



Los Angeles

AFRICAN AMERICAN CULTURE & ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

discoverlosangeles.com



Rosalind McGary, *See*, 2015, acrylic and ink on wood panel

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Ernest Wooden Jr.

» Welcome to Los Angeles. A dynamic, ever-evolving destination that’s set against a backdrop of authenticity, optimism, and the unexpected. A place where our rich ethnic and cultural diversity is celebrated throughout the city’s distinct neighborhoods. We invite you to be a free spirit here, to be different, to be bold, and to have fun.

Be ready to become passionately inspired with creativity at nearly every turn. The birthplace of Hollywood and the epicenter of entertainment, Los Angeles has long served as a beacon for dreamers and innovators. It’s why the world’s greatest artists, entertainers, and movers and shakers call L.A. home.

Make sure to go off the beaten path to discover fresh, authentic, “only-in-L.A.” experiences. Explore our vibrant mosaic of cultures through the city’s culinary landscape with an incredible breadth of cuisines including Creole and soul food.

We’ve curated this visitor’s guide with everything you need to know for your visit, highlighting the influential history of African Americans in Los Angeles, the destination’s rich African American arts and culture, our uniquely diverse neighborhoods such as Leimert Park, and tailored itineraries to help you experience the very best of Los Angeles.

Whether it’s visiting the Watts Towers, exploring dynamic cultural hubs, celebrating history, or enjoying the serenity of a stunning sunset, the possibilities in Los Angeles are endless. No matter what you choose to do, I hope you create treasured memories in our City of Angels.

Ernie

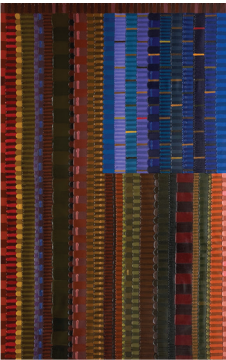
Ernest Wooden Jr.
President and CEO
Los Angeles Tourism & Convention Board

WELCOME

ABOUT THE ARTISTS

Rosalind McGary
An exploration of the emotional layers of black womanhood, Rosalind McGary’s works have been featured at the Museum of African American Art in Los Angeles, the African American Museum and Library at Oakland, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts in San Francisco, Hampton University Museum in Virginia, Atlanta’s National Black Arts Festival, Artexpo New York, and New York’s National Black Fine Art Show. McGary’s pieces have also appeared in films and television shows, most recently on FX’s *Justified* and ABC’s *Scandal*.

June Edmonds
Through paintings, native Angeleno June Edmonds explores how color, repetition, movement, and balance serve as conduits to spiritual contemplation and an interpersonal connection to her African roots. Her flag series has associations with periods in American history and examines what the U.S. flag symbolizes for black Americans. In 2018, Edmonds received the City of Los Angeles Individual Artist Fellowship, the city’s highest honor for exemplary mid-career artists. The California African American Museum has featured Edmonds’ work, and her solo exhibit appears this year at L.A.’s Luis De Jesus Los Angeles gallery.



Cover: June Edmonds, *Work Harder Flag* (detail), 2019, acrylic on canvas mounted on panel, courtesy Luis De Jesus Los Angeles, private collection

WELCOME



Herb J. Wesson, Jr.

Dear Friends:

As President of the Los Angeles City Council, it is my great pleasure to join with the Los Angeles Tourism and Convention Board in welcoming you to Los Angeles.

Our city is as dynamic as it is diverse, and the African American community is an especially important part of that cultural diversity. Whether it be the lively cultural scene of the Leimert Park community or the historic West Adams/Sugar Hill community, home to many prominent African American entertainers in the 1930s and 1940s, Los Angeles is filled with black history and culture.

The accessibility of our mosaic of many cultures makes a visit to Los Angeles a must for visitors seeking a unique experience. You won't be disappointed visiting the vibrant and historic Crenshaw District nearby, or sampling the culinary diversity of Little Ethiopia. Among the icons of Los Angeles are the Watts Towers and Arts Center in the community of Watts, and the recently restored Dunbar Hotel on the historic Central Avenue, which hosted a long list of Jazz Age artists and is well worth the step back in time. The California African American Museum in Exposition Park is within the shadow of the LA Memorial Coliseum, which played host to the Olympic Games in 1932 and 1984, and more recently home to the NFC Champions, the Los Angeles Rams.

These are just a few of the many important landmarks in the city, but on the following pages you'll find a guide of the history, arts, dining, and local events to better understand the outsized influence the African American community has had on our city.

We take great pride in welcoming everyone to our vibrant city, no matter their color, age, political affiliation, or whom they love. We know that you will enjoy your time here and hope you will stay long and come back often. Who knows — maybe you'll end up like me and decide Los Angeles is somewhere you'd like to call home.

Sincerely,

Herb J. Wesson, Jr.
President, Los Angeles City Council
Councilmember, Tenth District

Los Angeles

LOS ANGELES TOURISM & CONVENTION BOARD

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discoverlosangeles.com

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February 2019



Delfin Finley, *Under Your Curse* (detail), oil on canvas, 29x23 inches, 2017

HISTORY

The Green Book Legacy

- A guide for black travelers opens a window on the past—and the present.

» Thanks to a recent Oscar-winning movie, the existence of the Green Book—an annual on-the-road guide for black Americans published from 1936 to 1967—is in the news. But half a dozen years ago, when author and cultural documentarian Candacy Taylor was researching historic Route 66 for a travel publisher, only a few academics were even aware of the publication.

Taylor stumbled on a copy on display at the Autry Museum of the American West. “They had a Green Book under glass,” she remembers, “and it was a eureka moment.” She’d never heard of it before, but focusing on the landmark publication and documenting the places it listed—hotels, restaurants, and other businesses—would become her next project. She has since catalogued more than 9,600 sites, physically scouted 4,000 of those, and interviewed a number of owners of the enterprises or their descendants. Her groundbreaking research is the basis for an upcoming book, a traveling Smithsonian exhibit, an interactive digital map, and much more.

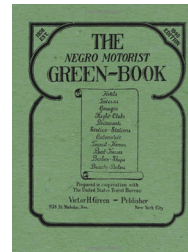
A Handbook of Havens

» Created by Victor Green, a postal worker from New York City’s Harlem, the Green Book was modeled after similar guides to places in the Borscht Belt that were open to Jews. “It’s been called an AAA Guide for black people,” says

Taylor, “but it was more like a Yellow Pages. It had everything from haberdashers and florists to drugstores, doctors, liquor stores, and theme parks. It was written in a casual style, not heavy on race or politics, just ‘here are things you can do.’”

The listings were an absolute necessity for driving across a United States that boasted a horrifying number of “sundown towns,” white communities where blacks were forbidden to spend the night. (The Los Angeles area had its share, including Culver City and Glendale.)

Green started by researching the sites himself, but eventually relied on information from a network of correspondents. In the



The Green Book (above) provided travelers to Los Angeles with a listing of welcoming establishments in the city; among the remaining sites is the Dunbar (right), reportedly the first American hotel constructed expressly for the black community, currently restored and providing affordable housing for seniors and families; the Dunbar circa 1938 (below).

