

Watch Journal

Here's looking at you, kid: The Kalpagraphe Chronomètre, Parmigiani's love letter to the tonneau dress watch.

Plus! Leica refocuses on watchmaking. Timepieces recast in film noir.
Shanghai Express: Storyboarding an epic Bulgari adventure in China.
Outsider's guide to Hollywood. Cameos from Patek, Hublot, Breguet & more.



Hollywood

**The Greenhorn's Guide to Hollywood.
Moving to Hollywood by accident showed me
why you should travel there on purpose.**

By Ben Keeshin

OPPOSITE: The Hollywood Hills neighborhood in Central Los Angeles with Griffith Park visible in the distance.



PHOTO: LOS ANGELES TOURISM & CONVENTION BOARD

Just north of Hollywood and Vine, the Capitol Records Tower is a Los Angeles Historic-Cultural Monument.

OPPOSITE, FROM TOP: Created in 1923 as an advertisement for real estate, the Hollywood Sign has become a cultural icon. Named after Griffith J. Griffith, the recognizable Griffith Observatory was created for the study of astronomy, now best known for its views and starring roles in *Rebel Without a Cause* and the more recent *La La Land*.

TRAVEL



HOLLYWOOD

How do you get to Hollywood?

For me, it was taking a real estate agent at her word. “Silver Lake,” she said. “Silver Lake one-bedroom—beautiful molding, good light, no parking.” In Los Angeles, to a certain newly arrived, younger-trending former Brooklynite, the phrase “Silver Lake” is catnip on par with “student loan database crashes” or “Doc Martens fire sale.” The historically Mexican neighborhood has great bars, a shimmering reservoir, and restaurants whose waiters recommend “six or eight small plates for the table.” Until recently, James Franco lived here. So did Fred Armisen. Hipster cachet lies so thick on the ground, the 1980s Mercedes almost can’t get through.

Which is all very nice. But my one-bedroom, I found out later, isn’t in Silver Lake. It’s in Hollywood. That good light? It glints off the famed sign, through some smog.

My spirits fell. As I had heard tell, Silver Lake was

charming fender benders with Father John Misty outside a crystal shop, where Hollywood was getting pickpocketed by a man in a Spiderman suit. Visions of sipping \$7 panacean coffee morphed into waiting in a Starbucks bathroom line, a half-dozen tourists deep. I like Bob Hope fine, but I didn’t need to touch his star.

It took me six months to overcome this misinformation. Because, while Hollywood has its odd corners, there’s a lot of that good light. It’s the coral gleam of neon against the neighborhood’s deco hotels, hot sun on a farmer’s market taco, the overwhelming luminosity of a cinema projector. Take a Thai chile to the face. Buy a velvet portrait of Marilyn. Watch a great movie, then creep over to the Bar Marmont to see its star in dishabille. Hollywood’s less than its legend, but so much more than its reputation.

Here’s what I found.



PHOTOS : LOS ANGELES TOURISM & CONVENTION BOARD



TRAVEL



HOLLYWOOD



PHOTOS: WONHO FRANK LEE/GWEN; TINA WHATCOTT/THE MUSSO & FRANK GRILL

Jessica Koslow's Squirrel represents the cutting edge of new California cuisine.

OPPOSITE, FROM TOP: Gwen Butcher Shop & Restaurant from Australian brothers Curtis and Luke Stone. The legendary Musso & Frank Grill has been a celebrity haven since 1919, the oldest restaurant in Hollywood.



EAT

In truth, my sense of adventure is just hunger in an pith helmet. Should your pangs begin before noon, there's no place better to eat than Squirrel, Jessica Koslow's diminutive spot—a slug of lacto-fermented hot sauce in the eye of big, bland brunches. Have sorrel-flecked rice for breakfast; an enormous, singular tater tot topped with Marcona almond-chive schmear for lunch. Rules don't matter, everything's good, and the jam reigns supreme.

If you like your midday meal a little more traditional (read: meaty), Hollywood has you covered. Top Chef alum Curtis Stone opened Gwen two years ago as a prix fixe temple to steak and short rib. (It's a full butcher shop, too.) Quietly, at lunch, it offers a \$12 grinder, full of cold cuts that don't give up much to Gwen's showstopping rib eye. And over at Pizzeria Mozza, Los Angeles mozzarella mistress Nancy Silverton offers pepperoni pizza, the crust of which is so bewitching, it will revolutionize the way you think of pizza—crust not as scaffolding, but as the chewy, yeasty point itself.

