

Los Angeles is a diverse and cosmopolitan city that has so much to offer to any traveler that visits. From beaches and mountains, to sun kissed streets and trendy neighborhoods, exploring the sprawling city is a dream vacation.

When travelers come to Los Angeles, most don't realize how large L.A. is. The entire L.A. basin is filled with millions of people, different cultures, freeways, it's easy to get overwhelmed with all of the sights the city has to offer. A weekend in L.A. will probably be one of the best weekends you've ever had. Here are a few of my recommendations for different areas of this vast city.

## **Downtown LA**

Downtown LA is definitely a must for any visitor. Downtown is filled with shops, restaurants, cafes, and museums! It's easy to tick a lot on a wishlist in terms of sights. I recommend not to drive in Downtown LA as there is plenty of public transportation that can take you to all the neighborhoods in Downtown. In addition to that, you can rent bikes and travel down the many bike lanes.

Visit the Broad, a contemporary art museum located near Bunker Hill. It's free admission, but reserve tickets online, as the line can get long! With 2,000 pieces of art within its walls, The Broad is a must for anyone wandering the streets of DTLA!

After a visiting The Broad, head across the street to Angels Flight, a landmark funicular railway that runs along Bunker Hill. It's only \$1 to ride or 50 cents with a TAP Card! Right across from Angels Flight is Grand Central Market, the oldest public market in the city. So many food options here, it'll cater to any picky eater!

For Shopping, wander around the Fashion and Jewelry District. The Fashion District is home to Santee Alley, also known as "The Alley" by locals. It's known for great bargain shopping.

Continue exploring Downtown by exploring Little Tokyo and The Arts District neighborhood. Trendy galleries and cafes line the streets in the section of Downtown. Close to Little Tokyo is Union Station and Olvera Street, a historic marketplace with craft shops and eateries that is very popular with tourists! Just north of Olvera Street and Union Station is Chinatown, one of the most popular Chinatowns in the country

Also in Downtown, check out The Last Bookstore, a popular store located on Spring Street! Plus venture down to LA Live, next to the Staples Center. Tip, visit here during the winter holidays, as there is an ice skating rink in the heart of LA Live!

## **West LA**

Without a doubt, many sights of LA are located on the westside. A day to explore everything the westside has to offer is a must on any schedule!

Santa Monica is a perfect hotspot for any tourist. The world famous Santa Monica Pier should be on any to-do list. If you plan on having a beach day here, arrive early as crowds of beach goers head to the beach to claim their spots! For shopping, head onto The Third Street Promenade, and upscale pedestrian mall in the heart of Santa Monica!

Just south of Santa Monica is the world famous Venice Beach. Rent bikes and bike down the path from Santa Monica to Venice within minutes. Parking and traffic can be a hassle in the area so be prepared! The area is filled with some of the most interesting people in all of Los Angeles, and Muscle Beach is a staple of the community of Venice. Away from the beach, there are some canals in the neighborhoods that you can walk along.

From Santa Monica, head inland to the UCLA area, Beverly Hills, Century City, WeHo, and the Sunset Strip. Visit the world famous Rodeo Drive and make all of your friends jealous with pictures. You might even see a celebrity shopping around! The beautiful area of UCLA is known as Westwood, has lots to explore with cafes and tree lined streets littered throughout. For an unforgettable night out, hit up West Hollywood and the Sunset strip. So many bars and restaurants line the many boulevards that flow through the city.

# Hollywood

Everyone who comes to LA, must get a glimpse of Hollywood. Hollywood is tourism hotspot, so try to get here early and get it out the way.

The main attractions of Hollywood are the Walk of Fame, Madame Tussauds Museum, The TCL Chinese Theatre, and the Dolby Theatre, which are all located on Hollywood Blvd. A nice walk along the boulevard is enough to take in the atmosphere around Hollywood. Lots of tourists, street vendors, and performers, and food spots are dotted along with sidewalk, It's easy to be entertained in the Entertainment capital of the world!

Tip: The Metro Red Line has stops along Hollywood Blvd. It saves you the hassle of fighting for a parking space and traffic.

Another major attraction of Hollywood is the famous Hollywood sign. There are multiple ways of seeing it up close. One way is at Griffith Observatory, another popular LA attraction in Griffith Park. There is a trail that begins at the observatory that takes you close to the sign. Another way, is from Runyon Canyon Park, as one of the trails in the famous park gives you a nice view of the sign.

Just north of Hollywood is the famous Universal Studios and Citywalk. Universal Studios is quite popular and packed, so if you're on limited time, take the Studio Tour!

## South Bay/Long Beach

The South Bay region of Los Angeles has a more relaxed pace compared to the rest of the city. Long shorelines, shopping malls, world famous piers, and some nightlife are what the South Bay is known for.

If you're looking for a beach day, Manhattan, Hermosa, and Redondo Beach will be your friends for the day. Manhattan and Hermosa Beach offer bars and restaurants along with a sun kissed shoreline for hours of relaxing vibes.

Hermosa Beach and Redondo Beach are known for their beautiful and world famous piers. The Redondo Beach Pier hosts several restaurants and a vast arcade which would please anyone that enters it.

Head further south to San Pedro, a seaside community that is located near the Port of Los Angeles. San Pedro is known for Port's O Call Village, and it's delicious fish market. Downtown San Pedro has many small shops and businesses along it's avenues perfect for shopping.

After stopping in San Pedro, take the Vincent Thomas Bridge east towards Long Beach. Long Beach is the second largest city in L.A. County and a major hotspot for travelers around the world. Long Beach is a big city with a small seaside town vibe. Travelers flock her for the nightlife, The Queen Mary, and the many beaches that are within the city. A fun way to spend the day is in the Belmont Shore neighborhood, along Second Street. Every block is filled with ice cream shops, bars, boutiques, and cafes. For a fun night out, bar hop down Pine Avenue in the heart of Downtown!

## **Just outside of LA.**

If you want to explore the outskirts of LA, you have plenty of options for any budget.

Big Bear is a popular ski destination to the east of the basin. Although famous for skiing, Big Bear is a gem year round with beautiful cabins, lakes, and streams. It's a retreat from the hustle of the city streets.

Tip: For more natural scenes, check out Mt Baldy, the tallest mountain in the Los Angeles area. Views from the mountain top span miles in all directions!

If you're an adrenaline junkie, check out Six Flags Magic Mountain located in the city of Valencia, north of L.A, or you can visit Knotts Berry Farm, in Orange County. Knotts is much closer to the city of L.A. if you have time restriction, in addition it is cheaper than Six Flags.

Also in Orange County is Disneyland and California Adventure. Disneyland brings hordes of people from all over the world. The park recently opened up Star Wars Galaxy's edge which is a must for any Star Wars fan!

## **Weather**

Weather should never be a problem for any visitor in LA. Most days the sun is constantly out, and temperatures are usually in the high 70s to 80s. LA enjoys a mediterranean climate with only about 35 days of precipitation. However, during May and June, LA experiences overcast skies and foggy mornings especially around the coastal areas. This is known as May Gray or June Gloom.

## **Anything else to know about L.A.**

Don't be afraid of public transportation. It can save you a lot on gas and parking expenses, and despite what people say, transit in LA can take you to most attractions in the city! Get a TAP card which is useful to all agencies in the city!