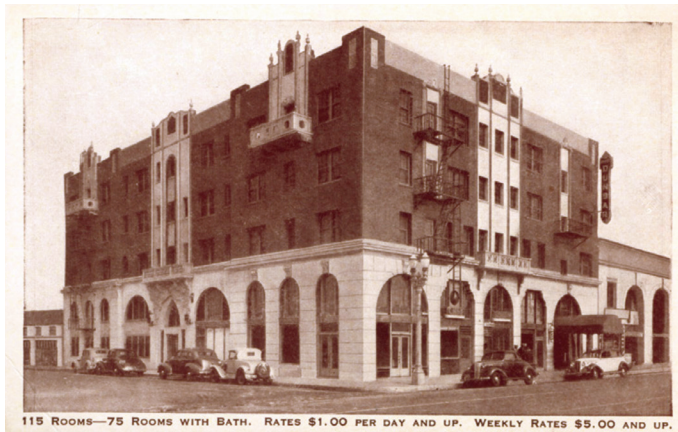


Photo: (bottom left) laconservancy.org





Clifton's, a Depression-era restaurant founded by Clifford Clifton in the belief that everybody should be able to eat, had its original Olive Street location listed in the Green Book, followed by the 648 S. Broadway location. Clifton's continues to be a Downtown legend, reopening in 2015 after a nearly four-year renovation that included constructing a three-story atrium around a massive redwood tree.

South, where more blacks lived, there were more safe places to stay, Taylor notes. It was far more dangerous to travel in the North and West, where there were fewer services for anyone. Breakdowns and accidents caused by long hours of late driving were common, so the names of gas stations and garages in the Green Book were welcome indeed.

Lasting Green Book Sites in L.A.

» Los Angeles figured prominently in many editions of the guide, with 224 sites, second only to Harlem. “That was a lot,” says Taylor, and in comparison with other cities, more buildings have survived here. She estimates that throughout the U.S., just 3 percent are still operational.

Among the survivors in L.A. is the Dunbar, reportedly the first American hotel constructed expressly for black people. Built by a dentist who was tired of not having a place to stay, the Spanish Colonial-style hotel included a stunning inner atrium and boasted a liquor store and beauty shop on the first floor. “It was the Waldorf Astoria of the black community,” says Taylor. “People like Billie Holiday and Duke Ellington stayed there.” It also hosted Congress of Racial Equality members and was a civil rights center.

Black musicians often performed down the street at another site whose building remains: Jack's Basket Room, a restaurant and nightspot owned by famed boxer Jack Johnson. “It was a place where people loved to party,” says Taylor, “with events till 6 a.m. and a radio booth. It was ahead of its time.”

Most of the Green Book sites in Los Angeles were in the heart of the black community in South Central, but notably there were also Downtown hotels and restaurants. The once-elegant Alexandria Hotel—now condos—had an up-and-down history, while the Beaux Arts-style Biltmore, today a historic landmark, was

a frequent venue for black-sponsored events. Clifton's, a Depression-era eatery whose quirky interior was lavishly renovated recently, was founded by the son of missionaries to China on the principle that no one should be hungry in America. He served everyone, even those who couldn't pay.

A unique Green Book site, now gone, was Murray's Dude Ranch, at the edge of Victorville. “*Life* magazine did a spread on it,” says Taylor, “and *Ebony* had a cover story. It had women in cowboy garb, horses, and a swimming pool. Pearl Bailey later bought it and ran it. She drove her pink Cadillac on the roads. The land is there, and you can still see parts of the foundations.”

In documenting sites like these, Taylor has also taken on a broader mission, she says: “The Green Book is a window into how resilient and self-sufficient the black community was. They had fun. But the communities were badly affected by policies of mass incarceration and urban renewal. I want to tell that story, not just how it was, but how we got here. We're challenging the idea that progress is linear. The sites are evidence of where we've grown and where we haven't.”

Taylor's book *Overground Railroad* will be published by Abrams in fall 2019. For more information, go to taylormadeculture.com. Also, 23 editions of the Green Book have been digitized by the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture and can be read at <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/collections/the-green-book#/?tab=about&scroll=15>.



HISTORY

HISTORY

A Look Back

- These buildings and artworks trace the histories of those who have made a lasting impact on the city.

By Chris Nichols, *Los Angeles* magazine

California African American Museum

» This long and low concrete building was designed by Jack Hayward and Vincent Proby and opened near the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum just in time for the 1984 Olympic Games. The complex includes several galleries, a research library, and archives.

600 State Dr., Los Angeles
CAAMUSEUM.ORG

Golden State Mutual Life Insurance Building

» This recently restored Late Moderne tower was designed

by pioneering architect Paul Revere Williams for the largest black-owned business west of the Mississippi. Two monumental murals in the lobby painted in 1949 are titled *The Negro in California History*. 1999 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles

Hollywood Jazz Mural

» Richard Wyatt Jr. has painted sprawling murals at Union Station, Inglewood High School, and the Watts Library. For this large piece near the Capitol Records building in Hollywood, he created

larger-than-life renditions of recording artists including Nat “King” Cole, Ella Fitzgerald, and Billie Holiday.

1750 Vine St., Los Angeles

Nate Holden Performing Arts Center/Ebony Repertory Theatre

» The Ebony Showcase Theater was a showcase for generations of black actors from 1950 until it was torn down in the 1990s. The city redevelopment agency acquired the land and built this high-tech, 400-seat theater, recording studio, and art gallery named after a longtime city councilman.

4718 W. Washington Blvd., Los Angeles
323-964-9766
EBONYREP.ORG

Paul R. Williams Suite at The Beverly Hills Hotel

» The Beverly Hills Hotel brought Williams on in the 1940s to revamp the hotel with a new wing, plenty of banana leaf wallpaper, and its now-iconic swoopy neon sign. One suite has been restored to its period look as a tribute to the architect.

9641 Sunset Blvd., Beverly Hills
DORCHESTERCOLLECTION.COM

RPM International Building

» Soul superstar Ray Charles housed his music empire in a custom-built mid-century office and recording studio on Washington Boulevard. The landmark is now home to the late singer’s foundation and a recently renovated memorial library filled with interactive exhibits, gold records, and

stage costumes.

2107 W. Washington Blvd., Los Angeles
THERAYCHARLESFOUNDATION.ORG

STAPLES Center Star Plaza

» Kareem Abdul-Jabbar and Earvin “Magic” Johnson are enshrined in a garden of gargantuan statuary outside of the STAPLES Center. The bronze likenesses of ten sports heroes, including Kobe Bryant and Shaquille O’Neal, are

captured in bronze outside the home of the Lakers, Clippers, Sparks, and Kings.

1111 S. Figueroa St., Los Angeles
213-742-7100
STAPLESCENTER.COM

Tom Bradley Wing of the Los Angeles Public Library Central Library

» Named in honor of Los Angeles’ first African American mayor, the 330,000-square-foot addition to the historic Goodhue Building opened in

Richard Wyatt Jr., Hollywood Jazz mural

1993 and features a cathedral-like glass atrium housing two major artworks: *Illuminations*, a series of large-scale lanterns along the escalator landings by Ann Preston, and three massive, whimsical chandeliers by artist Therman Statom.

630 W. 5th St., Los Angeles
213-228-7000
LAPL.ORG

William J. Seymour Pentecostal Museum

» A pioneering evangelist,

“Los Angeles has something to offer for everyone. From food to culture to activities, you can truly find anything you want in this beautiful city. With my love of sports, I can go to Dodger Stadium for a game, head Downtown to see the Lakers or Sparks play, or drive down the street and catch an LAFC match in the new Banc of California stadium. And now that the NFL is back in L.A., we’ll be able to see the L.A. Rams and L.A. Chargers in a new football stadium in 2020. The amount of activities available and the rich history keep the city vibrant and continuously attract guests to experience what there is to offer.”

—EARVIN “MAGIC” JOHNSON, JR.
President, Basketball Operations,
Los Angeles Lakers



Empowered Through Expression

- Join in L.A.'s celebration of African American excellence in music, theater, and art.

“The California African American Museum is the largest African American museum west of the Mississippi. Our mission is to examine the art, history, and culture of African Americans, with a focus on California. Our exhibitions and public programming are gaining national recognition and we have 4,000 items in our permanent collection. We are a museum for everyone!”

