

the BPP headquarters, travel north on Central Avenue, then turn left at Jefferson. Take a left onto Figueroa Street, then make a right at Exposition Park Drive, where you will enter the Exposition Park complex of museums and gardens. The coliseum is located in the middle of Exposition Park and is easily visible. After checking out the exterior of the coliseum, you can spend the afternoon strolling through the Rose Garden or visiting the California African American Museum (open Tues.–Sat. 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. and Sun. 11 A.M. to 5 P.M.; free admission), the Natural History Museum (open 9:30 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily; admission \$9 adults, \$6.50 children, students, and seniors), or the California Science Center (open 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. daily; free admission).

Have dinner in the Exposition Park–USC area. We recommend La Taquiza (3009 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles 90007; 213-741-9795), which features a mammoth menu of Mexican foods, including their specialty, the *milita*; or La Barca (2414 S. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles 90007; 323-735-6567), a family-style Mexican restaurant. Or stop for a coffee and pastry or a sandwich at the Ragazzi Room (2316 S. Union Ave., Los Angeles 90007; cross street is Hoover; 213-741-1723), a pleasant place to hang out and reflect upon your day. All three restaurants are north of the Exposition Park museums, which are bounded by Vermont and Figueroa.

## Queer Politics and Culture Tour

This tour explores the historical development of queer social communities and political movements for LGBT rights in Los Angeles. It travels through the North L.A. and Westside regions of the *People's Guide*, focusing on those neighborhoods that have been and continue to be particularly important incubators of queer social critique and political mobilization.

Begin on Vermont Avenue between Eighth and Ninth streets, a block that once housed the **IF CAFÉ** (810 S. Vermont Ave., Los Angeles 90005) and **OPEN DOOR** (831 S. Vermont Ave.), two working-class, racially mixed lesbian bars that were crucial to the development of lesbian culture and community in L.A. from the 1940s to the 1960s—as well as frequent targets of police harassment and abuse.

Next, head to **PERSHING SQUARE** (532 S. Olive St., Los Angeles 90013), which was a popular cruising spot for gay men from diverse racial and economic backgrounds in the 1950s, as well as a common site for a broad array of protests. To get there from the If Café and Open Door, head north on Vermont and turn right on Seventh Street, then turn left at Olive Street. Pershing Square will be on your right. During the 1950s and 1960s, Pershing Square anchored a wide range of bars, apartments, and other centers of gay social life in the surrounding neighborhood, but like the two lesbian bars



on Vermont, this area was subject to near-constant police sweeps and harassment.

Next stop: the former site of the L.A. branch of the **GAY LIBERATION FRONT**, which operated out of the home of gay rights activist Morris Kight (1822 W. 4th St., Los Angeles 90057). In addition to performing his work with the GLF, Kight was instrumental in founding both the gay rights parade now known as L.A. Pride and the organization now known as the L.A. Gay and Lesbian Center. To get to his former home from Pershing Square, head northeast on Olive Street toward Fifth Street, and turn left on Fifth. Stay left on Fifth as it goes under the freeway and

merges with Sixth Street. Turn right at Burlington Avenue, and take the third left, onto Fourth Street. Kight's former home, and the former offices of the GLF, will be on your right. As this is a private residence, please be respectful of the current occupants.

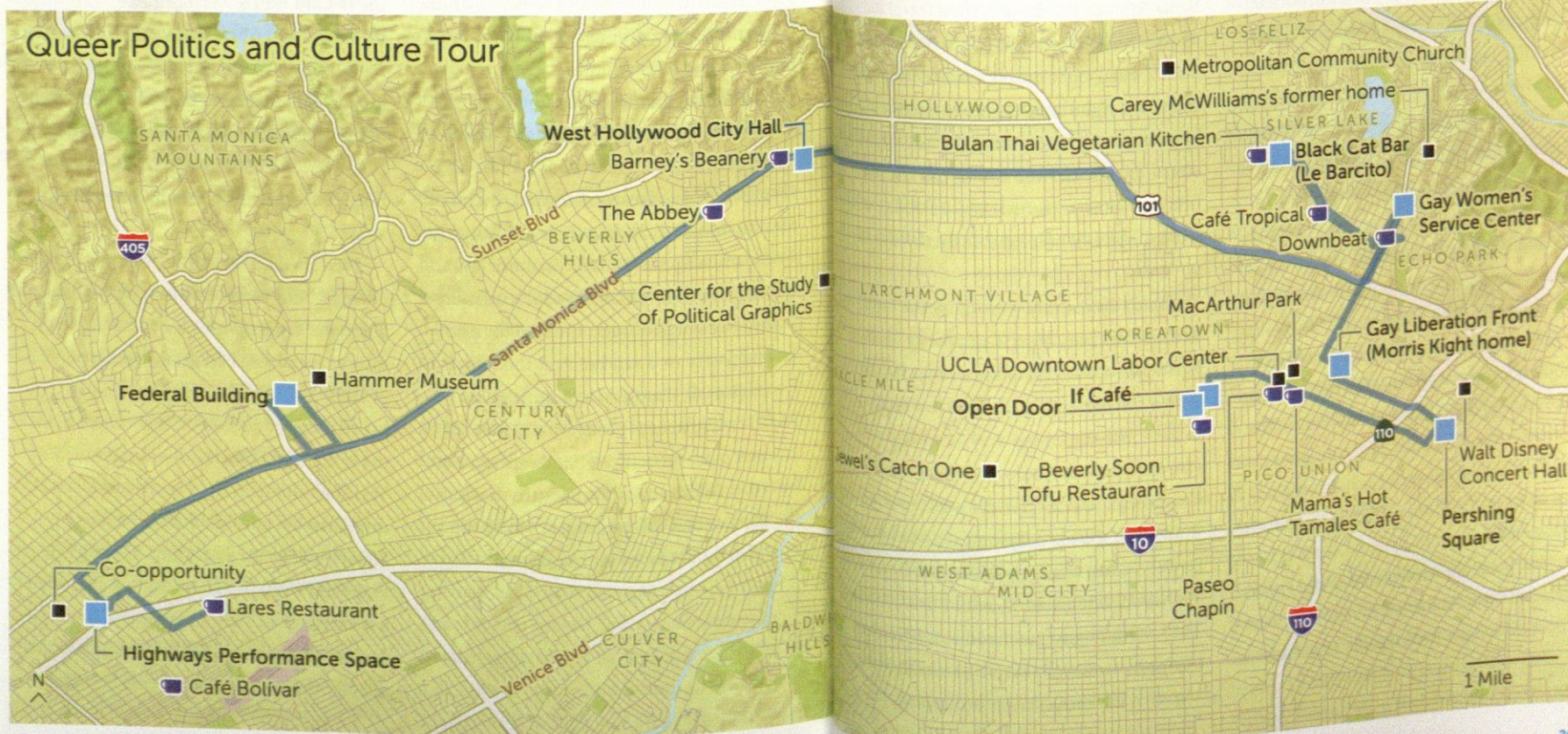
Now, you'll travel to the Silver Lake and Echo Park neighborhoods of L.A., which have long been queer-friendly places associated with a wide range of alternative communities and counterhegemonic social practices. First up: the historic site of the **BLACK CAT BAR**, now Le Barcito, in the Silver Lake neighborhood (3909 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles 90029). In early 1967, this bar

