

LOS ANGELES

ENCOUNTER

AMY C BALFOUR

Los Angeles Encounter

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Color-Coding & Maps

Color-coding is used for symbols on maps and in the text that they relate to (eg all eating venues on the maps and in the text are given a green knife and fork symbol). Each neighborhood also gets its own color, and this is used down the edge of the page and throughout that neighborhood section.

Shaded yellow areas on the maps denote 'areas of interest' – for their historical significance, their attractive architecture or their great bars and restaurants. We encourage you to head to these areas and just start exploring!

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AMY C BALFOUR

Amy arrived in Los Angeles by way of Virginia, where she'd been a deskbound attorney living her life in six-minute billable increments. Hearing the call of Hollywood, she chucked a stable salary to try her hand at screenwriting. A writer's assistant gig with *Law & Order* followed, and she soon learned how TV dramas are made. Eventually reprimanded for leading security on a low-speed golf-cart chase through the NBC/Universal Studios backlot after an unauthorized tour, she now resides in an undisclosed location outside the city. In 2007 Amy jumped from TV to fulltime freelancing and has written for the *Los Angeles Times*, *Backpacker*, *Every Day with Rachael Ray*, *Redbook*, *Southern Living*, *Women's Health* and *Travelers' Tales*. She is a co-author of Lonely Planet's *California, California Trips* and *Los Angeles & Southern California*.



AMY'S THANKS

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David Peevers is a photographer, writer and adventurer whose work has appeared in many Lonely Planet books and countless international publications and websites. He has been a white-water river guide, a blue-water sailor, a publisher of tribal Indian art and special-projects manager for the *Los Angeles Business Journal*. A citizen of the US and Ireland, he has lived in Los Angeles with his wife, Lonely Planet author Andrea Schulte-Peevers, since 1984 and is planning an imminent move to their favorite city, Berlin.

Our Readers Many thanks to the travelers who wrote to us with helpful hints, useful advice and interesting anecdotes: Don Bowles, Miriam Cullen, Sue Davis, Lubna Debbini, Donal Doyle, Dusty, Roger Greene, Joshua Grubaugh, Amy Luczak, Karen Mundy, Betty Pasley, Bernadette Sanz, BJ Semmes, Jason Vorders, Lydia Welton, Brian Yates.



RICHARD PRYOR



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THIS IS LOS ANGELES

Welcome to sunny Los Angeles, a shiny city of reinvention where small talk always starts with a question: 'Where are you from?' This query reveals what's driving the city's energetic buzz – a perpetual in-flow of dreamers, go-getters and hustlers primed with unabashed optimism.

Where else could an English acrobat named Archibald Leach become debonair Cary Grant? Or an Austrian bodybuilder lift his way from Muscle Beach to the governor's mansion? Even the water's from someplace else, imported almost a century ago after DWP chief William Mulholland opened the gates of his 233-mile aqueduct and millions of gallons rushed into the city. His words to the crowd? 'There it is. Take it.'

The crowd took, and the hustle hasn't stopped since. Screenwriters pitch in the shadows of the Hollywood sign. Surfers squint for the choicest Malibu wave. Then there are the true dream-chasers, the eternal optimists who join the line at Pink's – willing to wait hours for a bite of the perfect chili dog.

Don't care for hot dogs? A few steps away are the healthy macrobiotic delights of M Café de Chaya, where a hot dog would be met with gasps of Juicy Coutured horror. But that's LA – a bustling mash-up of culture, community and cuisine, where clubs-du-jour lurk beside old-school delis, ramshackle markets wobble near gleaming malls, palm trees sway over car-carrying rivers, and renowned museums preen beside bubbling tar pits.

As for the city portrayed in Oscar-winning *Crash*, LA's not quite so angry – everybody's too busy chattering on cells, checking Blackberries or downward dogging to worry about the next guy. Unless it's a casting agent, of course. Yes, the city runs a little thick on superficiality, self-absorption and sunshine, but c'mon, isn't that the point? Have fun. Reinvent. Shop. Hike. Surf. Party. LA is yours to grab. To paraphrase Mulholland: 'There it is. Go for it.'

Top left Frank Gehry's striking Walt Disney Concert Hall (p129) **Top right** Cyclists at Venice Beach. (p108) **Bottom** Glamour and gloss in the Hollywood Museum (p42)