—GEORGE DAVIS

Executive Director, California African American Museum

Museums

Explore the rich tapestry of African American culture, arts, and history at any or all of these family-friendly L.A. museums. Featured are artists and heroes who have made a difference as well as those who continue to work and strive on behalf of others.

California African American Museum (CAAM)

CAAMUSEUM.ORG

» Located just south of Downtown L.A., CAAM is the first fully state-supported African American museum of art, history, and culture. The expansive structure features permanent and temporary exhibits of more than 4,000 objects, including paintings, photographs, film, recordings, sculpture, historical documents, and artifacts from the 1800s to the present. Temporary exhibitions in 2019 will feature Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s 1963 Los Angeles Freedom Rally and the sociopolitically charged work of artist Gary Simmons.

Destination Crenshaw

DESTINATIONCRENSHAW.LA

» When L.A.'s Metro Rail authorities decided to build its 1.1-mile Crenshaw/LAX line above ground, the community decided to make the most of the situation with Destination Crenshaw, a project designed to enlighten train passengers traveling from LAX about the history and culture behind iconic Crenshaw Boulevard. Slated to start in fall 2019 and finish in spring 2020, the project will transform the stretch between 48th and 60th avenues into an “open-air museum” that celebrates the history and contributions of black L.A. via public art and streetscape design. Guided by city councilmember Marqueece

Harris-Dawson along with city, business, philanthropic, and artistic leaders, Destination Crenshaw will feature permanent and rotating art installations appearing on sidewalks and business facades, and share a central, positive theme that honors the neighborhood. Plans also include 4 acres of additional park land and a community amphitheater.

Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA)

LACMA.ORG

» Over time LACMA has expanded its artistic, historical, and cultural range of permanent and traveling exhibits, broadening its relevance



Njideka Akunyili Crosby, installation view, *Obodo (Country/City/Town/Ancestral Village)*, 2018. MOCA Grand Avenue, Los Angeles.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Njideka Akunyili Crosby
Njideka Akunyili Crosby was born in Enugu, Nigeria, in 1983 and currently lives and works in Los Angeles. She is the recipient of a 2017 MacArthur Fellowship and was named one of *Financial Times'* Women of the Year, 2016. Recent solo exhibitions include *Njideka Akunyili Crosby: The Beautiful Ones*, National Portrait Gallery, London (2018–19); and *Counterparts*, Modern Art Museum of Fort Worth, Texas (2018–19), and Baltimore Museum of Art, Maryland (2017–18).

L.A.-Based Artists

These L.A.-based creatives have received special recognition for their innovative and thought-provoking contributions to the art world. Although their media and styles vary, their common thread is producing pieces that transcend ordinary communication and deliver profound and urgent messages on a visceral level.

Made in L.A. Award Winners Lauren Halsey and EJ Hill

The Made in L.A. Awards are presented by the Hammer Museum at UCLA to recognize achievement by artists whose work has been featured in the museum's eponymous exhibition.

In 2018, the Mohn Award (\$100,000) was presented to sculptor and Los Angeles native Lauren Halsey, who built a detailed prototype for a functional public space to be replicated at full size on Crenshaw Boulevard. Called *The Crenshaw District Hieroglyph Project* and constructed of plywood and gypsum (a mineral used in building the pyramids of Egypt), Halsey's sculpture featured inscriptions signifying aspects of her own South Central L.A. community.

The Public Recognition Award (\$25,000), for which the winner is selected by onsite visitors, was awarded to performance artist EJ Hill, whose work *Excellentia*,

Mollitia, Victoria depicted the mental and physical endurance that society compels some bodies to endure. The project installation included sculptures and photographs by Texas Isaiah depicting Hill's “victory laps” (circles run around places where they had felt marginalized or unrepresented), as well as Hill himself, who stood on a podium-like sculpture for every hour the exhibition was open.

Mark Bradford

A creator of large-scale layered works on canvas, Mark Bradford is L.A. born and bred, but his socially conscious work featuring fragments of materials mined from urban neighborhoods has been featured in solo and comprehensive exhibitions throughout the world for more than 20 years. Locally, the work of this 2009 MacArthur Genius Award recipient has been featured at LACMA, the Hammer Museum, and The Broad, which purchased his famed *Continued on page 13*

ARTS + CULTURE

“Shirley and I met at Florida A&M University at the height of the Civil rights movement and were a part of the great migration in which six million African Americans fled the South for better opportunities in the North and West. Moving to Los Angeles was the best decision of our lives and has afforded us many opportunities to grow, prosper, and develop lifelong friendships.”

—BERNARD KINSEY

President/founder, KBK Enterprises, Inc.; co-curator and co-owner with wife Shirley, The Kinsey African American Arts & History Collection

and appeal to the greater Los Angeles community. In 2019, LACMA presents the first 21st-century museum retrospective on the work of midcentury artist and social activist Charles White, who created detailed and realistic portraits depicting the dignity, humanity, and heroism of African Americans confronting systemic racial injustice.

Mayme A. Clayton Library & Museum

CLAYTONMUSEUM.ORG

» Browse this collection of more than two million rare books, films, documents, photographs, artifacts, and works of art dedicated to U.S. African American history and culture. Originally known as the Western States Black Research Center, the Culver City–based library/museum was renamed in 2007 for its founder, university librarian and historian Mayme A. Clayton, Ph.D., who dedicated 40 years to amassing this important collection that includes pre–Civil War documents and the

personal correspondence of noted African Americans such as Booker T. Washington and Josephine Baker.

Museum of African American Art (MAAA)

MAAALA.ORG

» Founded over 40 years ago, this nonprofit cultural institution is open to the public Thursday through Sunday. Its permanent collection features the work of Palmer C. Hayden, one of the leading artists of the Harlem Renaissance, as well as unique historical and cultural objects originating from Africa, the Caribbean, the South Pacific, and South America. Operation of MAAA is made possible by contributions from business and community leaders, museum members, volunteers, and visitors.

The Underground Museum

THEUNDERGROUND-MUSEUM.ORG

» Painter Noah Davis and his wife, Karon, a sculptor, opened the Underground Museum in 2012 to bring museum-quality art to a traditionally African American and Latino neighborhood. When Davis died unexpectedly in 2015, his family continued his legacy, presenting carefully curated, thought-provoking collections of paintings, sculptures, installations, and media works with a shared theme, such as Water & Power (representations of natural phenomena) and Non-Fiction (depictions of the black body and its relationship to history). Numerous works are presented in collaboration with the L.A. Museum of Contemporary Art.

Charles White, *General Moses (Harriet Tubman)* (detail), 1965, ink on paper, 47 × 68 in., private collection, © The Charles White Archives, photo courtesy of Swann Auction Galleries

“Over the years, I’ve learned that it is important to live a life of purpose and surround yourself with loved ones. The City of Angels is filled with aspiring artists, tech entrepreneurs, activists, and many others. It is a place that allows you to step into your purpose every single day. One of my favorite things to do is volunteer and work with different nonprofit organizations. Some of my favorites are Habitat for Humanity of Greater Los Angeles, School on Wheels, and of course, the HollyRod Foundation. In Los Angeles, you can find just about any issue you care about to volunteer [for] while on your visit!”

—HOLLY ROBINSON PEETE

Actress, author, philanthropist



Continued from page 11
2007 *Helter Skelter I*
painting in 2018 for
\$12 million.

Betye Saar

A prolific pioneer among modern-day African American artists, Betye Saar has built upon her 70-year-plus body of work to create installations that combine, in her words, “the remnant of memories, fragments of relics, and ordinary objects with the components of technology” to create a bridge from the past to the future. Saar’s archive was recently acquired by the J. Paul Getty Trust as part of its African American Art History Initiative.

