

nightlife

Los Angeles

housing

recreation



dining

tips



Ready to enjoy Los Angeles?

**In-the-know Stanford young alums
have shared the best tips, tricks and
fabulous destinations to help you get
the most out of this vibrant city.**



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Dining

Young alums love to dine at these delicious destinations.



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Nightlife

According to young alums, these are the best spots to kick up your heels and enjoy an evening with friends.



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These are the places to go to have fun and hang out (you'll probably spot a young alum or two!).



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Be sure to check out the best young alumni 'hoods in Los Angeles.



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Tips

Young alums give their general advice on things to keep in mind as you explore Los Angeles.



Dining



Don't miss these young alumni-approved places for the tastiest meals in town.

<u>800 Degrees</u>	Great and inexpensive Neapolitan pizza. - CYNTHIA H., '10
<u>Alfred Coffee & Kitchen</u>	The newest organic coffee in town. - AMY A., '06
<u>Bella Pita</u>	This hole in the wall is a hidden gem. The fresh and healthy food is outstanding and you can't beat the prices. - MICHELLE K., '05
<u>Bibigo</u>	Korean, also on Beverly. - AYESHA R., '14
<u>Bossa Nova</u>	Amazing Brazilian food and centrally located. - CORINNE P., '09
<u>Bottega Louie</u>	Best macarons. Also great for brunch. - ANONYMOUS
<u>Bru Haus</u>	Impressive international beer selection, good American food and lots of TVs. - MEGHAN V., '11
<u>C&O Cucina</u>	Garlic knots. - ANONYMOUS
<u>Cafe Gratitude</u>	Delicious vegan cuisine and a very "LA" experience. - MICHELLE K., '05, ZIPPY G., '14
<u>Cha Cha Chicken</u>	Caribbean-inspired, outdoor seating, BYOB. - MEGHAN V., '11
<u>Daikokuya</u>	Really good ramen and less wait time compared to very popular Little Tokyo location. - ANONYMOUS
<u>Dia de Campo</u>	It's one of the best places to grab a margarita and freshly made tacos with friends. Dollar oysters on Tuesday plus a daily happy hour (called Bandito Hour). Need I go on? Don't miss out on the opportunity to eat some of LA's best guacamole here. - TAM V., '06
<u>EK Valley Restaurant</u>	Unassuming family-run Mexican restaurant with awesome mole enchiladas (but everything there is good). - CYNTHIA H., '10

Dining

<u>Father's Office</u>	Famous burgers. - MIKA W., '11
<u>Fishing With Dynamite</u>	Great for seafood lovers. - TAM V., '06
<u>Gilbert's El Indio</u>	Great Mexican, cheap margaritas, dollar Taco Tuesdays. - MEGHAN V., '11
<u>Gracias Madre</u>	Great vegan restaurant that meat eaters will love too! - ZIPPY G., '14
<u>Grand Central Market</u>	Lots of choices. A lot of affordable choices, good food stands. - ENRIQUE G., '14
<u>Gyu-Kaku</u>	Cook your own Japanese food, several locations throughout Southern California. - CORINNE P., '09
<u>Holy Cow BBQ</u>	Texas BBQ, authentic, low-key spot. - MEGHAN V., '11
<u>Komodo</u>	Spicy, awesome, fusion. - AYESHA R., '14
<u>Langer's Deli</u>	Best pastrami. - ENRIQUE G., '14
<u>Lemonade</u>	Quintessential LA eatery. - KYLE DEAN '09
<u>Lucy's</u>	Restaurant on Pico has some of the best breakfast burritos! - KAELA F., '14
<u>M Street Kitchen</u>	Great dinner spot. - MEGHAN V., '11
<u>Manhattan Beach Post</u>	Take your family here (great spot for when the parents are visiting town) and make sure you order the signature bacon cheddar buttermilk biscuits. - TAM V., '06
<u>Manpuku</u>	Delicious Japanese BBQ, excellent meat quality, great side dishes. Reservations are a must! - MIKA W., '11, MICHELLE K., '05
<u>Meals by Genet</u>	The BEST place for Ethiopian food!! Super friendly staff and delicious food. - ELLIE W., '09
<u>Mercado</u>	Excellent, innovative Mexican food with a great ambiance and very good margaritas. - MICHELLE K., '05

