LAX

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THE PACIFIC COAST & BEYOND

Greetings from LOS ANGELES

48 hours, solo, at your own pace

POCKET EDITION · 2027

48-HOUR GUIDE · SAFETY GUIDE · PLANNING CALENDAR
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Welcome to Los Angeles

Los Angeles is not one city but a dozen, stitched together by freeways and sunshine. It rewards the traveler who picks a few neighborhoods and gives each one a proper afternoon, instead of trying to see it all.

Traveling solo here works better than its reputation suggests. A counter seat at a taco stand, a lone walker on a beach path, a single ticket at an observatory or a museum: none of it draws a glance. The city has plenty of room, and the weather is forgiving.

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Read through once before you go. Day One covers Hollywood, Griffith Observatory, and Santa Monica at sunset. Day Two covers Downtown, the Getty, and Venice. Section 03 is the new-for-2027 story of the Hollywood Sign. Traffic is the real obstacle, so group your plans by area and use Metro rail or rideshare where it helps.

ESSENTIAL QUICK FACTS

CURRENCY
US dollar (cards accepted nearly everywhere)

TRANSIT
Metro bus and rail · pay with a TAP card or app

TIME ZONE
Pacific (UTC–8; UTC–7 in summer)

EMERGENCY
911 · non-emergency 311

TIPPING
18–20% in restaurants

SALES TAX
About 9.5–10.25% — added at the register

01 DAY ONE

Hollywood · Griffith Observatory · Santa Monica

The first day pairs Old Hollywood with the best view in the city, then ends at the Pacific.

MORNING · 8:30 AM – 1:00 PM

8:30 AM

Griffith Observatory

A 1935 landmark above the city with free entry to the building and grounds, sweeping views, and the best look at the Hollywood Sign. Parking is limited, so consider a rideshare or the shuttle.

Mornings are calm. Check the observatory's current hours before you go.

11:00 AM

Hollywood Boulevard

Walk the Walk of Fame, past the TCL Chinese Theatre and the Dolby Theatre. It is busy and touristy, but worth one pass.

Keep a close eye on your bag in the crowds.

12:30 PM

Lunch — Original Farmers Market

The market at Fairfax and Third has been open since 1934 and has dozens of stalls. Pick a counter and graze.

Good for solo diners; no one minds a single seat.

AFTERNOON · 2:00 PM – 6:00 PM

2:00 PM

The Getty or the Broad

Choose one. The Getty Center is free to enter and has a hilltop garden and views. The Broad downtown is also free, though you may need a timed reservation.

Check each museum's current reservation rules before you go.

4:30 PM

Santa Monica Pier

Drive or take the Metro E Line to Santa Monica. Walk the pier and the beach path as the light turns golden.

The beach is cool in the evening. Bring a layer.

EVENING · 7:00 PM

7:00 PM

Dinner — Third Street Promenade

A pedestrian street with restaurants for every budget. Walk until something smells good.

Singles are easy to seat at bars and counters.

Los Angeles is a city of neighborhoods. Pick two or three and give each a proper afternoon.

02 DAY TWO

Downtown · Grand Central · Venice

The second day moves from Downtown's old buildings and food halls to Venice's canals and boardwalk.

MORNING · 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

9:00 AM

Downtown Walk

Start at Union Station, then stroll Olvera Street, the Bradbury Building, Angels Flight, and Grand Central Market.

Weekday mornings are quieter.

11:30 AM

Grand Central Market

A 1917 food hall with dozens of vendors, from tacos to pupusas to coffee. Eat something at a counter.

Lines move quickly and you can order in small plates.

12:30 PM

Walt Disney Concert Hall

Frank Gehry's stainless steel landmark. Walk around the outside for free, or look into the lobby.

Check the schedule if you want a rehearsal or tour.

AFTERNOON · 2:30 PM – 6:00 PM

2:30 PM

Venice Canals

A quiet residential network of canals built in the early 1900s, lined with small bridges and gardens. A restful contrast to the boardwalk.

Walk on the paths, and respect the residents' privacy.

4:30 PM

Venice Boardwalk

A beachfront walk of street performers, murals, and Muscle Beach. Watch the skate park and the sunset.

Keep your bag in front of you in crowds.

EVENING · 7:30 PM

7:30 PM

Dinner — Abbot Kinney Boulevard

Venice's best shopping street, with restaurants and cafés at the heart of the neighborhood.

Weekend tables fill early; reserve or arrive before 7.

03 THE SIGN

The Hollywood Sign

DID YOU KNOW?

Did you know that the Hollywood Sign was meant to last only eighteen months?

It was built in 1923 as an advertisement for a housing development and spelled out "Hollywoodland." The last four letters were removed in 1949, and the sign was rebuilt in steel in 1978.

WHERE TO SEE IT

Griffith Observatory and the Hollywood & Highland area offer clear views. Nearby neighborhood access has been restricted, and hiking directly to the sign is discouraged, so use the official viewpoints.

HOW TO DO IT RIGHT

Go on a clear morning, when the light is on the sign, or a late afternoon for a golden glow. A telephoto lens on your phone helps.

BEST TIME TO GO

Fall and winter mornings give the clearest air. Summer mornings can bring a marine layer, locally called June Gloom.

04 WHERE TO EAT

LA's table — tacos, markets and trucks

Los Angeles is a city of counters, stalls, and trucks. Singles are welcome everywhere, and the best food is often the cheapest.

BREAKFAST & LUNCH

Grand Central Market
DOWNTOWN · $
Dozens of food stalls under one roof since 1917.

