



Understand Coastal California

COASTAL CALIFORNIA TODAY.....466

Growing pains are par for the course in Coastal California, an ongoing social experiment and multicultural mosaic.

HISTORY468

From Native Americans and Spanish missions to 20th-century water scandals, earthquakes and race riots, here's how California evolved.

CALIFORNIA FLAVOR475

Eat like an *Iron Chef* judge, tipple delicious vintages, then find fresh seafood shacks, farmers markets and food trucks.

THE PEOPLE & WAY OF LIFE482

Find out why Californians work so hard – and play even harder. Bust the myths and stereotypes, and uncover the realities.

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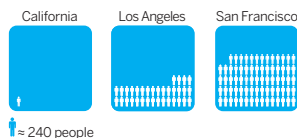
What makes California really shake, rattle 'n' roll? Discover geology in action.

SUSTAINABLE CALIFORNIA.....501

Going green isn't just a fad here, it's almost a religion – and a spur to high-tech innovation.



population per sq mile



Coastal California Today

Californians by the Numbers

- » Population 37.3 million
- » Foreign-born residents 27%
- » Residents who don't speak English at home 40%+

People & Politics

Even if you've seen it in the movies, coastal California may still be a shock. Venice Beach skateboarders, Humboldt hippies, Marin County wild-mushroom hunters, 'Bezerkely' professors and Silicon Valley millionaires aren't on different channels. They all live here, where tolerance for other's beliefs, be they conservative, liberal or wacky, is the social glue.

Today, the most divisive political hot potato may be same-sex marriage, and the proposed voter-approved constitutional amendment to ban it, which remains tied up in legal battles. Medical marijuana is old news for Californians, who approved a state proposition allowing its use back in 1996 – although the proliferation of raids on MMJ dispensaries and rumors of Mexican cartel intervention have raised eyebrows.

Environmental Roots

There's no denying that California's culture of conspicuous consumption is exported via Hollywood flicks and reality TV (hello, *Real Housewives of Orange County*!). But since the 1960s, Californians have trailblazed another, 'greener' way by choosing more sustainable foods and low-impact lifestyles, preserving old-growth forests with tree-sitting activism, declaring urban nuclear-free zones, pushing for environmentally progressive legislation and establishing the biggest US market for hybrid vehicles.

That shouldn't really come as a surprise. It was Californians who originally helped kick-start the world's conservation movement in the midst of the 19th-century industrial revolution, with laws curbing industrial dumping, swaths of prime real estate set aside as urban green space, and pristine wilderness protected by national and state parks. Today, even conservative California politicians prioritize environmental issues on their agendas – at least as much as the state's current economic woes allow.

Top Films

- » *Maltese Falcon* (1941)
- » *Sunset Boulevard* (1950)
- » *The Graduate* (1967)
- » *Chinatown* (1974)
- » *Boyz n the Hood* (1991)
- » *LA Confidential* (1997)
- » *Sideways* (2004)

Top Downloads

- » 'California Dreaming' – Mamas and the Papas
- » 'Surfer Girl' – Beach Boys
- » '(Sittin' on) The Dock of the Bay' – Otis Redding
- » 'California Soul' – Fifth Dimension
- » 'Los Angeles' – X
- » 'Straight Outta Compton' – NWA
- » 'California Gurls' – Katy Perry
- » 'Californication' – Red Hot Chili Peppers
- » 'California Love' – 2Pac

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