Dining

<u>Milk</u>	Really good ice cream and macaron ice cream sandwiches. - KAELA F., '14
<u>Milo & Olive</u>	This is a bakery and restaurant. My favorite restaurant in LA, especially for breakfast, pizza, and any/all baked goods. - CYNTHIA H., '10
<u>Palsaik Korean BBQ</u>	Top-notch and fun BBQ joint. - KYLE D., '09
<u>Pitfire Pizza</u>	Great personal pizzas. - AMY A., '06
<u>Pizzeria Mozza</u>	Delicious “fancy” pizza. - CYNTHIA H., '10
<u>Plan Check</u>	There are so many good options on this stretch of Sawtelle Blvd! - ELLIE WEN, '09
<u>Public School</u>	American food, chicken and waffles are great. - MEGHAN V., '11
<u>Redbird</u>	Unique Dishes. - ENRIQUE G., '14
<u>Shamshiri Grill</u>	Delicious Persian food. They deliver! - CYNTHIA H., '10
<u>Simplethings</u>	The best sandwich place in the city, hands down. Sink your teeth into a pretzel bun filled with pulled chicken or a juicy meatloaf sandwich. The mini pies are an excellent treat post-sandwich. - MICHELLE K., '05
<u>Soo Won Galbi</u>	Very good Korean BBQ with excellent meat quality. - MICHELLE K., '05
<u>Sunny Blue</u>	For omusubi. - CYNTHIA H., '10
<u>Sweet Rose Creamery</u>	For ice cream. - MICHELLE K., '05
<u>Sycamore Kitchen</u>	Awesome pastries and breakfast. - AMY A., '06
<u>Tacos Punta Cabras</u>	The best tacos on the Westside. Super fresh fish and spicy, uber-fresh salsas. Delicious ceviches and tostadas. - MICHELLE K., '05

Dining

Tatsu Ramen

Great ramen place in Hollywood. - **KYLE D., '09, ELLIE W., '09**

Tender Greens

Great salads! They have great working conditions and fresh and local food products. - **TRISHA M., MA '10, AMY A., '06**

The OP Cafe

Classic brunch spot. - **MEGHAN V., '11**

The Original Hoy-Ka

Wonderful Thai. - **CYNTHIA H., '10**

Toast

Breakfast hotspot. - **AYESHA R., '14**

Upper West

Great date night restaurant. - **MEGHAN V., '11**

Urth Caffe

Best organic coffee in town. Classic coffee spot/watering hole.
- **AMY A., '06, AYESHA R., '14**

Viktor Benes Bakery

Everything here is to die for. - **MEGHAN V., '11**

Wurstkuche

Cheap, delicious dinner; great for vegetarians and meat-eaters alike. Unrivaled beer list and beers on draught.
- **MICHELLE K., '05**



Nightlife



These are the hot spots young alums love to hit up to have a good time and make great memories.

<u>Angel City Brewery</u>	Great open venue and actual brewery. - ENRIQUE G., '14
<u>Blind Barber</u>	Great cocktails and grilled cheese. - AMY A., '06
<u>Cabo Cantina</u>	Cheap food and cheap, strong drinks. Daily deals and specials. - CORINNE P., '09
<u>EightyTwo</u>	Barcade, need I say more? - ENRIQUE G., '14, PATRICIA A., '14
<u>Faith and Flower</u>	Swanky, glamorous spot with great, innovative cocktails. Oysters are \$1 during happy hour. - MICHELLE K., '05
<u>Harlowe</u>	Old fashioned on tap! - AMY A., '06
<u>Hudson House</u>	Hudson House has a ridiculously long and rotating list of beers, plus an amazing line-up of handcrafted cocktails. Try the spicy watermelon margarita. Their happy hour is from 5–7 pm every weekday, and includes incredible food from their kitchen. They're known for their pretzel-bun burger and fries. - TAM V., '06
<u>Luna Park</u>	Has all day bottomless mimosas or sangria and wonderful happy hour 2-for-1 specials along with a shrimp pizza that is absolutely superb. - KAELA F., '14
<u>Mom's Bar</u>	Classic bar that has a DJ and turns into a dance party later at night. - MEGHAN V., '11

