WELCOME TO THE BEACH!
Just a stone's throw from Los Angeles, the world-famous Malibu coastline offers 27 miles of scenic public beaches. Spend a day in the sun on one of the beautiful all-public beaches. Or head for the 20 miles of public beaches that are lined with private beachfront—where you can go beachcombing and wildlife-watching on the state lands below the high tide line and sunbathing and sign-watching on the abundant public easements on the dry sand. Whether you’re visiting from far away or from the properties next door, Malibu’s public beaches will reward you with abundant opportunities for recreation and discovery.

“Development shall not interfere with the public’s right of access to the sea...including...the use of the dry sand and rocky coastal beaches to the first line of terrestrial vegetation.”
— California Coastal Act, Section 30211 (1976)

“The state of California owns...the lands seaward of what is called the ‘mean high tide line’... Although it is difficult to ascertain the boundary between public and private lands, a general rule to follow is that visitors have the right to walk on the wet beach.”

ACCESS TO PUBLIC-PRIVATE BEACHES

Lechuza Beach
1. Broad Beach Rd at West Sea Level Dr
2. Broad Beach Rd at Bunnie Ln
3. Broad Beach Rd at East Sea Level Dr
4. All-public beach between West Sea Level Dr and 1 house west of Bunnie Ln

Broad Beach
5. Between 31346-31340 Broad Beach Rd
6. Between 31318-31202 Broad Beach Rd

Escondido Beach
7. Between 27420-27400 PCH
8. Just west of Geoffreys’s restaurant
9. Between Malibu Cove Colony Dr and Escondido Beach Rd

Latigo Beach
10. Latigo Shore Rd
11. Park on PCH

Latigo Beach
12. Latigo Shore Rd
13. Park on PCH

Malibu Beach (Malibu Colony)
14. Take the path west from Malibu Lagoon parking lot.

Carbon Beach
15. “Zonker Harris Accessway”
16. East edge of 22706 PCH
17. West edge of 22126 PCH
18. Big Rock Beach
19. Between Moonshadows and 20340 PCH
20. Closed due to storm damage
21. Between 20000-19958 PCH

WHERE IS THE PUBLIC BEACH?

Beach hours vary. 7am-10pm at most all-public beaches. Public-private beaches open 24 hrs; access gates open sunrise-sunset for entry, 24 hours for exit (all but #16, not locked from beach side).

Legend
1. Access to public-private beaches
2. Restroom
3. MTA 534 bus stop, www.metro.net

Bold indicates all-public beaches.

East of Broad Beach, public-private beaches are often not passable at high tide. See other side for “Reading a Tide Chart.”
SAFETY TIPS
Be sure to take precautions against these common hazards:

Sun and Wind: Use sun protection. Carry an extra layer of clothing.

Pacific Coast Highway (PCH): Use caution when parking and extreme caution if crossing is necessary.

Rip Tides: Swim in areas with lifeguards; stay in shallows in ones without. Note: public-private beaches and many all-public beaches at off-peak times (and a few at all times) do not have lifeguards.

Urban Runoff: Stay out of water after rains. Avoid water near storm drains and creek outlets at all times.

Security Guards: Carry easement maps when using dry-sand easements. A copy of the CA Coastal Act is not necessary but can be useful.

BASIC BEACH ETIQUETTE
Respect public and private property, whether visiting from next door or far away:

• Deposit trash in receptacles provided.
• Use established restrooms only. Note: no restrooms on public-private beaches.
• Do not trespass on private property. Refrain from using beach furniture that does not belong to you.
• Refrain from posting signs and guards to keep people from using the land that belongs to everyone.

GEOLOGY
Here where the Santa Monica Mountains meet the Pacific Ocean, the coastline varies from rocky bluffs to smooth sandy beaches. Coastal development has interrupted natural erosional and depositional cycles, as has the construction of debris basins to prevent landslides in the mountains. Therefore, sand deposited on the beaches by the sea and mountains is often supplemented by exotic, trucked-in sand that originates in such urbanized formations as the San Fernando Valley.

FLORA AND FAUNA
The coast supports a rich and colorful array of life forms—underwater, overhead, and on the sand. Pelicans, dolphins, sea stars, and other year-round native wildlife are joined seasonally by whales, curlews, and other migrants. Common exotic species include potted palms in gardens and illegal dogs on the beaches, while bacteria and viruses greatly increase in abundance after rainstorms.

Since the last owner of the Malibu Rancho lost fierce legal battles in the early 1900s to block the building of the PCH, the human residents have become more abundant but have remained strongly territorial and litigious. Some are year-round inhabitants, while many use their dwellings primarily on weekends and holidays. While the residents are 89% Caucasian, day-use weekend visitors include a more diverse array of families, surfers, star-stalkers, and the silicone-enhanced. On weekdays, gardeners, maids, and construction workers visit beach-adjacent properties in large numbers but are seldom seen on the beaches.

PARKING
Parking is ample in public lots and on roads off the PCH, and less so on the PCH at peak beach-going times. Note: barriers to public parking are common, and range from “movable” (orange cones, trash cans) to “unmovable” (mailboxes, trees, lawns) to “can be moved but not recommended” (large potted plants, guards, illegal “no parking” signs).

Visit your local hardware store to make your own “no parking” sign for as little as $25.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Los Angeles Urban Rangers
www.laurbanrangers.org
“Malibu Public Beaches” guide and safaris
CA Coastal Commission
www.coastal.ca.gov (805) 585-1800
Legal and access info
LA County Dept Beaches & Harbors
beaches.co.la.ca.us/BandH/Main.htm
County beach info
Santa Monica Mtns Conservancy
www.lamountains.com/parks_search.asp
State beach info
Access For All
sierrasteve@earthlink.net (310) 455-4224
Nonprofit public-access advocate

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