

# Column: Live L.A. like a local. Tips from readers on where to take visitors

 [latimes.com/california/story/2019-07-26/where-to-take-visitors-to-los-angeles](https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2019-07-26/where-to-take-visitors-to-los-angeles)

July 27,  
2019



There's always one spoilsport.

Dozens of readers weighed in with great suggestions after I asked in a recent column where you should take a visitor who wants to see something other than the obvious sights in greater Los Angeles. Then there was this response from a former Angeleno:

2:02 PM, Jul. 27, 2019 In an earlier version of this article, Palos Verdes Peninsula enthusiast Jean Adelsman's first name was miscast as Jane.

"Try as I might, I could not think of one venue in Los Angeles I would myself want to revisit, nor could I recommend any to visitors," he wrote. "I recommend my visiting relatives stay away from Los Angeles. Sad but true."

OK, Mr. Cranky. Sure. But scads of locals leaped at the chance to play tour guide in greater Los Angeles, and I could fill a book or two with their answers.

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Jerry Rosenstein says you should get a good look at the natural beauty of Topanga and

Kanan Dume canyons, but you have to do it the right way — in a convertible, top down.

James Morrow narrowed his list of 40 travel tips down to eight, one of which was to check out Marilyn Monroe's crypt at Westwood Village Memorial Park.

Flea, of the Red Hot Chili Peppers, recommends Franklin Bell's Blues Workshop in Watts, a Fairfax High School basketball game in season, and a trip to the Deukmejian Wilderness Park in Glendale.

"Just minutes away from the chaos of the city, and get yourself lost in the wooded chaparral high above the sprawling metropolis, creeks rippling, bears lumbering, and bobcats creeping," says Flea. "Unbelievable!"

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Flea's enthusiasm for the place he calls home was far more typical of the responses. Sorting through them, I felt like I was at an L.A. love-in, with some people sending me long and detailed itineraries that I don't have space for, unfortunately.

"I've lived in L.A. for 20 years, traveled many times in every direction and still haven't seen a lot of the places recommended by readers."

### Steve Lopez

They sent their favorite haunts for breakfast, lunch and dinner, their favorite places to watch sunsets or just go for a walk. Vasquez Rocks in Agua Dulce got lots of endorsements, as did Descanso Gardens in La Cañada Flintridge.



Vasquez Rocks in Agua Dulce were recommended by many readers as a must-visit.

(Al Seib / Los Angeles Times )

I've lived in L.A. for 20 years, traveled many times in every direction and still haven't seen a lot of the places recommended by readers.

The Nethercutt Collection in Sylmar, for instance, which got lots of votes from people who raved about the antique automobiles, furniture and clocks. I'm embarrassed to admit I haven't yet been to another reader favorite — the Museum of Jurassic Technology in Culver City. Among the many treasures there is a collection of items from Los Angeles mobile home and trailer parks.

Frederick Frey was one of several who mentioned the Velaslavasay Panorama near University Park, a trove of panorama paintings from the 18th and 19th centuries. Others recommended a visit to the Adamson House and Malibu Lagoon Museum for a look at the history of Chumash and Spanish influences.

Union Station, for many, is a must-see. Same goes for the Korean Friendship Bell in San Pedro.

Rachel Kafka and Nate Hennagin, who have a blog called Finding Lost Angeles,

recommended a visit to a UNESCO World Heritage site — Frank Lloyd Wright’s pre-modernist, century-old Hollyhock House in Barnsdall Park.

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If your visiting friends or relatives are jet-lagged, asleep by day and wide awake at night, have them hook up with former L.A. City Councilman Mike Woo, Cal Poly Pomona’s dean of environmental design. The best way to appreciate Los Angeles as “a complicated living organism,” Woo said, is to scour the streets when the city sleeps.

“The invisible city is setting up, cleaning up, moving pieces around, and getting ready for many of the essentials of urban life that most people take for granted,” said Woo, who takes students on post-midnight tours of the produce and flower markets, the LAPD station on skid row, the Metro bus maintenance facility and the emergency room at County-USC Medical Center.

