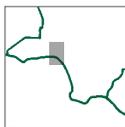




Topanga State Park to Will Rogers State Beach



	Sandy Beach	Rocky Shore	Trail	Visitor Center	Campground	Wildlife Viewing	Fishing or Boating	Facilities for Disabled	Food and Drink	Restrooms	Parking	Fee
Summit Valley Edmund D. Edelman Park			•						•	•	•	
Topanga State Park		•	•	•	•				•	•	•	
Getty Villa			•						•	•	•	
Temescal Gateway Park			•						•	•	•	•
Temescal Canyon Park									•	•		
Will Rogers State Beach	•	•				•	•		•	•	•	•
Will Rogers State Historic Park			•	•					•	•	•	•

SUMMIT VALLEY EDMUND D. EDELMAN PARK: *Off Topanga Canyon Blvd., 2.6 mi. S. of Mulholland Dr., Topanga.* Approach the park southbound on Topanga Canyon Blvd.; the turn-off is abrupt. There is a mile-long loop trail for hikers, equestrians, and mountain bikers; dogs on leash OK. Unpaved parking lot; chemical toilets.

TOPANGA STATE PARK: *Main entrance, end of Entrada Rd. off Topanga Canyon Blvd., 4.5 mi. N. of Pacific Coast Hwy., Topanga.* Imagine an enormous, scenic, and wild park within the boundaries of the West's largest city. Topanga State Park contains ridges where 360-degree views are dominated by undeveloped terrain, Santa Monica Bay, and Catalina Island. Besides open space, the park has facilities for picnics and hike-in and equestrian camping, along with 36 miles of trails.

The main entrance is at Trippet Ranch. Picnic tables, some under shady oaks, are near the large parking lot, along with interpretive panels and restrooms. There is a self-guided nature trail and a mile-and-a-half-long trail through Santa Ynez Canyon that leads to a 20-foot-high waterfall; look for tiger lilies and stream orchids. In the dry late summer landscape, look for prickly pear cactus in bloom and California black walnut trees bearing ripe nuts. Wildlife in the park includes coast horned lizards, California mountain kingsnakes, gray foxes, coyotes, bobcats, and mule deer.

Heading inland from Pacific Coast Hwy. on Sunset Blvd., turn left on Los Liones Dr. to reach one of several trails into Topanga State Park. Turn off Sunset Blvd. on Palisades Dr. and continue two miles to Santa Ynez Canyon Park, which borders Topanga State Park. One mile farther inland on Palisades Dr., turn west on Vereda de la Montura and park on the street; an opening in the fence leads to the Santa Ynez Canyon Trail. In the 1700 block of Michael Ln. a small sign marks a trail; park on the street. Past the point at which Palisades Dr. becomes Chastain Parkway East, turn on Via Las Palmas and go through a decorative archway, past private homes on both sides. A gated parking lot and restrooms for trail users is on the left. Hike up the paved path out of the residential area to the Temescal Fire Rd., which leads into Topanga State Park.

GETTY VILLA: *17985 Pacific Coast Hwy., Pacific Palisades.* The Getty Villa houses Greek, Roman, and Etruscan treasures at a dramatic site overlooking the sea. Admission is free, but an advance, timed ticket is required. The Getty Center in Los Angeles houses European and American art from the medieval period to the modern. For information about both museums, call: 310-440-7300.

TEMESCAL GATEWAY PARK: *End of Temescal Canyon Rd., N. of Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades.* This very lovely landscaped park offers tree-shaded lawns, picnic areas, and trail access into Topanga State Park. Summer

camps for kids and conferences are held in Temescal Gateway Park's historic buildings. Fee for parking; leashed dogs OK within the park. Call: 310-454-1395, x103.

TEMESCAL CANYON PARK: *Temescal Canyon Rd. and Pacific Coast Hwy., Pacific Palisades.* A mile-long, landscaped park is located along both sides of Temescal Canyon Rd., inland of Pacific Coast Hwy. There are picnic areas shaded by sycamore trees, children's play equipment, lawns, and a native plant garden. Shoulder parking.