Nightlife

San Francisco Saloon

SF sports bar for when you miss home!
- **MEGHAN V., '11**

Secret Restaurant and Hookah Lounge

Awesome happy hour deals on a daily basis as well as hookah.
- **CORINNE P., '09**

The Bayou

Although this gay bar is in West Hollywood's "boytown", it's not your typical bar. Very low key, and doesn't get crowded at all if you go before 9 pm. Drinks are cheap with or without happy hour.
- **KYLE D., '09**

The Well

Good cheap eats and drinks. - **AMY A., '06**

Zinque

Wine bar. - **AMY A., '06**





Whether it's hiking, live music or a new adventure, young alums recommend these interesting events and locales.

Recreation

Hiking, paddle boarding, hot yoga, museums. - **MIKA W., '11**

First Fridays in Venice, museum night (free admission every Thursday), summer movies at Hollywood forever cemetery. - **MIKA W., '11, ELLIE W., '09**

UCLA's Marina Aquatic Center offers classes on surfing, stand-up paddle boarding, sailing, kayaking, windsurfing, rowing and more. The prices for non-students are pretty reasonable and the instructions are top notch. They also offer reasonably priced rentals. - **MICHELLE K., '05**

UrbanDaddy. Food and clothes deals for men. - **AMY A., '06**

Food trucks!!! They're all over the place. - **AYESHA R., '14**

3rd Street Dance in West Hollywood/3rd Street area offers really fun, reasonably priced dance classes. We took a swing dance class and had a really great time. - **MICHELLE K., '05**

Go to Catalina Island. - **PATRICIA A., '14**

Malibu is always a beautiful place to go for the day on a weekend. - **PATRICIA A., '14**

Death Valley/Joshua Tree if you're into deserts. - **PATRICIA A., '14**

The Getty Center and Getty Villa. Free after 5 pm and (I think) every Friday night! (Parking is \$15 but you can also bus, especially to the Getty Center). Amazing places whether you like art or not; they are just as wonderful for the views and architecture, and are great places to bring a book. - **CYNTHIA H., '10, AMY A., '06, KIMBERLEY S., '10**

Santa Monica's Wednesday farmers market is large and very famous, but the Saturday morning market at Virginia Park on Pico is a great, laid-back experience (smaller and easier to navigate). - **CYNTHIA H., '10**

Echo Park is great for food, and for the lake. - **CYNTHIA H., '10**

Upright Citizens Brigade for comedy/improv shows. - **CYNTHIA H., '10**



Recreation

LA Philharmonic at Disney Concert Hall (of course). - **CYNTHIA H., '10**

Wandering and window-shopping on Abbot Kinney in Venice, Main Street in Santa Monica, or N Canon in Beverly Hills (more accessible/not just crazy extravagant like Rodeo Drive just two streets over). - **CYNTHIA H., '10**

Go to a concert at the Greek Theatre and Hollywood Bowl. - **ELLIE W., '09**

Hiking Runyon Canyon. - **ZIPPY G., '14**

Hiking around Griffith Observatory, then going for fresh smoothies after! At night or at sunset is beautiful! - **ZIPPY G., '14, ELLIE W., '09, AYESHA R., '14, PATRICIA A., '14**

Kitchen 24. Great for late night snacks. Including their cookies and brownies! - **AMY A., '06**

LACMA is free every weekday after 3 pm for LA county residents. If you enjoy free things as much as I do, most LA museums have a free day. - **ELLIE W., '09, KIMBERLEY S., '10, AMY A., '06, AYESHA R., '14**

Tasting Table. Food/restaurants and recipes for folks who cook. - **AMY A., '06**

Huntington beach. Great place to go if you have a dog. - **PATRICIA A., '14**

Finerthings LA. Offers a great bottomless mimosa guide to the city! - **AMY A., '06**

Hiking to the Hollywood sign is always a fun thing to do for new arrivals. - **KAELA F., '14**

There are a bunch of cheap movies in the park downtown in Exposition Park on the weekends over the summer that are always fun; bring a blanket and some cash for food trucks. - **KAELA F., '14**

If you enjoy television, many shows have free tapings. - **KIMBERLEY S., '10**

Cinespia movie events such as Hollywood cemetery movie screenings. - **AYESHA R., '14**