Craving a taste of classic-towards-calcified Hollywood? Drink your dinner at Musso & Frank's, a red-booths-and-dark-wood joint that's served martinis to most of the SAG. They've got food, too—if you're ever going to have Lobster Thermidor, shouldn't it be where Greta Garbo did? For a slightly newer standby, nip 15 minutes west to Spago—site of many a Reagan Era repast—still serving variations of its original 1982 menu—the tuna tartare is transcendent and still available, though, regrettably, no longer for just \$7.50.



TRAVEL



HOLLYWOOD



PHOTOS: COURTESY PIXEL LAB/SUNSET TOWER HOTEL; BARNSDALL ART PARK FOUNDATION

OPPOSITE, FROM TOP: Steeped in Hollywood history, The Terrace Bar at the Sunset Tower Hotel. Located within the Barnsdall Art Park, Frank Lloyd Wright's first Los Angeles commission, the Hollyhock House.

SHOP

It's titillating to out-of-state visitors: marijuana, in every form, available to anyone over 21 with valid ID. Whether you choose to nibble a square of fortified chocolate and have a somewhat-too-spiritual talk with your Uber driver is up to you. Here's a better bet: CBD, THC's non-psychoactive cousin, purported to have the same soothing properties as ganja without the potential to tip you into a full Maureen Dowd.

For a whimsical fix, try OK, a store on West Third, for a box of jewel-like CBD gummies from artisanal purveyor Lord Jones. The store's also got a fun assortment of housewares and colorful tchotchkes to lift your mood. Negative side effects? Purely financial.

Why not celebrate your trip with some new duds that will be totally useless come winter in your home state—something diaphanous and insane that says, "Just back from a Mediterranean clime"? Virgil Normal offers eclectic, gender-ambivalent selections, from doodled-upon painter's pants to leopard-print fleece turtlenecks. There are T-shirts designed by Jeff Goldblum. Fanny packs abound.

Fatigued? Plop into a Saarinen chair at Hernandez Furniture. This family-run shop on Santa Monica Boulevard specializes in the refurbishment and sale of midcentury furniture. The inventory, which contains enough surplus Danish teak to build a fleet of Chris-Craft runabouts, is ever-changing. But the selection so stylish and wide, you might think they stole wholesale the set of that L.A. episode of *Mad Men*. (They did not.)

If your desires are diffuse and you don't mind flashbacks to junior prom, the Melrose Flea Market has a weekly offering of clothing, artworks, furniture, and knick-knacks, all displayed in a busy swath in the shadow of Fairfax High School—a chance to buy a varsity jacket if you missed out on earning one the hard way.

SHOWBIZ, BABY

Going to Hollywood without seeing a movie in theaters is like visiting Parma and eschewing the cheese. The Arclight Hollywood at the corner of Sunset and Vine is a cinema with

projection and amenities so good, it draws residents of the adjacent Hollywood Hills—those without private screening rooms, that is. Most important, the seating is assigned, so you can arrive seconds before the lights dim, fearlessly, with a 24-ounce "movie pour" beer in hand.

If you visit in the summer—defined luxuriously here as May through October—head to Cinespia at the Hollywood Forever Cemetery. In daylight, Hollywood Forever hosts the celebrated deceased and their celebrants; at dusk, crowds of as many as 4,000 bring beach blankets for screenings of curated classics like *Vertigo* and *Saturday Night Fever*, plus cultier fare. Missing the temperate months? Hollywood Forever boasts one of L.A.'s best indoor music venues: an onsite Masonic temple.

For the intermittently athletic, Barnsdall Art Park offers walking paths around Frank Lloyd Wright's wonderful 1919 Hollyhock House. Should you tire of locomotion, splay out on the grass for a full view of twin Hollywood hillside icons: the Griffith Park Observatory and the Hollywood sign. Seeing the prominent letters at dusk is a gorgeous display of two Tinseltown staples: branding exercises and natural light.

STAY

As they'll tell you in the botox suite: age is just a number. Still, it happens that Hollywood's oldest operating hotel is also one of its best. The Hotel Roosevelt towers 12 stories above Hollywood Boulevard—directly across from Grauman's Chinese Theater—with 300 rooms, 63 suites, the Tropicana bar, and some compelling evidence of ghosts.

Further west, on Sunset Boulevard, is the Sunset Tower Hotel, one of the world's finest examples of art deco architecture, whose pool offers suitably grand views of the city. Just down the street—er, boulevard—is the legendary Chateau Marmont, which somehow fits a reputation for secrecy, scandal, sumptuous furnishings, and rock 'n roll mayhem into a single 1929 building modeled after a manse in the Loire Valley. Famously constructed to be earthquake-proof, it's the site of Jean Harlow's affairs and John Belushi's overdose, and offers laundry bags designed with Gucci. Consider it Peak Los Angeles, in all the best ways.