WILL ROGERS STATE BEACH: *Off Pacific Coast Hwy., Pacific Palisades.* This highly popular beach park, managed by Los Angeles County, occupies most of the ocean frontage along Pacific Coast Hwy. from Topanga Canyon Blvd. to Santa Monica. Large parking lots are located on both sides of the foot of Temescal Canyon Rd. and at Chautauqua Blvd. The parking lot at the foot of Sunset Blvd. is shared with Gladstone's restaurant; the deck is open to the public for ocean viewing. A small parking area with picnic tables, a view deck, and a ramp to the beach is located at the end of Coastline Dr. Some shoulder parking on the seaward side of the busy highway is available, but use caution. Restrooms, volleyball nets, and life-

guard stations are spaced along the beach. The South Bay Bicycle Trail begins at Temescal Canyon Rd. and runs south to Torrance. Beach hours are 7 AM to 10 PM. No fires or pets on the beach. Call: 310-305-9503.

WILL ROGERS STATE HISTORIC PARK: *End of Will Rogers State Park Rd., off Sunset Blvd., Pacific Palisades.* Will Rogers and his family took up residence here in 1928. The grounds are spacious, containing a polo field, riding stables, and lawns. The home itself reflects Will Rogers's personality: gracious, expansive, and unpretentious.

Visitors can tour the restored home, have a barbecue at picnic tables overlooking the polo field, or hike a series of loop trails around the property. The Backbone Trail leads into adjacent Topanga State Park, and the Rivas Canyon Trail leads two miles to Temescal Gateway Park. Polo matches take place on weekends, and Will Rogers's films are shown at the visitor center. For a schedule and other information, call: 310-454-8212. The Will Rogers home is wheelchair accessible, although the approach across the lawn may require assistance. No smoking on trails. Dogs must be leashed, and are not allowed on the Backbone Trail. Open from 8 AM to sunset.



Temescal Gateway Park

Will Rogers was born on a cattle ranch in Indian Territory (now Oklahoma) in 1879 and went on to become a folk hero, “cowboy philosopher,” movie star, and renowned writer and humorist. With his cowlicked hair and big ears, he endeared himself to the public through his sharp wit, cheerful disposition, and self-deprecating charm.

In 1902, while traveling in South Africa, Rogers entered show business performing impressive tricks with lassos and was dubbed “The Cherokee Kid.” (Rogers was part Cherokee although the majority of his ancestors came from Great Britain.) He continued trick roping in the United States, grew even more popular after introducing jokes into his act (often at his own expense), and later added running humorous commentary about the daily headlines, for which he became famous. Over the years the targets of his critical wit included presidents, taxes, Prohibition, both houses of Congress, and other aspects of politics, news, and everyday life.

In 1919 Rogers moved to southern California to act in silent films. He started appearing in talking pictures in 1929, usually improvising his lines and generally playing himself. By 1931 he was Hollywood’s highest paid star, and in 1935 he was the second-biggest box office draw after Shirley Temple.

Rogers also wrote a daily newspaper feature called “Will Rogers Says.” Between his columns and a weekly radio show, his opinions and commentary were reaching over 40 million Americans a week, more than any other journalist. His writing often contained grammatical and punctuation errors which, combined with his common sense and conversational tone, made him seem an everyday man to whom the average American could relate.

Rogers was an aviation enthusiast and was killed in 1935 in a plane crash in Alaska, prompting shock and mourning all across the nation. By then he had famously written his own epitaph: “Here lies Will Rogers. He joked about every prominent man in his time, but he never met a man he didn’t like.”



Will Rogers (1879–1935)



Will Rogers State Historic Park

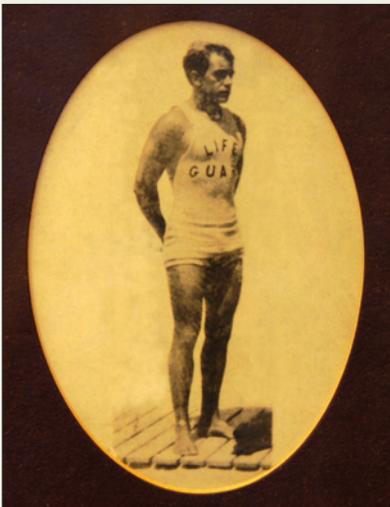
Lifeguards of Southern California

SWIMMING in the Pacific Ocean demands caution. A century ago, when no lifeguards were on duty, the hazards on southern California's beaches were great. When a swimmer got in trouble, sometimes there was a volunteer who would toss a life ring or row from shore in a cumbersome lifeboat; a would-be rescuer generally avoided getting in the water with a flailing victim. At some beaches there were ropes fixed to the shore; waders tried to hold on as they ventured out. Other beach visitors enjoyed the greater safety of saltwater swimming pools, called plunges, that were built at Redondo Beach and elsewhere.