Henry Taylor

The character-driven paintings by L.A. resident and sexagenarian Henry Taylor are recognized for their bold use of bright colors and their ability to evoke social commentary. His portraits of everyday and famous people capture signature moments, such as a long-married couple listlessly watching TV from their living room couch or trailblazer Jackie Robinson posing for his baseball card photo. Taylor’s work has been extensively featured in modern art museums and galleries in L.A. and New York City.



Photo: © Betye Saar; Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art, 2016.
Courtesy of the Artist and Roberts Projects, Los Angeles; photo: Tim Lanterman

Entertainment

Experience the open forum that is Los Angeles. Take part in the action at a nightclub or watch it unfold live on a theatrical stage.

Catch One
CATCH.ONE

» The oldest black-owned venue of its kind in America, Catch One has been a haven for the LGBTQ community since Jewel Thais-Williams opened it as a disco in 1973. Considered the Studio 54 of the West Coast, the spot became a refuge during the 1980s AIDS crisis and drew high-profile celebrities such as Whitney Houston, Donna Summer, and Madonna. Thais-Williams, a key advocate for the black LGBTQ community, was appointed Grand Marshal of the 2016 Los Angeles Pride Festival, the same year that Netflix released the documentary *Jewel’s Catch One*. Under new ownership, Catch One nightclub continues to provide a safe space that honors freedom of expression.

Comedy Union
THECOMEDYUNION.COM

» Enss Mitchell opened Comedy Union in 2001 to give urban talent a place to perform on a nightly basis. Since then, this first black-owned and -operated comedy club in L.A. has become a recognized hub for new and established performers such as George Wallace, Tiffany Haddish, and Kevin Hart. Dubbed by *The Hollywood Reporter* as “one of the six

best comedy clubs in the nation,” the intimate venue has acquired a loyal fan base, as well as national exposure on numerous comedy series and specials, such as HBO’s *Def Comedy Jam*.

Grand Performances
GRANDPERFORMANCES.ORG

» Dedicated to providing free access to global performing arts, Grand Performances presents live music, dance, and theater shows at its outdoor stage, California Plaza, in the heart of Downtown L.A., as well as community theaters throughout the city. Fueled by a spirit of unity, events welcome everyone who wants to experience the joy of seeing and hearing high-quality performing arts and have included the healing voices of the Urban Voices Project, a tribute to music icon Sly Stone, and the Secret Lives of Muslims series, among many others. Celebrating the diversity of L.A., the nonprofit organization’s programs have drawn rave reviews and a dedicated following for more than 30 years.

Pip’s on La Brea
PIPSONLABREA.COM

» Entertainment event producer Derrick Pipkin launched Pip’s on La Brea in 2010 with the goal of fusing great music with fine dining in a

friendly and intimate setting. True to its mission, the venue presents live acts featuring blues, jazz, and Latin music six days a week. And, whether opting for drinks and bites at happy hour, elegant Italian fare at dinner, or bottomless Champagne and the fresh pasta bar at Sunday brunch, regulars know to set aside several hours for this body- and soul-satisfying experience.

Concertgoers enjoy a Grand Performances event at California Plaza in Downtown. Performances are also held at local theaters throughout the city.



“My favorite place in Los Angeles is the Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). The iconic Theme Building that many people call ‘the spaceship’ or the Encounter Restaurant was designed by legendary African American architect Paul Williams. It’s a symbol of the jet age that is recognized globally. The plethora of restaurants at LAX keeps my meals interesting, as there are healthy choices and indulgences from almost every cuisine to choose from.”

—DEBORAH A. FLINT
CEO, Los Angeles World Airports

WACO Theater Center
WACOTHEATERCENTER.COM

» Founded in 2017 by actor/master teacher Richard Lawson and fashion designer/clothing line creator Tina Knowles Lawson (mother of Beyoncé), who also serves as artistic director, WACO (Where Art Can Occur) Theater Center embraces artistry, culture, and theater in performances, screenings, art exhibits, and even youth mentorship programs, all provided under one roof. The venue recently staged

a production of *No Place to Be Somebody* to honor the 50th anniversary of Charles Gordone’s Pulitzer Prize-winning, civil rights movement-era play.

Music

“The Martin Luther King, Jr. medical campus in Willowbrook is home to one of the country’s most cutting-edge and technically advanced hospitals and a medical university as well as a new library and senior housing. It tells an important story of community-driven revitalization that honors L.A.’s rich African American history and more.”

—MARK RIDLEY-THOMAS
Los Angeles County Supervisor,
Second District

From exhibitions to performances, the opportunities to immerse yourself in musical history, culture, and sound are abundant in the City of Angels. Unearth a rare recording, experience a new vibe, or just celebrate the strains that move you with loved ones.

Central Avenue Jazz Festival

July 27 and 28, 2019
CENTRALAVEJAZZFEST.COM

» Soak up the sounds of jazz and rhythm and blues where they first arrived in L.A.’s African American community in the early 1900s: on Central Avenue. Since 1996, fans have flocked to this famed thoroughfare to hear burgeoning and established musical artists pour their hearts and souls into their craft. The annual two-day festival is free and

draws crowds of more than 30,000 people. Multiple stages, food vendor booths, and an artist lineup honor the greats and embrace what’s new in jazz and Latin music.

GRAMMY Museum

GRAMMYMUSEUM.ORG
» The GRAMMY Awards, established by the Recording Academy in 1959, honor excellence in all forms of music, and the GRAMMY Museum at L.A. LIVE in Downtown L.A. is committed to the same mission. Launched in 2008 to coincide with the Awards’ 50th anniversary, the 30,000-square-foot museum is a sprawling and dynamic homage to musical culture and achievement. Experience interactive exhibits, enjoy a performance at the 200-seat Clive Davis Theater, or take in a thought-provoking screening, lecture, or program.

South L.A. Power Fest

COCOSOUTHLA.ORG/POWERFEST
» Presented by South L.A.–based Community Coalition, the annual Power Fest music festival combines art and activism to benefit and unite the community. Featuring renowned musical artists and DJs, community resources, food trucks, and family



activities, this free all-day event attracts thousands of L.A. residents. The outdoor event takes place at a different venue every year; the 2018 festival was held at People’s Lot, a previously vacant piece of land recently reclaimed by the community.



“I am a recent transplant to L.A., but have found two cultural spots that speak to me as an African American woman. The first is WACO Theater Center that is run by Tina Knowles Lawson and Richard Lawson. It presents plays and performances by African American artists and actors. The second is the Ebony Repertory Theatre, which is housed at the Nate Holden Center for Performing Arts on Washington. I recently saw a performance of Marvin Gaye’s songs there by Dorian Holley, and it was excellent. So happy to find community theaters in L.A.”

—DEBRA LEE
Former chairman and CEO, BET

Day Trips

● Only three days to spend in L.A.? From Downtown to the beach, here's what not to miss.

DAY ONE

South Los Angeles and Downtown

Watts Coffee House

» Start your day with a hot cup of java at the **Watts Coffee House**, a unique coffee shop located a short walk from the 103rd Street/Watts Towers Station of the Metro Rail Blue Line. Born from the ashes of the Watts riots of 1965, the coffeehouse now serves as a community hub for locals who enjoy delicious soul food surrounded by walls that are covered in African American-themed movie posters, jazz album covers, and other items from South L.A.'s rich cultural history.

1827 E. 103rd St., Los Angeles
323-249-4343

“My favorite cultural site in Los Angeles is the African American Firefighter Museum. It's the first and only free-standing museum of its type in the United States—rich in history and artifacts.”

—SYNTHIA SAINT JAMES
Artist

Watts Towers

» The world-famous Watts Towers are located half a mile from the Watts Coffee House. The towers were built by Sabato (aka “Sam” or “Simon”) Rodia in his spare time over a period of 33 years, from 1921 to 1954. Rodia—an Italian immigrant and a Watts resident—built the towers by himself, using only hand tools and window washer's equipment.

