



Los Angeles - City Business Guide

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Overview

Known for its sandy beaches and its star-studded entertainment industry, Los Angeles also boasts year-round warm weather, internationally renowned art museums and the latest in culinary trends. As well as being the "Entertainment Capital of the World", the city is home to thriving health care, business services, international trade, wholesale trade, technology and defense industries.

Los Angeles offers a rich program of diverse performing arts that includes dance, opera, classical and pop music and the latest Broadway hits. But the city's cultural wealth also extends to the visual arts. The freshly renovated, highly praised Getty Museum and the recently expanded Los Angeles County Museum of Art both exhibit impressive collections. Other attractions include Universal Studios Hollywood, which allows visitors to see the process behind some of their favorite movies and TV shows, and the new Long Beach Aquarium of the Pacific, which allows you to observe sea life up close.

Business Etiquette

Business style in Los Angeles tends to be much less formal than in other major business centers. While those working in the financial and commercial areas of the city dress in traditional business style, the entertainment industry has embraced the look of business casual.

* Formal dress is the norm for corporate executives and those working in the legal, consulting, accounting and banking industries. Dress is more casual in other sectors, particularly in the technology domain and particularly during hot summer weather.

* Meetings are often held over lunch, dinner or cocktails, and the question of the tab is related to the nature of the business. If you are trying to make a sale over the meal or drinks, you should be prepared to pick up the tab. Individual checks are also quite common.

* Appointments should be made and kept punctually.

* It is customary to open and end a meeting with a handshake.

* Casual conversation, lasting a few minutes, often starts a meeting.

* Business cards can be presented at the start or end of a meeting.

* Privacy should be respected in business contexts.

* An open and direct business style is the norm.

* Deals should be followed up and confirmed in writing as quickly as possible.

* Friendships in the business community are key to getting things done.

* Ask where (and when) smoking is permitted.

* If invited to someone's house, it is customary to bring flowers or another hostess gift.

Chamber of Commerce

Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce Tel.: +1 213 580-7591

The U.S. and Mexico Chamber of Commerce Tel.: +1 213 623-7725

Chinese Chamber of Commerce Tel.: +1 213 617-0396

French American Chamber of Commerce Tel.: +1 323 651-4741

German American Chamber of Commerce Tel.: +1 310 297-7979

Korean Chamber Of Commerce Tel.: +1 213 480-1115

Embassies and Consulates

British Consulate 11766 Wilshire Blvd, Suite 1200; Tel.: 1 310 481-0031

Chinese Consulate General 443 Shatto Place Tel: +1 213 807-8088

Czech Republic Consulate 10990 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 1100; Tel: +1 310 473 9813

French Consulate 10990 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 300; Tel.: +1 310 235-3200

German Consulate 6222 Wilshire Boulevard, Suite 500; Tel.: +1 323 930-2703

Italian Consulate General 12400 Wilshire Boulevard # 300; Tel.: +1 310 820-0622

Japanese Consulate 350 South Grand Avenue, Suite 1700; Tel.: +1 213617-6700

Business Centers

Business centers provide a range of services that include secretarial, translation/interpretation, and office services, including computer rentals, audio/visual equipment rentals, cellular phone rentals, copy and printing services, and temporary office space and staff.

Greater Los Angeles World Trade Center-Long Beach One World Trade Center, Suite 295 Long Beach, CA; Tel.: +1 310 495-7070

Los Angeles World Trade Center 350 S. Figueroa Street, Suite 172 Los Angeles, CA; Tel.: +1 213 680-1888

C W Business Center 8939 S Sepulveda Blvd # 102, Los Angeles, CA; Tel.: +1 310 568-1024

Premier Business Centers 6601 Center Dr. West Suite 500 ; Tel : +1 310 348

Conference and Exhibition Centers

Los Angeles Convention Center 1201 South Figueroa Street; Tel.: +1 213741-1151

Lake Tahoe Center 604 S Saltair Avenue; Tel.: +1 310 476-1147

Davidson Executive Conference Center University of Southern California, 3415 S. Figueroa; Tel.: +1 213 740-5219

Beckman Center National Academies of Sciences & Engineering, 100 Academy, Irvine, CA; Tel.: +1 949 721-2200