It was at Redondo Beach that George Freeth pioneered new lifesaving techniques. In 1907 Freeth came to California from his native Hawaii, where the young man impressed visitors with his ocean skills, which included "surf-board riding." Good-looking, athletic, and possessor of all-around talents in the water, Freeth taught swimming at the Redondo Beach plunge, introduced water polo to Californians, and gave surfing demonstrations. He was also an innovative member of the U.S. Volunteer Lifesaving Corps. At a call for help, he would dash to the water's edge, swim through the surf, and pull the swimmer to safety. He introduced two rescue devices: the paddle board and the flotation device called the rescue can, both of which remain in use.

Freeth's speed and skill were highly effective. Newspapers proclaimed him the "hero of Venice, Ocean Park, and Santa Monica" after he reportedly saved or helped to save 50 lives near Venice in 1907–08. During a sudden December storm off Venice in 1908, several Japanese fishing boats were swamped or capsized. Volunteers responded. Three times Freeth swam out through the tumultuous surf to personally rescue seven fishermen. Altogether, 11 lives were saved that day; none were lost. Afterwards, a chilled and exhausted Freeth was treated to a hot beverage. The *Los Angeles Times* reported, "Girls crowded around just to pat his tanned shoulders and smile at him."

The growing population along southern California's shore justified a professional lifeguard service that could be available whenever and wherever needed. Long Beach assigned a lifeguard to the Police Department as early as 1908. In the 1920s the city of Los Angeles provided professional lifeguards at ocean beaches when the towns of Venice and San Pedro were annexed. Huntington Beach and San Diego hired lifeguards starting in 1918, and California State Parks began to provide lifeguard service in 1938 at Orange County beaches.



George Freeth (1883–1919)

The professional lifeguard service of the County of Los Angeles expanded in the 1930s to serve towns such as Hermosa Beach, Redondo Beach, and Manhattan Beach. Lifeguarding had its Hollywood connection. Johnny Weismuller, who played Tarzan in the movies, was an honorary Santa Monica lifeguard, as was Buster Crabbe, who played Flash Gordon and Buck Rogers. Actor and state park advocate Leo Carrillo, whose name is memorialized at

Leo Carrillo State Park in Los Angeles County, was once a working lifeguard in Santa Monica. Marilyn Monroe's boyfriend at one time was Hollywood stuntman and lifeguard, Tom Zahn. The vastly popular television series *Baywatch* was the creation of a Los Angeles County lifeguard.

Lifeguards were innovators in lifesaving techniques. The swim fin was adopted early by Santa Monica lifeguards, and the wetsuit was developed by Los Angeles County lifeguards. During World War II, the county's lifeguards trained U.S. Navy personnel in water survival and scuba diving, or volunteered for service. The first woman lifeguard in the service of Los Angeles County was hired in 1930.