Original Farmers Market
FAIRFAX · $
A 1934 market with dozens of counters and stalls.

Langer's Deli
WESTLAKE · $$
A legendary pastrami sandwich on rye.

Tacos around Boyle Heights
BOYLE HEIGHTS · $
Taco stands and trucks, easy and cheap.

DINNER & LATE

Abbot Kinney restaurants
VENICE · $$
A strip of cafés, bars, and dinner spots.

Koreatown BBQ
KOREATOWN · $$
Grill-at-the-table barbecue, with solo-friendly counters in many spots.

Pink's Hot Dogs
HOLLYWOOD · $
A late-night stand open since 1939.

Santa Monica seafood
SANTA MONICA · $$
Fish and chips and chowder near the pier.

05 GETTING AROUND

Getting around Los Angeles

Los Angeles is a driving city, but Metro rail covers more than people expect. Group your plans by area.

Metro bus & rail	about $1.75	Pay with a TAP card or app. Check current fares before you go.
LAX Airport	Metro or rideshare	Use the LAX shuttle to the Metro C Line, or rideshare.
Metro E Line	Downtown to Santa Monica	A direct rail link to the beach.
Rideshare	varies	Useful for hills and late nights.
Rental car	by the day	Helpful for the Getty, Malibu, and the canyons, but parking costs money.

Choose one or two neighborhoods per day and avoid rush hour on the freeways.

06 BACKUP PLANS

When it rains in LA

Rain is rare, but when it comes, LA's museums and food halls shine.

MIRACLE MILE
LACMA
A huge art museum on Wilshire Boulevard. Check what is open during renovations.

MIRACLE MILE
La Brea Tar Pits
Ice Age fossils in the middle of the city.

DOWNTOWN
The Broad
Contemporary art, free general admission.

HOLLYWOOD
Academy Museum
A museum of film history on Wilshire.

EXPOSITION PARK
Natural History Museum
Dinosaurs and gems, a family favorite.

DOWNTOWN
Grand Central Market
A covered market for a rainy lunch.

07 NEIGHBORHOODS

Know your neighborhoods

OLD HOLLYWOOD
Hollywood
The Walk of Fame, the Egyptian Theatre, and the sign above.

CANALS & BOARDWALK
Venice
Artists, skaters, and the canals.

BEACH TOWN
Santa Monica
The pier, the promenade, and the bike path.

DOWNTOWN
Downtown LA
Historic buildings, food halls, and museums.

HILLSIDE CALM
Silver Lake
Coffee shops, small restaurants, and a reservoir path.

LITTLE TOKYO
Arts District
Murals, breweries, and converted warehouses.

08 GOOD TO KNOW

What nobody tells you

- Distances are larger than they look. Plan by neighborhood, not by landmark.
- Traffic peaks on weekday mornings and afternoons. Avoid the freeways at rush hour.
- Pay for Metro with a TAP card or app. Check the current fares before you go.
- Beach mornings can be cloudy in May and June. The sun usually breaks through by afternoon.
- Bring a light jacket. Evenings are cool near the coast, even in summer.
- Tip 18–20% in restaurants. Sales tax is added at the register.

WHEN TO GO

Mar–May	Best overall	Warm days, clear skies, and green hills.
Jun–Aug	Peak season	Dry and sunny, with some coastal fog in June.
Sep–Nov	Second best	The warmest, clearest weather of the year.
Dec–Feb	Off-season	Mild and occasionally rainy; great for museums.

09 SOLO TRAVELER SAFETY

Is Los Angeles safe?

Generally safe in tourist areas, with the usual big-city awareness. Car break-ins are the most common problem for visitors, so never leave valuables in a parked car. Stay alert in crowds and late at night in unfamiliar areas.

NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY AT A GLANCE

Santa Monica & Venice (day)	●●●●●
Griffith Park & Silver Lake	●●●●○
Beverly Hills & West Hollywood	●●●●○
Hollywood Boulevard	●●●○○
Downtown at night	●●●○○
Skid Row area	●○○○○

COMMON SCAMS

Street vendors and costumed characters on Hollywood Boulevard may ask for tips or sell mix tapes. Decline politely and keep walking. Never leave belongings in a parked car.

HEALTH & MEDICAL

For emergencies call 911. Drink water in the sun and use sunscreen; the heat can build quickly in the canyons.

SOLO TRAVELERS

Share your plans with someone back home, charge your phone, and use rideshare late at night. Stick to busy, well-lit areas after dark.

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Police, fire & ambulance	911
Non-emergency (city services)	311
LAPD non-emergency	1-877-275-5273
Poison control	1-800-222-1222

10 PLANNING CALENDAR

Los Angeles, month by month

A year-round look at the events that shape the city. Exact dates shift annually.

JAN–FEB AWARDS SEASON

- The Golden Globes, the Grammys, and the Oscars fill the winter calendar with red carpets.

FEB–APR WILDFLOWERS

- Hillsides and desert nearby bloom after wet winters.

MAY–JUN JUNE GLOOM

- Marine layer clouds cool the coast most mornings.

JUL–AUG SUMMER CONCERTS

- The Hollywood Bowl hosts outdoor concerts under the stars.

SEP–OCT PEAK WEATHER

- Hot, clear days and warm evenings; a favorite time to visit.

DEC HOLIDAY LIGHTS

- Neighborhood light displays and the Hollywood Christmas Parade.

LAX

Every Stop, Mapped

Scan the code to open the free interactive Los Angeles map — every stop in this guide, filterable by day, food, and transport.

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