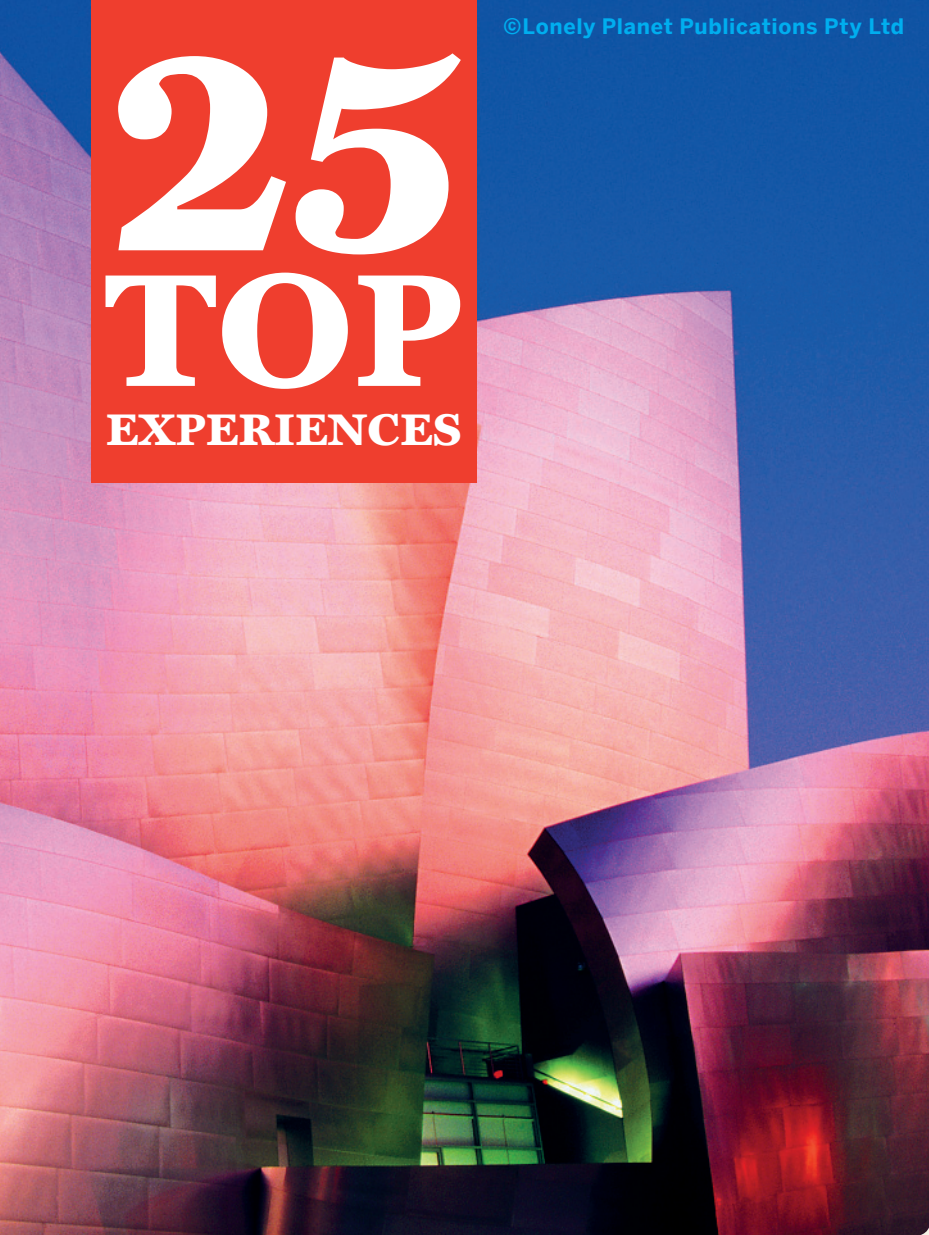


25 TOP EXPERIENCES



Downtown Los Angeles

1 Often overlooked by star-struck sightseers in Hollywood, Downtown LA (p69) is one place you won't want to miss. From architect Frank Gehry's Walt Disney Concert Hall on Grand Ave's 'Cultural Corridor' to the ethnic flavors of El Pueblo de Los Angeles, Little Tokyo and Chinatown, Downtown encapsulates everything LA has to offer: cutting-edge creative arts, a melting pot of world cultures and aspiring civic spaces to rival New York or Chicago. Tip: take a ride into history on the reopened Angels Flight funicular, the world's shortest railway. Walt Disney Concert Hall, above



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Disneyland

2 Where orange groves grew, there Walt Disney built his dream, throwing open the doors of his Magic Kingdom in 1955. Today, Disneyland (p217) is SoCal's most-visited tourist attraction. Inside Anaheim's most popular theme park, beloved cartoon characters waltz arm-in-arm down Main Street USA and fireworks explode over Sleeping Beauty's castle on summer nights. If you're a kid, or just hopelessly young at heart, who are we to say that Disneyland can't really be 'the happiest place on earth'?



EUROSTILE GRAPHICS / ALAMY

Pacific Coast Highway

3 This legendary highway (p33) snakes past dizzying sea cliffs and dozens of beach towns, each with its own idiosyncratic personality, from offbeat bohemian to glamorously rich. PCH also connects the dots between SoCal's coastal cities, from surfin' San Diego to rockin' LA. Make your escape from tangled, traffic-jammed freeways and cruise in the slow lane. You'll uncover hidden beaches and locals' fave surf breaks, rustic seafood shacks dishing up the day's freshest catch and old-fashioned piers where you can walk out and catch the sun setting over boundless Pacific horizons.