

(/)

Eat And Drink

(<https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/things-to-do/eat-and-drink/>)

Inspire Me (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/inspire-me/>)

Los Angeles

(<https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/destination/los-angeles/>)

Sightseeing (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/things-to-do/sightseeing/>)

Unique & Unexpected

(<https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/things-to-do/unique-unexpected/>)

# Getting Witchy in Los Angeles: 11 Magical Places to Visit

[Blog \(/blog\)](#) · [Los Angeles \(https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/destination/los-](https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/destination/los-angeles/)

[angeles/\)](#) · [Getting Witchy in Los Angeles: 11 Magical Places to Visit](#)



The real magic of Los Angeles is that it's always full of surprises.

While the Wizarding World of Harry Potter at Universal Studios Hollywood continues to delight visitors, even more magical adventures await here in the City of Angels. From the new downtown Skyspace to a Los Feliz perfumery where you can create your own potions, there are plenty of destinations in town to inspire your inner witch or wizard.

**A quick note about COVID-19:** As we quarantine in Los Angeles to help flatten the curve, many places listed here may have adjusted hours or more limited availability than usual. But I've visited each of these wonderfully witchy places pre-pandemic and promise you they belong on your must-see list for future travels.

Now let's get started. Here's your guide to 11 truly magical places in LA.

## 1. Visit the unusual home of an eccentric heiress.

In witchcraft, hollyhocks are a symbol of growth and rebirth. They have had a wide range of medicinal uses throughout history, which made them a favorite flower of eccentric oil industry heiress Aline Barnsdall.

When Barnsdall commissioned Frank Lloyd Wright to design her home and arts center at Olive Hill more than a century ago, she insisted Wright dismiss his custom of naming designs for their patrons and honor her by calling it [Hollyhock House \(https://culturela.org/cultural-centers/hollyhock-house/\)](https://culturela.org/cultural-centers/hollyhock-house/).

**Barnsdall Art Park Entrance / Credit: Barnsdall Art Park Foundation**

---

Wright agreed, although Barnsdall fired him before the house was complete. Other acclaimed architects happily took over the project. Many years later his son, Lloyd Wright, oversaw a renovation and added touches of his own.

**A glimpse at the intricate interior of Hollyhock House / Credit:  
Barnsdall Art Park Foundation**

---

A tour of Hollyhock House reveals the importance the flower held for Barnsdall, while engravings throughout the house recall ancient runes. Design choices honor the four elements: water, earth, fire, and air. It's a good idea to call ahead for tour schedules and to check to see if there are any concerts or special events.

**2. Maybe magical potions are your new thing? Try mixing your own.**

**Credit: Opus Oils**

---

We all know the importance of a good scent when you're mixing potions, and who's to say perfume doesn't have a little sorcery of its own?

A short walk from Barnsdall Art Park, Opus Oils Jitterbug Perfume Parlor (<https://www.opussoils.com/parlour>) is the workshop of Hollywood's master perfumer Kendra Hart. Back in the good old days of shopping hotspot Barneys New York in Beverly Hills (a famous department store, now closed), Hart was one of the creators of the in-store apothecary, a favorite with celebrities for custom fragrances.

**Credit: Opus Oils**

---

These days with her own perfume school, she receives the same rave reviews. Classes, scent events, and custom blending parties are available throughout the year, but for a truly bewitching experience you can stop in to browse or to schedule a private consultation.

### **3. Step into a world of wizardry at Universal Studios.**

**Credit: Stacy Bierlein**

---

This one is worth its own LA day trip.

A snow-covered turret is not the sort of thing one expects to see in the Hollywood Hills, but there it is, thanks to Universal Studios Hollywood (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/your-complete-guide-to-visiting-universal-studios-hollywood/>) and the Wizarding World of Harry Potter.

Hogwarts Castle, complete with those turrets and an astronomy tower, hosts The Forbidden Journey, a state-of-the-art flight on an enchanted sofa that puts you inside the movies. Watch for steam-breathing dragons, giant spiders, flying snitches, and your favorite Gryffindors.

**Credit: Stacy Bierlein**

---

Once you have survived the journey, head over to Three Broomsticks for a butterbeer, or dance with Beauxbatons Academy witches at a Tri-Wizard celebration. If you've forgotten your wand, no worries, the staff at Ollivanders will know what you need.

**Beauxbatons dancers at Universal Studios Hollywood / Credit: Stacy Bierlein**

---

The magic continues beyond the gates of Hogsmeade. Look for Draco Malfoy's owl among Universal's animal superstars, and dare to stare down zombies in "The Walking Dead" attraction.