was the site of L.A.'s first known protest for LGBT rights, sparked by an incident of police brutality the year before. The demonstration helped to mark Silver Lake as a gay neighborhood and to establish connections between the emerging gay liberation movement and the movements among other communities of color in L.A. and nationally.

While in the area, spend some time exploring Silver Lake's funky shops and street scene. There are also many wonderful spots here for lunch. Grab an espresso and pastry (the guava cheese pie is highly recommended) at Café Tropical (2900 W. Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles 90026; near the

intersection of Sunset and Parkman). For a heartier meal, try Bulan Thai Vegetarian Kitchen (4114 Santa Monica Blvd., Los Angeles 90029; one-quarter mile from Le Barcito; travel west on Sunset and go left at the split with Santa Monica Boulevard); or Downbeat (1202 N. Alvarado St., Los Angeles 90026), a jazz-themed coffee shop in Echo Park that serves up sandwiches and salads and is on the way to the next tour stop.

Staying in this general area, head to the **GAY WOMEN'S SERVICE CENTER** (1542 Glendale Blvd., Los Angeles 90026), founded in 1971, the first lesbian social services center in the United States. To get there from the





Black Cat area, continue east on Sunset Boulevard and turn left on Alvarado Street. Watch for the Downbeat, at 1202 North Alvarado, if that's where you wish to stop for lunch. The former site of the service center will be on your right, about a half mile up the street, at the corner of Alvarado Street and Glendale Boulevard.

The remaining stops on the tour take you to the Westside, to explore places that have been crucial to the more recent development of queer life, politics, and culture in L.A. Head to the **WEST HOLLYWOOD CITY HALL** (8300 Santa Monica Blvd., West Hollywood 90069) and the surrounding city of West Hollywood, which was incorporated in 1984 and is popularly known as the first "gay city" in the United States. From the Gay Women's Service Center, turn around on Alvarado to travel southeast, and turn right to merge onto US-101 north, traveling toward Sacramento. After 2.5 miles, exit on Santa Monica Ave/CA-2 toward Western Avenue. At the top of the off-ramp, turn left onto Santa Monica Boulevard and drive for 2.5 miles into West Hollywood. City Hall will be on your left. If you're so inclined, stop for a cocktail or other refreshment at The Abbey (692 N. Robertson Blvd.; at the corner of Santa Monica Blvd. and Robertson Blvd.), a beautiful bar and restaurant that has been at the center of WeHo nightlife for many years.

Next stop: the **FEDERAL BUILDING** (11000 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles 90024) in Westwood, which has been the site of numerous

protests on behalf of gay rights and HIV/AIDS research, funding, and services. From WeHo City Hall, continue west on Santa Monica Boulevard for 5 miles and turn right on Sepulveda Boulevard. Take the third right, onto Wilshire Boulevard. The federal building will be on your right about a quarter mile up.

Finish the tour at **HIGHWAYS PERFORMANCE SPACE** (1651 18th St., Santa Monica 90404; 310-315-1459; [www.highwaysperformance.org](http://www.highwaysperformance.org)). From the federal building, go northeast on Wilshire Boulevard toward Veteran Avenue and turn right on Veteran Avenue. Take the third right, onto Santa Monica Boulevard, then travel for almost 3 miles and turn left at Twentieth Street. Turn right onto Olympic Boulevard, then turn right onto Eighteenth Street. Highways will be on the right side of the street. Check the web site or call ahead to find out what performances, exhibits, or workshops will be available on the day of your visit.

Finish up the day with dinner at Lares Restaurant (2909 Pico Blvd., Santa Monica 90405; 310-829-4550), a Mexican restaurant with a full bar and occasional live music; to get there from Highways, head northeast on Olympic Boulevard, turn right on Cloverfield, and then make a left on Pico Boulevard. Or for delicious, if somewhat pricier, Indian food, try Nawab of India (1621 Wilshire Blvd., Santa Monica 90403; 310-829-1106); from Highways, head southwest on Olympic, turn right on Seventeenth Street, and turn left on Wilshire Boulevard.