Shrine Auditorium & Expo Center 649 W Jefferson Boulevard; Tel. +1 213 748-5116

Translation Offices

ALS International Translation Tel.: +1 310 203-8330

Anytime Anyplace Tel.: +1 310 915-1630

Atlas Language Services Toll-Free Tel.: +1 888 816-0577

Berlitz Translation Services Tel.: +1 310 260-7100

Exotic Languages Agency Toll-Free Tel.: +1 800 303-7200

Services Unlimited International Tel.: +1 310 274-2020

Global Language Solutions Tel.: (949) 798-1414

Courier/Messenger Services

A New York Minute Messenger Service Tel.: +1 310 313-1888

Freeway Messengers Tel.: +1 310 450-8999

Minute Man Delivery Tel.: +1 949 552 1776

Executive Express Tel.: +1 800 540 0600

DHL Tel.: +1 800 225-5345

FedEx Tel.: +1 800-463-3339

UPS Tel.: +1 800 742-5877

Internet Connection Place

All upper-range and most medium-priced hotels are equipped with dataports that allow guests to use laptop computers. Many hotels offer business centers equipped with computers and Internet access. Outside hotels, cyber cafes are available including:

Hope Cyber Cafe Tel.: +1 323 290-2410

Cyber Java Tel.: +1 323 466-5600

Visas & Customs

Passports valid for at least six months after arrival are required for all. In general, travelers visiting the U.S. are required visas. However, under the Visa Waiver Program, citizens of Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom are allowed to stay for 90 days without a visa. Citizens of Canada and Mexico do not need a visa but must carry proof of citizenship and identity.

Beginning October 26, 2004, all travelers, including children of any age, who want to travel visa-free to the United States under the Visa Waiver Program must have a Machine-readable passport.

Duty-free allowances are 200 cigarettes or 50 cigars or 2 kilograms of tobacco, 1 liter of alcohol, and gifts worth up to \$100. Meat products, seeds, plants, fruits, and hazardous goods are prohibited.

Phone Information

Area codes for the Los Angeles area include 213 (downtown), 323 (mid-city), 818 (San Fernando Valley), 310 (West Los Angeles and Santa Monica), 626 (Pasadena), and 562 (Long Beach).

Emergency Phone Numbers

Emergency police, fire, and ambulance 911

Tips and Rules for Use of Phone in Country

For local calls, dial the seven-digit telephone number. For long-distance calls within the U.S., dial 1, then the three-digit area code, then the seven-digit number. For long-distance calls outside the U.S., first dial 011 and the country code. Four special prefixes, "800," "888," "877," and "900," are not area codes but indicators of special services. "800," "888," and "877" are toll-free calls. The "900" numbers charge you for the call and are often expensive. For collect calls or operator-assisted calls, dial "0" instead of "1". For local directory assistance, dial 411. For long-distance information, dial 1, and then the appropriate area code followed by 555-1212.

The most common public phone is the coin-operated type. Telephone-card phones are becoming increasingly common.

Tips and Rules for Use and Rental of Mobile Phones

There are several cellular service providers in the U.S., including: Verizon Wireless, T-Mobile, Cingular, AT&T Wireless, and Sprint PCS. Mobile phone numbers follow the regular telephone number convention, with the seven-digit telephone number followed by the area code.

If you choose to bring your cellular phone into the U.S., be sure to check with your home cellular service provider to establish compatibility of your phone with systems abroad. Rent a locally compatible cellular phone before you arrive to obtain reasonable rates and reliable service.

Money

Foreign currency must be exchanged to U.S. dollars. Money can be exchanged at banks and various foreign-exchange services. Most restaurants, shops, and hotels will take travelers' checks and major credit cards. Travelers can also withdraw cash from ATMs.

The basic unit of U.S. currency is the dollar, which equals 100 cents. Coins are the copper penny (1 cent) and four silver coins: the nickel (5 cents), the dime (10 cents), the quarter (25 cents), and the half-dollar (50 cents). Silver \$1 coins and "golden" dollar coins also exist. Paper bills come in denominations of \$1, \$5, \$10, \$20, \$50, and \$100.

Tippling

- * **Restaurants** 15 to 20 percent of bill, none at fast-food restaurants
- * **Bars** About US\$1 per drink or 10% to 15% of drink prices
- * **Airport Skycap/Porter** US\$1 per piece of luggage
- * **Taxis** 10 percent of fare
- * **Hotel Bell Desk** US\$1 per piece of luggage or per taxi summoned
- * **Hotel Housekeeping** US\$1 per person per day
- * **Hotel Room Service** 15 percent of bill
- * **Parking Attendant/Valet** 15 percent of parking rate
- * **Haircare/Personal Services** 20 percent of bill

Time Difference

Los Angeles lies in the Pacific Time Zone (Greenwich Mean Time minus eight hours). The city observes daylight-saving time.