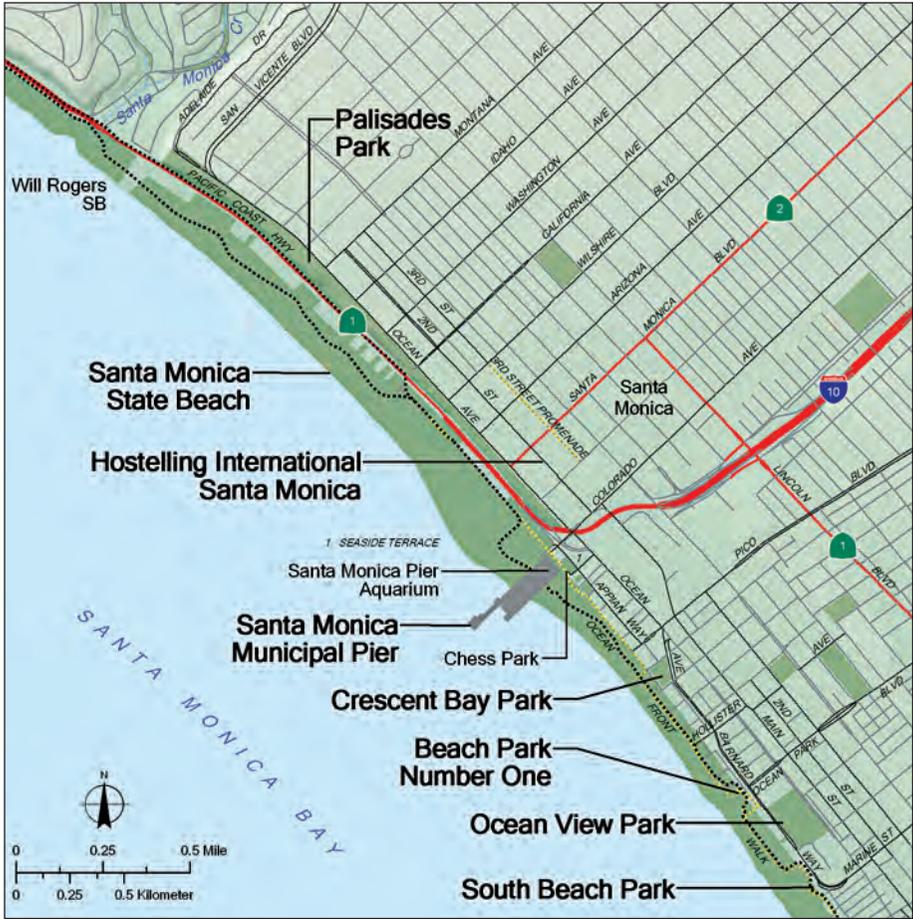
Competitive sporting events among lifeguards are popular, and influential. At the first International Surf Lifesaving Competition held in 1956 near Melbourne, Australia, California lifeguards competed in open water swimming, dory racing, and paddleboard racing with their counterparts from other Pacific locales. The Californians brought with them to Australia the rescue cans, lightweight paddleboards, and cardiopulmonary resuscitation techniques they used at home. The honorary chairman of the Melbourne event was fabled surfer and swimmer "Duke" Kahanamoku, who had been coached decades earlier at the Los Angeles Athletic Club by none other than George Freeth, the hero of Santa Monica Bay beaches.

Today, lifeguards are not only trained for water rescues including diving and cliff rescues, but also are trained in emergency medical techniques such as the use of defibrillator units for heart attack victims. Thousands of rescues are performed annually at southern California beaches, most of them due to rip currents. More numerous still are preventive actions taken by lifeguards, to stop dangerous behavior from becoming life-threatening. In 2006 Newport Beach had 7.5 million beach visitors, and lifeguards reported 3,916 rescues and 84,949 preventive actions, with no fatalities. The U.S. Lifesaving Association estimates that the chance of a person drowning at a beach protected by Association-affiliated lifeguards is 1 in 18 million. This high level of safety can be contrasted with conditions a century ago. In 1918, before San Diego's lifeguard service was organized, 13 persons drowned at Ocean Beach in one day.

Enjoy the water, and always be careful. Do not turn your back on the ocean, keep an eye on your children, and always swim near a lifeguard.

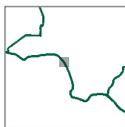


Lifeguard, El Porto Beach



Santa Monica State Beach

Santa Monica



	Sandy Beach	Rocky Shore	Trail	Visitor Center	Campground	Wildlife Viewing	Fishing or Boating	Facilities for Disabled	Food and Drink	Restrooms	Parking	Fee
Palisades Park		•	•						•			
Santa Monica State Beach	•	•	•			•	•		•	•	•	•
Hostelling International Santa Monica									•	•		•
Santa Monica Municipal Pier			•		•	•	•		•	•	•	
Crescent Bay Park	•	•					•		•	•		
Beach Park Number One	•	•					•		•	•	•	
Ocean View Park										•		
South Beach Park	•	•					•		•	•	•	•

PALISADES PARK: *Along Ocean Ave., from Adelaide Dr. to Colorado Ave., Santa Monica.* In the 1920s, construction commenced on Route 66, a highway which linked Chicago, Illinois with Santa Monica. For generations of visitors, the first sight of the Pacific Ocean was from palm-fringed, blufftop Palisades Park. The view is still lovely. A plaque in the park at the foot of Santa Monica Blvd. commemorates old Route 66, later renamed the

Will Rogers Highway. Modern-day visitors can find maps and assistance at the Santa Monica Visitor Information Kiosk near the end of Broadway; call: 310-393-7593. The linear park has nicely landscaped walkways, flowerbeds, shuffleboard courts, and restrooms, as well as vistas of Santa Monica Bay, the beach, and the Santa Monica Mountains. Beach access stairs or ramps are at the ends of Montana, Idaho, and Arizona Avenues.