## **4. Get ready to time travel in Echo Park.**

**Time Travel Mart postcards / Credit: Stacy Bierlein**

---

There's a rather sweet backstory to this one.

When acclaimed author Dave Eggers noticed a need in his community for tutoring centers to help students with their writing, he explained something that should have been obvious. No kid wants to walk into a building labeled "tutoring center."

So he got creative. [San Francisco](https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/destination/san-francisco/) (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/destination/san-francisco/>) got a Pirate Supply Store. [Brooklyn](https://www.exp1.com/blog/lesser-known-queens-brooklyn/) (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/lesser-known-queens-brooklyn/>) seemed like the right spot for the Superhero Shop. But in my opinion, Los Angeles got the best of the bunch: a [Time Travel Mart](https://timetravelmart.com) (<https://timetravelmart.com>).

From the outside on Sunset Boulevard, it looks like your average convenience store, but inside is all the equipment a time traveler needs. There are guides on how to achieve time travel and treasures that adventurers have brought back from the past.

Upgrade your experience with insider tips from our local experts.

It's rewarding to peruse the shelves and let sales associates answer all your time travel questions. It's a great stop for families, too. Merit badges are available to award young time travelers for tasks like myth creation, crypt management, prehistoric pet care, and extinction preparedness.

**Insider tip:** Echo Park happens to be a good place for a spectacular LA sunset (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/7-under-the-radar-spots-in-la-to-enjoy-a-spectacular-sunset/>), another magical sight in the city.

## 5. Dine nearby inside your own enchanted greenhouse.

Don't leave without exploring the Echo Park neighborhood. The owners of nearby Lady Byrd Café responded to the COVID crisis by installing private greenhouses in their dining garden. It's pretty magical. You're in a translucent miniature house surrounded by greenery within and without, suspended in nature, a world away from the bustling city.

And the food isn't bad either. I like their signature spicy pulled-pork sandwich, or you might try something new from the juice bar. Grab-and-go farm-fresh delights are available, but it's a lovely place to linger. Lady Byrd Café also features an impressive children's menu, featuring not-so-standard fare like the Egg & Cheese Burrito and the Nutella Monte Cristo.

## **6. Then head off in search of a secret.**

**Credit: Dave Pifer**

---

If you have time to explore further, don't miss the charms of the nearby Silverlake neighborhood. Sunset Junction, in the heart of Silverlake and off the beaten path of tourists, is one of the best places to live like a local.

It's easy to spend hours getting lost in the relaxed atmosphere of eclectic boutiques like The Secret Headquarters, a haven for fans of graphic novels and indie comic books.

## **7. Next, find your favorite brew at a hangout beloved by locals.**

**Credit: Artisanal Brewers Collective**

---

Another Echo Park favorite, Mohawk Bend, boasts elevated pub food, vegan desserts, and is well known for California craft beer. The vibrant decor and relaxed, eclectic crowd are the perfect nod to modern-day LA.

**Insider tip:** If you have received a parking ticket in the past 24 hours, the staff at Mohawk Bend feels your pain. Bring in your parking ticket and a bartender will serve your first beer for a penny — just a bit of local wizardry.

## 8. Collect spellbooks and more at The Last Bookstore.

**Credit: Stacy Bierlein**

---

The Last Bookstore is a reader's utopia. Set in the former Crocker Citizens National Bank, it's a gorgeous 1914 Art Deco structure designed by Parkinson and Bergstrom. (Those are the big-name architects whose downtown jewels inspired backdrops for scenes in classic films like "The Big Sleep" and "Double Indemnity.") The bookstore offers visitors 22,000 square feet devoted to new, used, and rare books, as well as vinyl records and local crafts.

Giant bank vaults house mystery, thriller, and occult sections. Pass through a tunnel made entirely from old books to reach a former office space with floor-to-ceiling shelves that offer up used books for a dollar each.

Elsewhere, an art annex showcases rare and out-of-print coffee table books. Oversized sofas in the center of the store await meetings of feminist, Gothic, horror, and dystopian book clubs. And poetry readings and live music are commonplace in the downstairs atrium.

**Insider tip:** Don't skip the second-floor gallery. I spoke to patrons who believe it to be haunted. (Listen for the jingling of keys.)

Upstairs you will find the Spring Arts Collective, where works by downtown artists are displayed and sold alongside vintage cameras and posters. There's also a yarn shop here offering walk-in knitting lessons — because yarn bombing never goes out of style in LA.