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VAT & Taxes

Sales tax in Los Angeles is 8%. The tax on hotel rooms is 12% (17% in some areas outside Los Angeles).

Voltage

110V AC, 60Hz. Plugs are of the flat, two-pin type.

Local Transportation

Getting from place to place in Los Angeles necessitates driving. Surprisingly, Los Angeles is not as intimidating as it seems to drive around. Do not expect to hail a cab while standing on a street corner. You must call in advance for a taxi in Los Angeles. Major hotels and airports have a constant stream of taxis.

Since distances are great in Los Angeles, traveling by taxi can be very expensive. The standard rate for a taxi is US\$1.90 plus US\$1.60 per mile. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) operates one of the largest bus services in the U.S. (over 1,500 buses) and three train lines. They are open weekdays during normal business hours. Downtown Los Angeles has a special bussystem called DASH, which services around the downtown area. The Red Line runs underneath downtown beginning at Union Station. Trains run to the Civic Center and MacArthur Park before splitting, with some heading to the mid-Wilshire area and others going north toward Hollywood, with stops at Beverly, Santa Monica and Sunset boulevards and the intersection of Hollywood and Vine. The Blue Line extends from 7th Street in downtown to Long Beach. The Metro Green Line is a light rail line running east-west through Los Angeles County, serving Watts, Inglewood, Manhattan Beach and Redondo Beach. The standard rate for bus or rail is US\$1.35 one way. A weekly Metro pass (US\$11) is good for unlimited rides on Metro Bus or Rail, or passengers can buy ten Metro tokens for US\$9, good for one-way fares on either bus or rail.

Health Info

No specific immunizations are needed to enter the United States. For more information, contact the Center for Disease Control at 800-342-2437.

Climate

Los Angeles is a year-round destination, with temperatures averaging in the mid-40s (Fahrenheit) in the winter and in the mid-80s during the summer. Los Angeles's hottest months are August and September. Most of the area's rain falls in January and February.

Public Holidays

- * **New Year's Day** January 1
- * **Martin Luther King Jr. Day** Third Monday in January
- * **Presidents' Day** Third Monday in February
- * **Memorial Day** Last Monday in May
- * **Independence Day** July 4
- * **Labor Day** First Monday in September
- * **Columbus Day** Second Monday in October
- * **Veterans' Day** November 11
- * **Thanksgiving** Fourth Thursday in November
- * **Christmas** December 25

Where to Eat

L'Orangerie, one of the city's most formally elegant establishments, serves exquisite nouvelle French cuisine. For a stylish meal, try the **Cinch**, a gorgeous space with rock walls, water fountains and quartz candleholders, with an incredible Japanese-inspired menu. Distinguished and roomy, **La Cachette** features sumptuous, healthy California-style French dishes. Meanwhile, **Spago** impresses with its size and design. A favourite setting for power lunches of fine American Continental cuisine is **Musso and Frank**. **Joss** has a reputation in Los Angeles for its stylish, minimalist interior and its finely nuanced Chinese cuisine. **Cozy Matsu** has made a name for itself with refined Japanese flavors. The best place to get Mexican food is the very traditional **El Cholo**.

Local Gift Ideas

A large selection of entertainment collectibles can be found along the Universal CityWalk, next to Universal Studios, and in shops located near other studios and recreation sites. Some suggestions include classic film posters and Mickey Mouse memorabilia.

Melrose Avenue is home to many interesting shops specializing in twentieth-century antiques, as well as many unique fashion boutiques. For luxury brands and designer fashions, legendary Rodeo Drive in Beverly Hills, off Wilshire Boulevard, and surrounding shopping areas are a shopper's heaven.

Leisure Time

Both Paramount and Universal Studios offer tours that show how some of that movie magic is created. Another highly visited site is the Walk of Fame in Central Hollywood. The Getty Center and the Museum of Contemporary Arts both house extensive art collections. For classical music fans, the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra is considered one of the world's finest.

Disneyland remains one of the area's most frequented attractions. The beach is also a popular choice, and driving along the coast provides you with a chance to enjoy the spectacular Southern Californian scenery.

At night, Sunset Boulevard is one of the liveliest areas. Pasadena's Old Town and the Santa Monica Third Street Promenade also offer vibrant nightlife. Bar Marmont, Bird's, and Skybar are some of the city's most fashionable bars. Comedic performances can be seen at The Laugh Factory, The Comedy Store and The Improvisation.

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