Palisades Park view to Santa Monica Pier

During the 1920s and '30s, the stretch of oceanfront just north of Santa Monica Pier was known as the Gold Coast, because it was the location of fancy beach clubs and the elegant homes of Hollywood stars such as Cary Grant, Douglas Fairbanks, and Greta Garbo. The largest, most ornate of these homes by far belonged to film star Marion Davies, thanks to her paramour and professional supporter, William Randolph Hearst. Her beach house was actually five different houses all built in the Georgian Colonial style. They included a large three-story mansion with the structure designed by architect William Flannery and the interior designed by Julia Morgan; four other houses for family members, servants, and guests; and grounds with tennis courts, gardens, and two swimming pools. In all, there were 55 bathrooms, 37 fireplaces, and over 100 rooms. There were chandeliers of Tiffany crystal, gold-leaf ceilings, and many elements transported from buildings in Europe, including entire rooms from British mansions, three rooms lifted from an Irish castle, and a ballroom imported from Venice. Hearst spent an estimated \$3 million building the complex and another \$4 million to decorate it. Always a popular hostess, Davies made her Santa Monica beach house the frequent site of large parties entertaining movie stars, political dignitaries, and other members of society's elite.

Davies sold her estate in the mid-1940s, and the property underwent a number of transformations with different buildings being added and demolished over the years, operating alternately as a private beach club and a luxury hotel known as Ocean House, where guests could enjoy their stay among the antiques and opulent surroundings. It was purchased by the State of Califor-

nia in 1959 and leased to the Sand and Sea Club from the 1960s through 1990. It was then opened to the public for several years as a seasonal beach club and filming site, including serving as the fictional Beverly Hills Beach Club in television's Beverly Hills 90210. In 1994, the Northridge earthquake caused nearly everything on the property to become too damaged to occupy.

The site, located at 415 Pacific Coast Hwy. next to Santa Monica beach parking lot #10 North, is planned after renovation by the city to reopen in 2009 as the Annenberg Community Beach Club. The Club will provide convenient access to Santa Monica Beach and amenities that include beach boardwalks, locker rooms, special event venues, paddle tennis and volleyball courts, concessions, and a children's play area. North House (the original guesthouse) and the 110-foot long Italian marble swimming pool, both designed by architect Julia Morgan, are also being restored for use by the public. These are the two original structures still remaining from Marion Davies' time, offering present-day visitors a special glimpse into the days of Santa Monica's Gold Coast.



Marion Davies (1897–1961)



Santa Monica State Beach

SANTA MONICA STATE BEACH: *W. of Pacific Coast Hwy., Santa Monica.* The extremely wide, sandy beach stretches three and a half miles from Will Rogers State Beach to Venice Beach. Extensive facilities north and south of the pier include sand volleyball nets, playgrounds, and, scattered along the sand, more than a dozen restroom buildings with beach showers. Numbered fee parking lots are spaced along the beach. Skate, bike, and surfboard rentals and food service are available at Perry's Café's four locations at 930 and 1200 Pacific Coast Hwy. and 2400 and 2600 Ocean Front Walk. Other restaurants and snack stands are located near the beach and on the pier.

Grassy picnic areas are found south of the pier at three sites: Crescent Bay Park in the 2000 block of Ocean Ave., Beach Park Number One at the foot of Ocean Park Blvd., and South Beach Park at the south end of Barnard Way. Barbecuing is not allowed in the parks. Wheelchair-accessible boardwalks lead from parking areas onto the sand near the pier, both north and south. Beach wheelchairs can be checked out at no charge from

two of the Perry's Café locations, north of the pier at 930 Pacific Coast Hwy. and south of the pier at 2600 Ocean Front Walk. For information, call: 310-452-2399.

Santa Monica State Beach is managed by the city of Santa Monica, which prohibits smoking, glass containers, fires, and temporary enclosures or tents. Dogs are not permitted on the beach. For information, call: 310-458-8974. Lifeguard service is provided by Los Angeles County, which maintains the world's largest professional lifeguard service, now a part of the county's Fire Department. Nearly 30 towers are spaced along the Santa Monica beach; some are staffed year-round on a daily basis, and others are staffed seasonally. Los Angeles County also maintains a fleet of twin-engine diesel rescue boats, and lifeguards are trained in use of defibrillator units for heart attack victims. For more information, call lifeguard headquarters: 310-394-3261.