## 9. Draw down the moon in DTLA.

**Credit: Jakob Layman**

---

You're already in downtown LA, the heart of the city and a perfect place to wind down your day. From The Last Bookstore, it's an easy 10-minute walk to Grand Central Market, the famed meeting place and collection of food vendors from all over the city.

Whether you're in the mood for delicacies from Korea, Italy, Indonesia, Mexico, Thailand, or Vietnam, or simply craving a classic deli sandwich, you'll find a chef making it here. Try Octopus Tacos from La Tostaderia; Adobo Fried Rice from Sari Sari; or a Scottish Salmon Bowl from Prawn. But do your best to leave room for a bowl of Turkish Coffee Ice Cream from McConnell's. I highly recommend it.

**Credit: Jakob Layman**

---

Just beyond the market is California Plaza and [Angel's Flight](https://www.exp1.com/blog/angels-flight-railway-in-la-what-to-expect-from-your-ride/) (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/angels-flight-railway-in-la-what-to-expect-from-your-ride/>), the shortest railway in the world. Not the train to Hogwarts, but it has a magic all its own.

## 10. Fly above the city on the Skyslide.

Credit: OUE Skyspace LA

---

Of course, no trip downtown Los Angeles is complete without a visit to OUE Skyspace Los Angeles (<https://www.oue-skyspace.com>). Located on the 70th floor of the US Bank Tower at West 5th Street, it's the highest observation deck in Southern California.

Credit: OUE Skyspace LA

---

After taking in panoramic views of Los Angeles and the Pacific Ocean, the famed Skyslide invites visitors to fly 1,000 feet above the city, this time without a broom. By night or day, it is a wild ride. Skyslide, made entirely of glass, is 45 feet long with a 4-foot wide entrance. It descends from the exterior of the 70th to 69th floor of the tower. And the view is extraordinary — screaming is definitely allowed.

## 11. Don your wings to show your angelic side.

Angel wings mural by Colette Miller / Credit: OUE Skyspace LA

---

Don't miss artist Colette Miller's striking angel wings mural. There's one located right by the observation deck to remember your flight with the perfect photo op.

LA boasts several of these murals around town if you want to show off your angelic side for Instagram. This map (<https://colettemiller.com/angelwings>) shows where to spot them, from the Arts District to Koreatown.

# Witchy Fun and More: Always Magical Here in LA

From ocean to skyscraper, this city is always an adventure. It spills over its own borders, resists classifications, and honors the naughty and haughty along with the nice.

On one of my [many tours around LA](https://www.exp1.com/los-angeles-tours/) (https://www.exp1.com/los-angeles-tours/), I noticed someone once left a note at the Skyslide entrance that called it “thrilling and not for the faint of heart.”

I like that. It’s an apt description for the ride — and for the bewitching charm of Los Angeles as well.

Posted by Stacy Bierlein

(<https://www.exp1.com/blog/author/stacy/>) · August 5, 2020

---

## YOU MAY ALSO LIKE...

(<https://www.exp1.com/blog/venice-beach-canals-history/>)

(<https://www.exp1.com/blog/why-reasons-to-hit-runyon-canyon-park-while-visiting-la/>)

(<https://www.exp1.com/blog/why-santa-monica-pier-is-a-destination-for-everyone/>)

---

**The Venice Beach  
Canals: A Glimpse  
of Italy in Los  
Angeles**

(<https://www.exp1.com/blog/venice-beach-canals-history/>)

**Four Reasons to Hit Runyon Canyon Park While Visiting LA**

(<https://www.exp1.com/blog/four-reasons-to-hit-runyon-canyon-park-while-visiting-la/>)

**Why Santa Monica Pier is a Destination for Everyone**

(<https://www.exp1.com/blog/why-santa-monica-pier-is-a-destination-for-everyone/>)

---

**f** (<https://www.facebook.com/ExperienceFirst>) **ig** ([https://www.instagram.com/experiencefirst\\_](https://www.instagram.com/experiencefirst_)) **YouTube**

(<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCN2E5IBu3fyiK3zySjw4Tw>) **p** ([https://www.pinterest.com/ExperienceFirst\\_](https://www.pinterest.com/ExperienceFirst_))

**rss** (<https://www.exp1.com/blog>) | **New York** (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/destination/new-york/>) | **Paris** (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/destination/paris/>) | **Los Angeles** (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/destination/los-angeles/>) | **San Francisco** (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/destination/san-francisco/>) | **Dallas** (<https://www.exp1.com/blog/category/destination/dallas/>)