Go ahead and be a tourist now and then even if you're from the area. Do the Santa Monica boardwalk, go for a drive down Palm Drive, hike up to the Hollywood sign, people-watch at the Grove—it's all good fun. - **AYESHA R., '14**

Shakespeare in the Park. Free, open-air summer shows at Roxbury Park. - **AYESHA R., '14**

If you need a late night snack, the Sprinkles in Beverly Hills has a vending machine. Just know that if you go after midnight, you'll probably come away with at least a dozen new high school friends. - **AYESHA R., '14**

Recreation

Attend all the Stanford Football parties that are organized by the Stanford Alumni Association. Great shopping and deals in downtown LA. LA Live area is also thriving and has some excellent spots and specials. - **CORINNE P., '09**

The California Science Center is free and really cool. Targeted to little kids but equally fun for nerdy adults. JPL offers free guided tours if you happen to know someone who works there (or you can reach out to alumni out there). - **KIMBERLEY S., '10**

Brand Park in the summer has free outdoor movies every weekend. - **PATRICIA A., '14**

If you enjoy meditating, there are tons of gatherings and Lake Shrine is a cool spot to visit. - **KIMBERLEY S., '10**

Summer is a great time to be in LA for outdoor movie events, concerts in the park, plays, etc. - **KIMBERLEY S., '10**

Downtown Art Walk. Happens every 2nd Thursday of each month. - **ELLIE W., '09**

Walk around Tongva Park in Santa Monica. - **ELLIE W., '09**

Go to an improv show at The Groundlings, Upright Citizens Brigade, etc.- **ELLIE W., '09**

DineLA/Restaurant Week. - **MICHELLE K., '05**

Well + Good Los Angeles. Good place to find out about new fitness/wellness places. - **MICHELLE K., '05**

Venice311 on Twitter. - **SAM F., '09**

There's a drive-in movie theatre downtown! Just discovered this—look into it. - **AMY A., '06**

Join Stanford professional women of Los Angeles county for activities to do with local professional Stanford women. - **TRISHA M., MA '10**

5 Every Day is an app that lists 5 new things to do in LA each day. - **ANONYMOUS**

Thrillist.com Restaurants, things to do, “best of” lists. - **AMY A., '06**

LAist.com. - **ENRIQUE G., '14**

Time out LA. - **ENRIQUE G., '14**

Groupon, Living Social and the Stanford Alumni Association. - **CORINNE P., '09**

Hidden Los Angeles. - **ELLIE W., '09**



**Moving to Los Angeles?
These neighborhoods are young
alumni favorites.**

Brentwood. Nice, residential. - **ANONYMOUS**

Culver City and Ladera Heights. They're nearly one in the same. Safe, central to the freeways and easy to access from all the surrounding areas. Walkable, lots of restaurants, close to other good neighborhoods. - **AMY A., '06, CORINNE P., '09**

Glendale/La Canada Flintridge. Just drive 15 to hang. I prefer the view and the cost gets you a bit more. - **PATRICIA A., '14**

Hollywood is great because it is central. You'll be near the bars and clubs but also close to the "hipster" neighborhoods like Silver Lake and Echo Park without having to actually live there. - **ZIPPY G., '14**

Koreatown. Affordable and central location in Los Angeles. Active nightlife and LOTS of good places to eat. - **KYLE D., '09**

Ocean Park, Santa Monica. A really great neighborhood. You're super close to the beach, it is super walkable and bikeable and the vibe is relaxed and friendly. Rent in Santa Monica is rent-stabilized, which means that once you move in, your rent cannot go up more than a few percent each year. The neighborhood has many beautiful parks, lots of green spaces and is well maintained. - **MICHELLE K., '05**

Pasadena. Becoming a cooler spot to live in. It is close enough to hang out in LA if you don't mind a short drive but good to go back to for a quiet place where the air is a bit cleaner. - **KIMBERLEY S., '10**

Santa Monica. Close to the beach. - **MIKA W., '11, ELLIE W., '09**

Silverlake/Los Feliz/Echo Park. If you're from/really miss the East Coast. It's got a Brooklyn-vibe. More "alternative" (i.e. hippie) places. Very chill with a very forward-minded crowd. Hip and full of young people, gentrified and up and coming. - **PATRICIA A., '14, ZIPPY G., '14, AMY A., '06, KIMBERLEY S., '10**

Housing

Venice/El Segundo or beach cities. Unsung gems of the South Bay would be Hermosa and Redondo Beach. The rent is more affordable than Santa Monica or Venice, and you have the feeling of a private (versus tourist-heavy) beach. The beach town vibe is more laid-back in some ways, but Hermosa definitely has a 20-something local party scene at night and on weekends.

