



# Los Angeles, California



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## City of Angels Offers More than Stars

**L**os Angeles is famous for its Hollywood movie stars and filmmakers, but visitors to the “City of Angels” can venture beyond Universal Studios and Grauman’s Chinese Theatre to a cosmopolitan city that offers activities from surfing at Malibu’s pristine beaches to exploring the desert wildlife of Joshua Tree National Park.

### Then and Now

The many freeways that criss-cross Los Angeles trace the city’s history. Highway 101 follows the old El Camino Real, a trail built by Spanish missionaries from 1769 to 1823. Hybrid convertibles

now zip down roads that Native Americans and Spanish settlers once traveled on horseback.

When Mexico gained its independence from Spain in 1821, the city of Los Angeles still had a tiny population of about 100 people. This changed dramatically after 1848, when gold was discovered in California. Millions of people rushed to the West Coast to strike it rich, and the population of Los Angeles grew into the thousands. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo had ceded California to the United States in 1848, and all of its residents became citizens.

City history includes these other milestones:

- 1886 — The price of a train ticket between Kansas City and Los Angeles falls to a dollar, prompting another population boom. By 1890 the population of Los Angeles reaches 50,000.

The Santa Monica Pier is a popular tourist destination.  
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- 1905 — Real estate developer Abbot Kinney carves out canals near Santa Monica Beach, naming the district “the Venice of California.” Six of the original canals still exist, and both locals and tourists stroll along them after visiting Venice Beach.

- 1907 — The Southwest Museum of the American Indian opens. Today it holds one of the largest and most important collections of Native American art and cultural artifacts in the United States.

- 1915 — Carl Laemmle opens Universal Film Manufacturing Company, the world’s largest motion picture production facility. Today, you can visit Universal Studios and take a tour during



The Getty Center’s architecture helps attract 1.3 million visitors annually to the location in Los Angeles ©Shutterstock

## The People

The second-largest city in the United States, Los Angeles is home to more than 3,800,000 people. The city’s rich culture is reflected in its many ethnic communities, including Chinatown, Filipinotown, Little Ethiopia and Thai Town. Latinos make up almost half of the city’s diverse population, which speaks more than 200 different languages.

## The Land

Framed by the Pacific Ocean to the west and the San Gabriel Mountains to the north, Los Angeles boasts varied terrains. The city’s 1,200 square kilometers cover hills and valleys that are home to diverse wetlands, gorgeous coasts and arid deserts.

## The Weather

Los Angeles has a subtropical-Mediterranean climate, with warm temperatures year-round. Albert Hammond famously sang, “It Never Rains in Southern California,” and with 330 days of sun, visitors can enjoy Venice Beach even in winter.

which you’ll see the set of *Jaws*, the first modern blockbuster.

- 1922 — The Hollywood Bowl holds its first concert. Today, it is the summer home of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Artists from Frank Sinatra and Judy Garland to the Beatles and Juanes have performed on its stage.

- 2005 — Antonio Villaraigosa wins the race for mayor of Los Angeles, becoming the city’s first mayor of Hispanic descent since 1872.

## Live Like an Angelino

In Los Angeles, the sights and sounds of the movies come alive. The Griffith Observatory, used as a set in *Rebel Without a Cause* and *The Terminator*, is also a planetarium with an extensive array of science and space exhibits. The Leonard Nimoy Event Horizon Theater, named for the actor who played Spock in the original *Star Trek* television series, opened in 2006.

From Griffith Observatory, you can hike to the world-famous Hollywood

sign. The surrounding hills and trails are part of Griffith Park, the largest urban park in the United States. In 1896 Colonel Griffith J. Griffith donated almost 13 square kilometers of his ranch land to create the public space. It now covers 16 square kilometers of mountains, dales and flatlands between Hollywood and the San Fernando Valley.

In west Los Angeles, you can cruise down the Pacific Coast Highway and visit the Getty Villa. Looking out over the ocean, the Getty Museum houses a large collection of Greek and Roman art. Also on the Pacific Coast Highway, the Santa Monica Pier offers spectacular views of the city from its solar-powered Ferris wheel. Whether you enjoy swimming at the beach, hiking along gorgeous trails or eating in Beverly Hills in hopes of spotting a celebrity, Los Angeles has something for most everyone.