HOSTELLING INTERNATIONAL SANTA MONICA: *1436 2nd St., Santa Monica.* This large renovated facility, with 254 beds, has

a downtown location only two blocks from the beach. Family rooms available. Facilities include a shared kitchen, laundry, and Internet access. Linens included; meals available. Open 24 hours; wheelchair accessible. For information, call: 310-393-9913.

SANTA MONICA MUNICIPAL PIER: *Foot of Colorado Ave., Santa Monica.* South of the pier on Ocean Front Walk at Seaside Terrace is Chess Park, where tables with chess boards are available for use from sunrise to sunset. Also south of the pier on Ocean Front Walk is Muscle Beach, an array of parallel bars and other gymnastics apparatus, for first-come, first-served use. Originally named for the mussels attached to the pier pilings, Muscle Beach came to its altered name after a 1930s project turned the beach into a work-out area for Depression-era children. Later, UCLA gymnasts, circus performers, and weightlifters practiced on the beach, until weightlifting equipment was removed in the late 1950s. Today, Venice Beach is known for outdoor bodybuilding and weight training, while the Santa Monica site is popular for gymnastics.

The Santa Monica Pier Aquarium is located on Ocean Front Walk at beach level, under the Carousel. There are interactive displays, touch tanks, and programs for school groups; open to the public Tuesday through Friday from 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM and Saturday and Sunday from 12:30 PM to 6:00 PM. Free admission for children under 12; donations encouraged for others. Fee for groups. Call: 310-393-6149. The aquarium is operated by Heal the Bay, a nonprofit organization that works to improve water quality in southern California's coastal waters, including Santa Monica Bay. Heal the Bay also issues annual, summer, and weekly California Beach Report Cards, grading hundreds of beaches on levels of bacterial pollution; for more information, see: www.healthebay.org.

Located on Appian Way, where it passes beneath the approach to Santa Monica Pier, is the Santa Monica Urban Runoff Recycling Facility. This structure treats dry-season water runoff from Santa Monica and parts of Los Angeles, much of which comes from yard irrigation or car washing. The runoff contains various contaminants, such



Ferris wheel on Santa Monica Pier



Santa Monica State Beach

as trash, oil and grease, and heavy metals. After treatment, the water is used for landscape irrigation or other non-public-contact purposes, rather than being dumped into Santa Monica Bay, as formerly occurred. The facility was designed as a piece of public sculpture, and visitors can view interpretive displays at the site.

CRESCENT BAY PARK: *2000 block, Ocean Ave., Santa Monica.* Green lawns, covered picnic areas, and a beachfront parking lot are located on Ocean Ave. at Bay St. Restrooms with beach showers are at the edge of the sand. A wheelchair-accessible boardwalk leads partway onto the beach.

BEACH PARK NUMBER ONE: *Foot of Ocean Park Blvd., Santa Monica.* A green, landscaped park with picnic tables, play equipment, restrooms, and Perry's Café is located

seaward of Barnard Way; bicycles and skates can be rented at the café. Large fee parking lots are located north and south of the park. A wheelchair-accessible boardwalk leads from the south parking lot out onto the sand.

OCEAN VIEW PARK: *2701 Barnard Way, Santa Monica.* This city park on the inland side of Barnard Way offers a basketball court, two junior paddle tennis courts, and six tennis courts. On weekdays the courts are open to all on a first-come, first-served basis; on weekends courts are monitored and use may be subject to reservation and fees.

SOUTH BEACH PARK: *Barnard Way at Marine St., Santa Monica.* A small strip of lawn next to the wide beach contains picnic tables and children's play equipment; restrooms are adjacent, on the beach, and a large fee parking lot is located to the north.

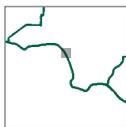
Santa Monica's beaches and attractions are popular all year. At peak times, traffic congestion can be formidable. Convenient ways to get around include the Tide shuttle bus, which runs in a continuous loop that links the Third Street Promenade, Santa Monica Pier, beaches, and Main St. shops and restaurants; buses run daily all year from noon until 8 PM (until 10 PM on Friday and Saturday). Santa Monica's Big Blue Bus system serves the larger community

and neighboring parts of Los Angeles. For information on the Tide shuttle and the Big Blue Bus, call: 310-451-5444. The city of Santa Monica maintains a website that lists all beach parking lots north and south of the pier, downtown parking structures, and tips for best weekend beach parking. The website also provides real-time information, updated constantly, on parking availability in key lots surrounding the pier area; see <http://parking.smgov.net>.