A lot of hometown pride showed up in suggestions from readers who raised a flag for Glendora, Orange, Highland Park, Pacoima, San Fernando and Echo Park. Jean Adelsman didn’t just recommend a tour of the Palos Verdes Peninsula — she laid out a specific route, turn by turn.

“Start on Palos Verdes Boulevard, heading southbound and merging onto Palos Verdes Drive West,” she wrote, with recommended stops at Malaga Cove, Point Vicente Lighthouse, Wayfarers Chapel and Portuguese Bend.

“Gorgeous views. Absolutely fabulous,” said Adelsman. “This isn’t South Bay chauvinism. This is the reaction of worldly travelers who compare the vistas with the Corniche on the French Riviera.”



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Terranea Cove Beach at Terranea Resort in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

2/12

The grounds and entryway to Wayfarers Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

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Inside Wayfarers Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

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The view from the grounds of Wayfarers Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

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Wayfarers Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

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The grounds and view from Wayfarers Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

7/12

The grounds and view from Wayfarers Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

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The fountain at Wayfarers Chapel in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

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Terranea Cove Beach at Terranea Resort in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

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Whale spotters at Point Vicente Interpretive Center in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

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The Point Vicente Lighthouse as seen from Point Vicente Interpretive Center in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

12/12

Whale watching at Point Vicente Interpretive Center in Rancho Palos Verdes.

(Katie Falkenberg / Los Angeles Times)

Amy Aquino, who nails her role as an LAPD lieutenant in the “Bosch” series based on Michael Connelly’s novels, recommended a Sunset Ranch horseback ride in the Hollywood Hills and a trip to the Bronson Canyon “Bat Cave” used in the “Batman” TV series.

For fans of “Bosch,” Aquino sent a list of Season 4 film locations – the Bradbury Building, Grand Central Market, Angel’s Flight and the Biltmore Hotel.

Sticking with the entertainment theme, Andy Sydney pointed out a detail that’s probably missed by most people, residents and visitors alike.

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"Whenever I'm traveling through Hollywood with visiting tourists," said Sydney, "I like to point out the massive bas-relief pattern on the wall of the 101/Hollywood freeway that resembles a processed roll of 35mm film."

Several readers recommended taking in a movie at the Hollywood Forever Cemetery. And Kelly Aden offered a tip on another place to see a movie.

"I would take my visitor to the Vista Theater in Silverlake for a 1:30 matinee for \$6.50," she said of the Lewis A. Smith-designed movie palace that's Spanish Colonial Revival on the outside and Egyptian-themed on the inside. It goes back to the days of silent movies and vaudeville.

"Doesn't matter what's playing," says Aden. "The Vista is the show."

Linda Deutsch, the famed Associated Press reporter who covered some of the biggest crime and court stories in Los Angeles history — including the Robert F. Kennedy assassination and the Charles Manson and O.J. Simpson trials — checked in with her list. She's still chasing stories, and said a good place to find them is at the Last Bookstore in downtown L.A.

"I dare you to not find a must-have treasure among the thousands of used and new books," Deutsch said.



Downtown L.A.'s The Last Bookstore

(Jay L. Clendenin / Los Angeles Times)

Deutsch was one of several readers who said that when they need to get away from it all, they go to the Self-Realization Fellowship Lake Shrine in Pacific Palisades.

"The meditation garden is the perfect place for a calm reflective respite amid nature's beauty," said Deutsch.

Mick McGuire offered an entirely different kind of getaway — a visit to the fabric district near downtown L.A.

"Just down the street from the piñata market, around the corner from the produce market, the toy market, the garment district," wrote McGuire. "The place is like a beehive. Workers (Hispanic), shop owners (Mediterranean), cloth from every corner of the world..."

"Great opportunity...to reflect on immigration, thick accents swirling, questions answered, getting hustled, educated.... This could have been New York lower Eastside in 1910 but it wasn't. It was the most multi-faceted place in America. Los Angeles."

That seems like a pretty good ending.

Many thanks to all of you who sent tips on where to go and what to see in a city where there's so much to do, even us locals can pretend to be tourists.