valley via Koreatown, Hollywood and Universal Studios. Unlimited-ride passes (\$5 per day, via stored-value TAP cards) are a downright bargain, and given LA's legendary traffic it's often faster to travel below ground than above. Light-rail lines connect Downtown with Long Beach, Pasadena and East LA. A Culver City line was due to open as we went to press, to be extended to Santa Monica by 2015.

In 2011, the city of Los Angeles authorized construction of an eventual 1,680 miles of bikeways, in addition to those in other cities around the county. Bicycles are permitted on Metro trains and buses are fitted with bike racks.

While eventual plans call for a 'Subway to the Sea' in Santa Monica, for now you'll be busing, biking or – gasp! – driving to Mid-City, Beverly Hills and the beaches.

## GRAUMAN'S CHINESE THEATRE

Yes, every other tourist goes there too, but even the most jaded may thrill to matching hand- or footprints with those of the stars, enshrined forever in concrete in front of Grauman's Chinese Theatre in Hollywood (p539).

## Top Five LA Beaches

- » **El Matador** (off Map p574) Hideaway hemmed by battered rock cliffs and strewn with giant boulders. Wild surf; not suitable for children.
- » **Zuma** (p546) Gorgeous 2-mile ribbon of sand for swimming, body surfing and tight bodies.
- » **Malibu Lagoon/Surfrider** (p546) Legendary surf beach with superb swells and a lagoon for bird-watching.
- » **Santa Monica** (p547) Families escape inland heat on this extra-wide beach, home to the Santa Monica Pier and South Bay Bicycle Trail (p553).
- » **Venice** (p547) provides a nonstop parade of friends and freaks. Drum circle in the sand on Sundays.