Ocean Front Walk, Venice City Beach

Venice



	Sandy Beach	Rocky Shore	Trail	Visitor Center	Campground	Wildlife Viewing	Fishing or Boating	Facilities for Disabled	Food and Drink	Restrooms	Parking	Fee
Venice Beach Cotel									•			•
Venice Beach Hostel									•			•
Venice Recreation Center							•		•	•	•	
Venice City Beach	•	•					•	•	•	•		
South Bay Bicycle Trail			•									
Venice Fishing Pier						•	•		•	•		
Venice Canals		•			•							
Ballona Lagoon Walkway		•			•							
Aubrey E. Austin, Jr. Memorial Park	•	•	•			•	•			•		

VENICE BEACH COTEL: *25 Windward Ave., Venice.* This hostel, located steps from the beach, offers both shared rooms and private rooms. Amenities include multi-lingual staff, Internet access, and recreational equipment. Guests must show a valid passport, US or foreign. Fee applies. For information, call: 310-399-7649.

VENICE BEACH HOSTEL: *1515 Pacific Ave., Venice.* Shared rooms sleep a total of 40 persons; there are also 12 private rooms. Facilities include a kitchen, laundry room, common room, and storage lockers. Overnight fee applies; open 24 hours. For information, call: 310-452-3052.

VENICE RECREATION CENTER: *End of Windward Ave., Venice.* The old Venice Pavilion, a recreation facility now demolished, once stood at the end of Windward Ave. Now located at the site are modern outdoor courts for basketball, volleyball, racquetball, and handball; a skate park; children's play area; and a picnic area. The renowned open-air Muscle Beach weight pen, which was renovated in 2008, includes weight-lifting and strength-training equipment. Fees apply for some activities.

The one-time "graffiti pit" that was located near the end of Windward Ave. has been replaced by the Venice Art Walls, which are concrete structures on which artists may express themselves; for a required painting

permit, visit on a weekend, or call: 310-535-7729. Modern restrooms with showers are located near the ends of Venice Blvd. and Washington Blvd. For Venice Recreation Center information, call: 310-399-2775. A small, off-leash dog park maintained by the city of Los Angeles is located nearby, at 1234 Pacific Ave.

VENICE CITY BEACH: *Ocean Front Walk, Venice.* A very popular three-mile-long sandy beach is used by swimmers, surfers, divers, and kite-flyers. Fish commonly caught from shore include surf perch, corbina, and halibut. From mid-March through late August grunion spawn on the beach several nights a month immediately following a new or full moon. Sanderlings, gulls, and willets rest and feed on the beach. No fires or alcohol are permitted on the beach; pets are not allowed. Lifeguard service is provided by the County of Los Angeles; headquarters are at 2300 Ocean Front Walk in Venice, and lifeguards are on duty during daylight hours. A beach wheelchair is available at lifeguard headquarters. For surf and tide information, see: www.watchthewater.org.

Paralleling Venice Beach is lively Ocean Front Walk, a paved promenade which draws vendors, street musicians, colorful characters, and visitors from all over. Strolling, jogging, roller-skating, and skateboarding are popular, along with people-watch-

ing. Shops and eating establishments are located in the area. Bicycle and skate rentals are located adjacent to the beach, near the ends of Venice Blvd. and Washington Blvd. The parking lot closest to the beach is at the west end of Venice Blvd.; spaces in that fee lot fill up fast. Additional fee parking is available at Venice Blvd. where it intersects Pacific Ave., and, during the summer, at the west end of Rose Ave. and on Westminster Ave., east of Pacific Ave.

SOUTH BAY BICYCLE TRAIL: *Along the beach from Pacific Palisades to Torrance.* A paved, 20-mile-long bicycle route follows the beach closely from Will Rogers State Beach in Pacific Palisades to Torrance. In Venice, the bicycle route detours inland around Marina del Rey Harbor by running along Washington Blvd. and then generally along Admiralty Way and Fiji Way. The trail rejoins the beach south of the channel entrance to Marina del Rey Harbor and then continues south to Torrance County Beach. In Venice, bicyclists and pedestrians use separate, parallel paved alignments. Elsewhere, the South Bay Bicycle Trail is shared by bicyclists, skaters, and pedestrians; please be courteous in using the route.