The monumental sculpture was declared a National Historic Landmark in 1990 and has become a point of pride for the community, serving as a location for events such as the annual Day of the Drum Festival and the Simon Rodia Watts Towers Jazz Festival.

At the site, the **Watts Towers Arts Center** provides diverse cultural enrichment programming through tours, lectures, exhibitions of local African American and international artists, and studio workshops for both teachers and students.

Also on-site, the **Charles Mingus Youth Arts Center** presents programs to young area residents by expanding existing music classes offered through the Department of Cultural Affairs.

Note: The Watts Towers are undergoing restoration through 2020; check the website for updates.

1765 E. 107th St., Los Angeles
WATTSTOWERS.ORG

African American Firefighter Museum

» The **African American Firefighter Museum (AAFM)** collects, conserves, and shares the heritage of pioneering African Americans in the fire service. Opened in 1997, the AAFM is housed in the former Fire Station 30 in South L.A. The museum was originally dedicated to acknowledge the first 100 years of service by L.A.'s African American firefighters. The AAFM currently exists as the first and only museum of its kind in the country. The first floor contains vintage fire equipment, stories, and pictures of pioneering African American firefighters. The second-floor gallery features pictures, artifacts, and other memorabilia of African American firefighters, captains, chief officers, and historic women fire-service professionals from around the country.

1401 S. Central Ave., Los Angeles
AAFMUSEUM.ORG

Option: Tomorrow's Aeronautical Museum

» **Tomorrow's Aeronautical Museum (TAM)** is a living classroom that brings aviation history to life and empowers the dreams of underprivileged youth to literally take flight. Located in South Los Angeles, TAM features



ITINERARIES

“Hilltop Coffee + Kitchen, Simply Wholesome, Mercado La Paloma, Stuzo Clothing, and Kutula by Africana are my favorite cultural sites in Los Angeles. From the food to the networking and the entertainment—all of these places are black owned and have fierce women at the helm. I love L.A. for its richness in culture and its ability to draw you in with its creativity.”

—PATRISSE CULLORS
Co-founder, Black Lives Matter

interactive exhibits that explore racial diversity in the evolution of modern flight, a Tuskegee Airmen Learning Center, Sky Lab computer center, and operating and static display aircraft.
961 W. Alondra Blvd., Compton
TAMUSEUM.ORG

California African American Museum (CAAM)
» Located in historic Exposition Park in Downtown L.A., the renowned California African American Museum (CAAM) is housed in a 44,000-square-foot facility that opened to the public

during the 1984 Olympic Games. The museum’s collection ranges from traditional African art to artifacts from the estate of L.A.’s first and only African American mayor, Tom Bradley.
600 State Dr., Los Angeles
CAAMUSEUM.ORG

Biddy Mason Park
» Located near the historic Grand Central Market in Downtown, Biddy Mason Park is dedicated to Bridget “Biddy” Mason, a former slave who became a noted philanthropist and a founding member of the First African Methodist Episcopal Church. Mason won her freedom in 1856 and settled in Los Angeles to work as a midwife. Ten years later she bought a house, where she operated an orphanage and eventually founded the city’s First A.M.E. Church on land she had purchased and then donated to the church. The park features a timeline that traces Mason’s remarkable life.
331 S. Spring St., Los Angeles
DORNSIFE.USC.EDU/LA-WALKING-TOUR/BIDDY-MASON-PARK

Harold & Belle’s
» Harold & Belle’s has been serving the distinctive flavors and Southern hospitality of New Orleans since 1969. Three generations of Legaux ownership can be experienced in the home-cooked family recipes and the warm and inviting atmosphere.
2920 W. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles
HAROLDANDBELLES
RESTAURANT.COM



WATTS TOWERS



CALIFORNIA AFRICAN AMERICAN MUSEUM

DAY TWO
Beach Cities

Battleship IOWA
» Known as the “World’s Greatest Naval Ship,” Battleship IOWA is a floating museum offering daily tours of the ship’s history through World War II, the Korean War, and the Cold War. Also known as the “Battleship of Presidents,” the IOWA has hosted three U.S. presidents: Franklin D. Roosevelt, Ronald Reagan, and George H. W. Bush. The ship is also where Samuel Lee Gravely Jr., a pioneer in the United States Navy, began his career. During his distinguished career, Gravely accomplished a number of firsts for African Americans: the first African American in the Navy to

serve aboard a fighting ship as an officer, the first to command a Navy ship, the first fleet commander, and the first to become a flag officer.
250 S. Harbor Blvd., San Pedro
PACIFICBATTLESHIP.COM

CRAFTED
» For a one-of-a-kind L.A. souvenir, check out one of the many artisan vendors found at CRAFTED at the Port of Los Angeles. CRAFTED is housed in World War II-era waterfront warehouses that have been transformed into a year-round, large-scale craft marketplace. A diverse group of artists, designers, and artisanal food makers bring their talents here to provide visitors with a variety of unique handcrafted goods.

Stop by Adewole Arts, where April Adewole creates handmade pottery inspired by the traditional clay work of African women, heavily influenced by California beaches, fabric, and a love of color.
110 East 22nd St., San Pedro
CRAFTEDPORTLA.COM

Theme Building—LAX
» Paul R. Williams designed numerous Los Angeles landmarks, from public buildings and churches to homes for celebrities such as Frank Sinatra and Lucille Ball and Desi Arnaz. Williams was born in Downtown L.A., studied architecture at USC, and became the first certified African American architect west of the Mississippi. Perhaps his most recognizable work is the iconic

ITINERARIES

Theme Building at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX). Williams was part of the team that designed the Googie-style landmark, which was built in 1961. Though the building’s Encounter Restaurant is now closed, the observation deck is still open to the public from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. Admission to the observation deck is free.

1 World Way, Los Angeles

Santa Monica Beach

» In the 1920s, there was only one beach in Southern California that minorities could use without being harassed. The strip of **Santa Monica Beach** known as the Inkwell was located off Ocean Front Walk, near the historic Casa Del Mar hotel. In 2007, the City of Santa Monica unveiled a plaque at the beach in memory of Nicolas Gabaldon, the first documented surfer of African American and Latino descent. This landmark beach is still popular with African Americans in the L.A. area to this day. For a quintessential L.A. ending to your three-day experience, watch a scenic sunset at Santa Monica Beach.

200 Santa Monica Pier, Santa Monica

Native Santa Monica

» After the sun sets, head to Native for seasonal dishes including the spicy Beef Noodle Soup and Flannery Hanger Steak from acclaimed chef Nyesha Arrington.

*620 Santa Monica Blvd.,
Santa Monica
310-458-4427*

EATNATIVE.LA

DAY THREE

Leimert Park and Mid-Wilshire

» Begin your day with a coffee or go big with a hearty plate of soul food at one of the many restaurants in **Leimert Park**, an arts and cultural hub that filmmaker John Singleton referred to as the “Black Greenwich Village.” Leimert Park features Art Deco buildings that house Afrocentric art galleries, shops, restaurants, theaters, nightclubs, and cultural centers.

The village is home to the historic **Vision Theatre**, a performing arts center that has served the community since 1931. Also located in Leimert Park is the **Kaos Network**, a multimedia and training arts center best known for “Project Blowed,” a hip-hop and rap open-mic night that gave birth to rappers and rap groups such as Aceyalone, Medusa, and Jurassic Five. The popular **Leimert Park Art Walk** is a free, self-guided visual and performance art experience that takes place on the last Sunday of every month.