- **SAM F., '09, TAM V., '06**

West Hollywood. Fun and lively, pretty central to most LA hot spots. Cool for business people into networking. A little cheaper than Santa Monica but still close (less than 10 minutes from the beach). - **MIKA W., '11, AMY A., '06, KYLE D., '09**

West LA. - **ELLIE W., '09**





Keep these young alumni words of wisdom in mind as you get to know Los Angeles.

If you are out and about before 9 am on Saturday or Sunday, you'll be able to get anywhere in the city very quickly (without traffic). - **CYNTHIA H., '10**

Live on the same side of town as where you work. - **SAM F., '09**

Rush hour traffic is a real thing. Hunt for houses away from LA if you can and find one in a sweet location. - **PATRICIA A., '14**

It can take some time to adjust to LA, especially if you are used to smaller college towns like Palo Alto/Stanford. Allow extra time to get places and consider exploring one new neighborhood or sub-neighborhood at a time; you'll find your own favorite spots, but they might be spread far apart. - **CYNTHIA H., '10**

The bus system is quite good in West LA. - **CYNTHIA H., '10**

Don't be afraid to live somewhere other than Venice or Santa Monica! - **ZIPPY G., '14**

Expect traffic. All the time. - **ANONYMOUS**

Sometimes surface streets are faster than freeways! When in doubt, skip Sunset, take Fountain or Hollywood Blvd. Skip La Cienega, take San Vicente. From January to July, keep an umbrella in your car—just in case. - **AMY A., '06**

LA sunsets are unbeatable, thanks to the smog. Enjoy them! - **AYESHA R., '14**

It can be a bit tough to make friends at first, but if you go out to events that you enjoy you are bound to meet people. LA people do tend to have their set friend groups but on the other hand, so many people move here that there are plenty of opportunities to meet other newbies! You could live in LA for years and never explore the whole thing. So many restaurants, and the weather is as good as the rest of the country thinks. Similar to the Bay Area in that there is an "industry" that a lot of people are involved in—here it's entertainment. - **KIMBERLEY S., '10**

Take an improv class. Great way to meet friends and become more comfortable in work/social situations. - **AMY A., '06**

Tips

Some days start grey but end super sunny (yay!). Bring your sunglasses. - **AMY A., '06**

You will only ever be able to turn left on yellow. This sometimes catches drivers new to LA traffic, who will wait at the intersection for an eternity and then get honked at. - **AYESHA R., '14**

Make sure you have a car. - **CORINNE P., '09**

If you ever think you'll be gone for so little time that the parking police won't get you, you're **WRONG** (also make sure you know whether street cleaning on certain days might mean you'll have to move your car even if you **DO** have a permit!) - **AYESHA R., '14**

Look for places near public transportation routes (express buses, metro) or that are walkable/bikeable. This will make your life much less stressful, as LA's traffic can be pretty crazy. - **MICHELLE K., '05**

Also know that the temperature will hit maybe 55 degrees and every local will get out their parkas and fur-lined jackets. Totally socially acceptable! Our sartorialists make a point of dressing for all seasons even if we might not have them. - **AYESHA R., '14**

Location is **EVERYTHING** in LA. If you know where you're going to work, it's important to pick a place to live that's reasonably located. - **KYLE D., '09**

Go exploring when you can. Take a slightly different route to work, go visit your friends in other areas, whatever! The LA sprawl has all sorts of cool spots and great eateries tucked away off the main boulevards. On that note, make a point of getting out of the city now and then too—Santa Barbara, San Diego, pretty much anywhere near the coast for a few hundred miles can't do you wrong. - **AYESHA R., '14**

Use Westside Rentals and RadPad when looking for an apartment. - **ZIPPY G., '14**

Every beach has slightly different rules for what you can do there. Best beach for bonfires is Dockweiler. - **AYESHA R., '14**



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