3341 W. 43rd Pl., Los Angeles

LEIMERTPARKVILLAGE.ORG

Eso Won Books

» Eso Won Books is an independent bookstore located in the heart of Leimert Park Village. Meaning “water over rocks” in Africa, Eso Won is so-named, say its owners, because it “provides fluid, safe, stirring opportunities that flow to a reservoir of knowledge for all people to experience.” In addition



LEIMERT PARK

“L.A.’s black community—which is the largest west of the Mississippi—has had an incredible impact on the cultural landscape of L.A. Though it is hard to only name a few, some black-owned businesses that I’m a regular at include Dulan’s and the Marathon Clothing Store. I also couldn’t be more excited that next year, we will be unveiling **Destination Crenshaw**—a major cultural project celebrating black L.A. history and culture. Spanning 1.1 miles on Crenshaw Boulevard, the project will feature more than 100 artworks, multiple new parks and green space, more than 800 trees, and additional street improvements. **Destination Crenshaw** will shine a light on the contributions of the remarkable black community we have in L.A. and invite the public to experience this historic community.

—MARQUEECE
HARRIS-DAWSON
Incumbent, L.A. City Council

ITINERARIES

“Nestled between Broadway and Spring Street and 3rd and 4th streets in Downtown Los Angeles, the Bridget ‘Biddy’ Mason Park and gravestone celebrates the life of the woman who, nearly two full centuries ago, was a black business and religious groundbreaker in Southern California. Born into slavery in Hancock, Georgia, in 1818, Mason later freed herself and her daughters, served countless others as a nurse, became one of the first black women landowners in Los Angeles, and helped found L.A.’s first black church, the First African Methodist Episcopal Church.”

—NAIMA J. KEITH
Deputy Director and chief curator,
California African American Museum

to its wide selection of books, Eso Won hosts author events that have previously featured Presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton, as well as Maya Angelou, Ruby Dee, and many more.
4327 Degnan Blvd., Los Angeles
ESOWONBOOKSTORE.COM

Museum of African American Art
» The Museum of African American Art (MAAA) is located on the third floor of Macy’s at the Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza. The nonprofit museum’s unique art space exhibits the work of

world-renowned artists as well as emerging local artists while ensuring that its art experiences are free and accessible to the public. MAAA is also the home of the renowned Palmer Hayden Collection: 40 oil paintings by the acclaimed Harlem Renaissance artist, including the 12 paintings known as *The Ballad of John Henry*.
4005 Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles
MAAALA.ORG

Petersen Automotive Museum
» Located on Museum Row, at the corner of Wilshire Boulevard at Fairfax, the Petersen Automotive Museum is dedicated to the exploration and presentation of the automobile and its impact on American life and culture, using Los Angeles as the prime example. For generations, African Americans have made important contributions to the industry, ranging from Richard Spikes (inventor of the automatic gear shift) to Edward T. Welburn, the vice president of global design at General Motors since 2005. Encompassing more than 300,000 square feet, the museum’s exhibits and lifelike dioramas feature more than 150 rare and classic cars, trucks, and motorcycles.
6060 Wilshire Blvd., Los Angeles
PETERSEN.ORG

Fowler Museum
» Located on the campus of UCLA in Westwood, the Fowler Museum explores global arts and cultures with an emphasis on works



from Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and the Americas—past and present. The museum’s Arts of Africa and the African Diaspora is one of the largest and finest in the United States, and one of the top 20 African collections worldwide. This collection offers a superb representation of the arts of many African nations, including objects from Senegal, Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Democratic Republic of the Congo (formerly Zaire), Kenya, Zambia, and South Africa.
308 Charles E. Young Dr. E.
Los Angeles
FOWLER.UCLA.EDU

Post & Beam
» Post & Beam brings warm hospitality, exciting yet approachable cuisine, and good times to the Baldwin Hills neighborhood. Chef Govind Armstrong has created a mouthwatering menu that includes hand-stretched 11-inch pizzas from the wood-burning oven; small bites like turkey sausage meatballs in spicy wood-roasted tomato sauce; and Sticky Little Ribs with roasted potato salad.
3727 Santa Rosalina Dr., Los Angeles
POSTANDBEAMLA.COM

“I recently moved to Los Angeles from New York City, a city known for its walkability, and I’m really impressed by the ease and walkability of Downtown L.A. (DTLA), where all the neighborhoods are connected. You can get a great sense of the energy and diversity that the city offers, which is why I’ve chosen to call Downtown my home. I’ve loved sampling DTLA’s thriving culinary scene, and I’m also impressed with the culture and entertainment options available to the city’s residents and visitors. I can step out my door and in no time catch a Lakers game at STAPLES Center or hop over to The Broad. This city has piqued my curiosity and I look forward to exploring it further.”

—NILES HARRIS
General manager, InterContinental Los Angeles Downtown

Photo: (left) Mike Finkelstein; (above) Art Cars at Auto-Didactic: The Juxtapoz School exhibit, Petersen Museum, by Robert Williams (left) and Kenny Scharf (right); photo by TED7.COM PHOTOGRAPHY.

Tastes of the Town

- **Soulful, soothing, eclectic, delicious, and innovative**—such are the creations at these Los Angeles restaurants where chefs are putting their own modern spin on traditional dishes, reflecting the bounty of the farmers’ markets here and the city’s vibrant diversity.

Ackee Bamboo Jamaican Cuisine

» Nestled in a neighborhood storefront, this local favorite serves Caribbean dishes including jerk chicken and curry shrimp. Open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner (dinner is served all day).

4305 Degnan Blvd., #100, Los Angeles
323-295-7275

ACKEEBAMBOOJACUISINE.COM

Alta

» This new—and already acclaimed—spot in the historic West Adams neighborhood serves family-style comfort food like oxtails and rice, black-eyed pea fritters, grilled pork chops, and skillet-fried chicken. Diners can settle into a booth in the main dining room, perch on a stool at the bar or at the chef’s counter in front of the open kitchen, or take a table amid the greenery of the lovely back patio. Among the

noteworthy cocktails is the Lunchbox: butter-washed bourbon, peanuts, Aperol, and huckleberry.

5359 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles
323-571-4999

ALTAADAMS.COM

Bloom & Plume Coffee

» Owned by artist and floral designer Maurice Harris, Bloom & Plume Coffee is located next to his floral studio on West Temple Street in Historic Filipinotown. Fulfilling its motto, “Thirst come, thirst served,” the recently opened cafe offers Stumptown joe, matcha, and chai drinks, as well as fresh juices, and has cold brew and kombucha on tap. Hunger is satisfied, too, with sweet and savory toasts, egg sandwiches, and house-made cornmeal waffles.

1638 W. Temple St., Los Angeles
213-908-5808

BLOOMANDPLUMECOFFEE.COM

“I love that in Los Angeles you have the ability to have a truly authentic food experience with a variety of cultures. Not only can you get top-notch Creole and soul food from family businesses such as ours, but you can also enjoy true Ethiopian, Korean BBQ, Mexican, and more. Having the Pacific Ocean here also enables L.A. to have some of the freshest seafood.”

—RYAN LEGAUX

Owner, Harold & Belle’s restaurant

Big Man Bakes

» Co-founded by the 6’5” Chip Brown (“The Big Man”) and Claudine Grier, this bake shop in the Old Bank District in Downtown Los Angeles serves up award-winning cupcakes and gives back to local organizations.

413 S. Main St., Los Angeles
213-617-9100

BIGMANBAKES.COM

Bludso’s Bar & Que

» At this restaurant and bar, owner Kevin Bludso slow-cooks his legendary Texas-style barbecue, which his family has been perfecting for five generations.

609 N. La Brea Ave., Los Angeles
323-931-2583

BARANDQUE.COM

Brooklyn Deli & Mini Market

» Husband and wife team Hakeem and Remmi Dolphin opened their deli in 2014 with the goal of what they call “spreading love the Brooklyn way.” The couple’s Skateboard Special—pastrami and turkey on wheat—landed on Eater LA’s winter 2019 “17 Epic Los Angeles Sandwiches” list.

4308 Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles
347-981-8408

BROOKLYNDELI14.WIXSITE.COM/
CRENSHAW



NATIVE



HAROLD & BELLE'S



ALTA

Photos: (clockwise from top left): Jake Ahles Photography; Mike Finkelstein; Andrea D'Agosto; courtesy Harold & Belle's

DINING

The Brownstone Bistro

» Owners Everod Vernon and Charles Taylor present a refined upscale dining experience in this elegant restaurant where executive chef Clive Jackson blends Californian culture with Caribbean fusion to turn out dishes like lobster mac ’n’ cheese, shrimp and grits, braised oxtail, curried goat, and blackened salmon. Cocktails are served at the full bar, and on Sundays a buffet brunch is available from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

5047 Pico Blvd., Los Angeles
323-452-0028
BROWNSTONELAONPICO.COM

Darrow’s New Orleans Grill

» Lunch and dinner at this fast-casual restaurant feature classic Creole and Cajun food with all the flavors of the Bayou. Po’boys come with fillings like slow-roasted brisket, turkey or chicken sausage, catfish, crab, shrimp, and oysters, while bowls and wraps showcase jambalaya. Cobblers, beignets, and Sweet Tater Pie end meals on a sweet note, and made-to-order cocktails are available at the bar.

21720 S. Avalon Blvd., #102-B, Carson
424-570-0531
DARROWSNEWORLEANSGRILL.COM

Delicious Pizza

» Open from morning to midnight, this pizza house is known for its devotion to hip-hop, demonstrated in its displays of music and memorabilia. Named for hip-hop lyrics, the pizzas, available whole and by the slice, are made from an organic grain mix fermented with a natural yeast starter and topped with ingredients like soppressata, ricotta and fontina cheeses, and house-made sausage. The Sunset Boulevard location features live DJs on Friday nights. Check the website for special events.

5419 W. Adams Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-424-3014
6601 Sunset Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-467-3840
DELICIOUSPIZZA.COM

Delicious Southern Cuisine

» This cafeteria-style eatery serves up southern cuisine in comforting dishes like smothered chicken on rice, Cornish game hen with cornbread stuffing and gravy, and collard greens. The dark peppery gumbo is spiked with chicken, shrimp, Andouille sausage, and crab, and served with white rice and garlic bread or a cornbread muffin.

4371 Crenshaw Blvd., #D, Los Angeles
323-298-0445
DELICIOUSSOUTHERNCUISINE.COM

Dulan’s Soul Food Kitchen

» Serving made-from-scratch soul food in a cafeteria-style setting for more than 25 years, this bastion of the community has two locations.

202 E. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood, 310-671-3345
1714 W. Century Blvd., Los Angeles, 323-418-8527
DULANS-SFK.COM

Earle’s on Crenshaw

» Brothers Duane and Cary Earle got their start 30 years ago serving hot dogs from a cart. Today Earle’s on Crenshaw is a neighborhood institution offering gourmet dogs with toppings and sides including vegan chili fries and vegan chili cheese Fritos.

3864 Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles
323-299-2867
EARLESRESTAURANT.COM

Firefly

» This warm and intimate restaurant features healthy seasonal comfort cuisine incorporating ingredients from local farmers’ markets. Garden patio seating makes the most of L.A.’s temperate climate.

11720 Ventura Blvd., Studio City
818-762-1833
FIREFLYSTUDIOCITY.COM

Harold & Belle’s

» In 1969, husband and wife Harold and Belle Legaux opened this Jefferson Park restaurant to serve their friends and family their favorite



Aise Born, West Coast Love, mural

dishes from back home in New Orleans. Fifty years later, with devoted third-generation owners, it has undergone a spiffy renovation and expanded its eats from po’boys and filé gumbo (originally served on Fridays only) to a full menu of Creole favorites, including crawfish étouffée, jambalaya, Cajun meatloaf, and Louisiana hot links. Classic southern cocktails include the Dixie Mule, Proud Mary, Sazerac, and Bon Ton Tea (Jack Daniel’s mixed with house-made peach tea).

2920 W. Jefferson Blvd., Los Angeles
323-735-9023
HAROLDANDBELLESRESTAURANT.COM

Hilltop Coffee + Kitchen

» L.A. locals Ajay Relan and Yonnie Hagos have created a community space and gathering spot for locals and visitors that serves breakfast bowls, sandwiches, juices, and salads.

4427 W. Slauson Ave., Los Angeles
323-815-9833
FINDYOURHILLTOP.COM

Messob Ethiopian Restaurant

» Forgo utensils for injera at this Ethiopian-style eatery. Communal dishes include lamb or chicken stew, sautéed strips

of beef with onions and green chiles, and vegan offerings such as split lentils in red pepper sauce.

1041 S. Fairfax Ave., Los Angeles
323-938-8827
MESSOB.COM

My Two Cents

» Mid-City locals gab across the sidewalk tables at this strip-mall soul food restaurant. But you don’t need to live in the neighborhood to feel at home. Chef-owner Alisa Reynolds has created a vibe and a menu that welcomes everyone.

“The Los Angeles African American community has such a rich and vibrant history with food and amazing eateries. At the heart of the experience is Harold & Belle’s restaurant on Jefferson. It started as simply a sandwich shop for the hundreds of New Orleanians who migrated from the south in the ’60s, and the Legaux and Honore families have grown it into an amazing New Orleans sit-down restaurant, where the community, elected officials, and celebrities all come together and enjoy some of the best New Orleans food west of Claiborne Avenue.”

—DANNY BAKEWELL, SR.

Civil rights leader; founder, Taste of Soul festival; chairman, The Bakewell Company

The spaghetti is vegan; the mac and cheese is gluten free; and the plantain-stuffed pork chops, shrimp and grits, fried green tomato po’boy, and seasonal cobblers are comforting takes on southern classics.

5583 Pico Blvd., Los Angeles
323-879-9881
MYTWOCENTSLA.COM

Native

» This handsome new restaurant, just yards from the Wednesday Santa Monica farmers’ market, describes its culinary style as “progressive California cuisine

DINING

celebrating the multicultural landscape of Los Angeles.” Native also celebrates the multicultural family of chef-partner Nyasha Arrington. The *Top Chef* alum was just five years old when she began cooking alongside her Korean grandmother, and that influence shows in dishes like *gochujang*-glazed bacon bites, grilled octopus with corn nuts, and Wagyu beef tartare with Korean mustard.

620 Santa Monica Blvd., Santa Monica
310-458-4427
EATNATIVE.LA

Orleans & York

» The concept: Fuse a New York-style deli with a New Orleans restaurant. The result: Five Orleans & York sandwich shops opened in five years in Los Angeles, including outposts in Inglewood, Downtown, and the newest on Crenshaw Boulevard. All offer po’boys, heroes, muffulettas, platters, and sides like red beans and rice and dirty rice. The dilemma: catfish po’boy or a Reuben sub? The solution: multiple visits.

3868 Crenshaw Blvd., Los Angeles
323-903-6650
ORLEANSANDYORKDELI.COM

Post & Beam

» Chef Govind Armstrong serves up southern-inflected food from a spacious restaurant featuring an open kitchen with a wood-burning oven, plus a welcoming outdoor patio.

3767 Santa Rosalia Dr., Los Angeles
323-299-5599
POSTANDBEAMLA.COM

Red Flavor Table

» Owner Marilyn “Red” Wallace dishes out flavors from the South at this home-style breakfast spot. The décor reinforces the Louisiana vibe in the dining room and patio area where plates arrive carrying short ribs and grits, fluffy omelets stuffed with shrimp and crab, Wallace’s popular

“The Taste of Soul [festival] is by far my favorite L.A. cultural event. Each year 200,000 [people] come to Crenshaw Boulevard to experience the best soul food west of the Mississippi and to hear all genres of soul music. For 13 years, my business has participated in what is now recognized as the largest family, food, and entertainment festival on the West Coast.”

—GREG DULAN
Owner, Dulan’s Soul Food Kitchen

mash-up Peach Cobbler French Toast, and combinations pairing eggs with pork chops, salmon croquettes, various types of sausage, or fried chicken, catfish, or shrimp.

2812 W. Florence Ave., Los Angeles
323-751-6000
REDSFLAVORTABLE.COM

Simply Wholesome

» Housed in a historic landmark, this restaurant and store has been a local mainstay for 35 years. Owner Percell Keeling and his team serve healthy food with a Caribbean spin.

4508 W. Slauson Ave., Los Angeles
323-294-2144
SIMPLYWHOLESOME.COM

Sky’s Gourmet Tacos

» Owner and chef Barbara “Sky” Burrell has been serving up some of L.A.’s most unique tacos for more than 25 years from this unassuming storefront on Pico Boulevard.

5303 Pico Blvd., Los Angeles
323-932-6253
SKYSGOURMETTACOS.COM

Soul Restaurant & Bar

» Chefs Yealang Smith and Guilian Jones give traditional southern cuisine a twist with fresh seasonal organic ingredients, international flavors, and unique spices. The inviting bar is packed with southern spirits and enlivens the dining experience with unique cocktails, craft beers, and a carefully curated and well-stocked wine cellar.

7046 Hollywood Blvd., Los Angeles
323-962-7685
SOULHOLLYWOOD.COM

Stuff I Eat

» Before vegan offerings started appearing even on steakhouse menus, there was Stuff I Eat. The restaurant has thrived for more than a decade in Inglewood, a neighborhood better known for having some of the best barbecue joints in Los Angeles. That’s because the plant-based, organic food served under the watchful eye of co-owner Miss B is deeply satisfying. Standouts include the enchilada pie and the soul food platter: mac and cheese, BBQ tofu, yams, kale greens, black-eyed peas, a cornbread muffin, potato salad, and coleslaw.

114 N. Market St., Inglewood
310-671-0115
STUFFIEAT.COM

Sweet Red Peach

» Chocolate chip cream cheese pound cake, turtle brownies, and personal-size peach cobbles are just a few examples of the made-from-scratch offerings at this bakery, which specializes in southern-style desserts.

1035 S. Prairie Ave., #2, Inglewood
310-671-2253

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Kingsley Dawson Brock
An artist and a teacher employed by the U.S. Works Progress Administration, Kingsley Dawson Brock (1912–1995) was one of the first African American artists to have his work exhibited at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. His realistic charcoal depiction of Reverend Martin Luther King Jr. in deep contemplation was recently on display in the Los Angeles office of Senator Kamala Harris.



Kingsley Dawson Brock, *Untitled* (detail), charcoal on paper with color application

Must-See Events

Time Is Running Out of Time: Experimental Film and Video from the L.A. Rebellion and Today

» *Time Is Running Out of Time* presents early short works of Black filmmakers and video artists in Los Angeles. Central to the exhibition is a selection from the pioneering student work of the L.A. Rebellion. In the aftermath of the 1965 Watts Uprising, a group of black diasporic students entered the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) School of Theater, Film, and Television as part of the University's Ethno-Communications Initiative. These students collectively became known as the Los Angeles School of Filmmakers, or the L.A. Rebellion. From the late 1960s to the early 1980s, they produced experimental, documentary, and narrative film and video work. In dialogue with these films are works from following

“Los Angeles is one of the most dynamic cities in the world. From its great food to its trendsetting best-in-class entertainment, you can't go wrong. There are great eateries with delicious soul food from every corner of the globe. I prefer Dulan's on Crenshaw, Post and Beam, and Harold & Belle's, but you would be hard-pressed to find a bad meal anywhere in the city.”

—MICHAEL LAWSON
President, Los Angeles Urban League

generations of filmmakers and artists in Los Angeles.

WHEN: Feb. 2–Sept. 14, 2019

WHERE: Art + Practice
3401 W. 43rd Pl., Los Angeles
ARTANDPRACTICE.ORG

Charles White: A Retrospective

» The first major 21st-century museum retrospective on this famed midcentury artist, *Charles White: A Retrospective*, traces White's career and impact in the cities he called home: Chicago, his birthplace; New York, where he joined social causes and gained acclaim; and Los Angeles, where he developed his mature art and became a civil rights activist. The exhibition includes approximately 100 drawings and prints along with lesser-known oil paintings.

WHEN: Feb. 17–June 9, 2019

WHERE: LACMA
LACMA.ORG

Plumb Line: Charles White and the Contemporary

» A prolific painter, printmaker, muralist, draftsman, and photographer whose career spanned more than half a century, Charles White's artistic portrayals of black subjects, life, and history were extensive and far-reaching. *Plumb Line* features contemporary artists whose work in the realm of black individual and collective life resonates with White's profound and continuing influence. From abstraction to figuration, the artists of *Plumb Line*, including Sadie Barnette, Diedrick Brackens, Greg Breda, Alfred Conteh, Kenturah Davis, Kohshin Finley, Yashua Klos, and Toyin Ojih Odutola, find conversation with White through the largesse of their canvases, expansive renderings of black skin and black community, and in the treatment of black past and presence in ways that are both epic and intimate.

WHEN: Mar. 6–Aug. 25, 2019

WHERE: California African American Museum
CAAMUSEUM.ORG

Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power, 1963–1983

» *Soul of a Nation: Art in the Age of Black Power* shines a bright light on the vital contribution of black artists made over two decades, beginning in 1963 at the height of the civil rights movement. The exhibition examines the influences, from the civil rights and Black Power movements to Minimalism and developments in abstraction, on artists such as Romare Bearden, Barkley Hendricks, Noah Purifoy,

Martin Puryear, Faith Ringgold, Betye Saar, Alma Thomas, Charles White, and William T. Williams. Featuring the work of more than 60 influential artists and including vibrant paintings, powerful sculptures, street photography, murals, and more, this landmark exhibition is a rare opportunity to see era-defining artworks that changed the face of art in America.

WHEN: Mar. 23–Sept. 1, 2019

WHERE: The Broad
221 S. Grand Ave., Los Angeles
THEBROAD.ORG

Leimert Park Village Book Fair

» Considered one of the premier literary events on the West Coast, the Leimert Park Village Book Fair is free to the public and features more than 150 authors, writers, storytellers, poets, spoken word performers, vendors, and exhibitors.

WHEN: August 2019

(dates to be announced)

WHERE: Baldwin Hills Crenshaw Plaza, 3650 W. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Los Angeles
LEIMERTPARKBOOKFAIR.COM

Taste of Soul

» One of Southern California's largest food events, Taste of Soul is a food and entertainment street festival that regularly draws an estimated 350,000 people to a stretch of Crenshaw Boulevard between Stocker Boulevard and Rodeo Road. The block party hosts food vendors, a beer garden, and entertainment stages for live music and comedy. Attendance is free, food vendors charge various amounts for bites.

WHEN: Oct. 19, 2019

TASTEOF SOUL.ORG

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Phoebe Beasley
Phoebe Beasley created official artwork for the inaugurations of President George H. W. Bush in 1989 and President Bill Clinton in 1993, and was one of 44 artists commissioned to construct a collage on a life-size bust of President Barack Obama in 2012. Beasley has been honored by the U.S. Department of State for her participation in its Art in Embassies program, which promotes cross-cultural understanding through visual arts. In 2013, she received the Lifetime Achievement Award for Visual Arts and Arts Advocacy from the California African American Museum.



Phoebe Beasley, *Battle of the Big Horns* (detail), 1988, collage



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