VENICE FISHING PIER: *End of Washington Blvd., Venice.* In the summer of 1905 a pier,

pavilion, ship-hotel, and auditorium were built at the end of Windward Ave. The pier served as a meeting place and as a site for society dances. The original pier was destroyed by fire in 1920, and was later rebuilt as an amusement midway lined with rides and concessions. Mack Sennett, who made silent films featuring Charlie Chaplin and the Keystone Kops, used the pier for location shooting. After a series of disastrous fires, the pier was demolished in 1947.

A replacement pier was built in 1965, this time at the end of Washington Blvd. The 1,300-foot-long pier has fish cleaning stations, restrooms, and showers. Fish commonly caught from the pier include bonito, mackerel, jacksmelt, halibut, and various species of croakers and perch, as well as the occasional yellowtail or white seabass. The pier is open from 6 AM to midnight. Fee parking is available at the end of Washington Blvd. and also at the corner of Washington Blvd. and Pacific Ave. Additional summer-weekend parking is located at Washington Blvd. and Strongs Dr.

VENICE CANALS: *Between Pacific Ave. and Ocean Ave., S. of Venice Blvd., Venice.* The Venice Canals are bordered on both sides by public sidewalks. Carroll Canal, Linnie Canal, Howland Canal, and Sherman Canal



Venice Pier and Beach



Eastern Canal, Venice

run east and west, and the Grand Canal and Eastern Canal run north and south. Mallards paddle along the waterways, and you might spy a double-crested cormorant roosting on a boat. Parking in the neighborhood is extremely limited; visitors would do better to walk to the canals from nearby beach parking lots. No facilities.

BALLONA LAGOON WALKWAY: *E. side of Ballona Lagoon, Marina del Rey.* A dirt public walkway runs along the east side of the Ballona Lagoon. The landscaped path can be reached from Pacific Ave. via a pedestrian bridge at Lighthouse St. and from Aubrey E. Austin, Jr. Memorial Park. Bufflehead ducks and cormorants feed in the lagoon, and snowy egrets search for prey along its shallow margin. Look for belted kingfishers awaiting their next meal. Dogs must be kept on leash.

AUBREY E. AUSTIN, JR. MEMORIAL PARK: *S. end Pacific Ave., Marina del Rey.* A linear park, part of Marina del Rey but physically at the south end of Venice Beach, runs perpendicular to the end of Pacific Ave. The

park is a great place to watch passing boats and crew rowing teams. There is a paved pathway, and benches overlook the Marina del Rey entrance channel. The paved path extends west onto the north jetty of the entrance channel, allowing anglers to reach the water and pedestrians to gain access to the adjacent sandy beach. Metered street parking; no facilities.



Venice Art Walls

In 1904, cigarette magnate Abbot Kinney purchased 160 acres of coastal marshland just south of Santa Monica (once part of the Ballona Wetlands) with the intention of developing a “Venice of America.” Architects Norman Marsh and C. H. Russell, commissioned by Kinney to design his project, created the Grand Canal, two networks of smaller canals, and a central lagoon from wetlands that were historically used for hunting and fishing. Gondoliers and gondolas imported from Italy, arched Venetian bridges joining the canals, and the St. Mark’s Hotel added authenticity and romance to the venture. Visitors were drawn to the beachfront promenade and the pier with its cafés and an auditorium for lectures and concerts, where such notables as author Helen Hunt Jackson, actress Sarah Bernhardt, and the Chicago Symphony performed. However, attendance soon waned at these cultural events, and from 1910 to 1920, visitors flocked to Venice’s roller coasters, casinos, parades, and bathhouse instead. A period of decline be-

gan after the death of Abbot Kinney in 1920. Because of design flaws, the canals were often dirty and stagnant. The area’s sewer system was inadequate for the growing population, and the narrow streets were designed primarily for pedestrians and not automobiles. By 1930, all but six canals had been paved over. Even during the years of the Great Depression, however, visitors headed for the beach during the heat of summer, and holiday parades and beauty pageants were popular.

A restoration project undertaken by the city of Los Angeles in the 1990s included stabilization of the canal banks, construction of new sidewalks, and landscaping. The public walkways along the canals provide a charming respite from the surrounding busy streets. The well-maintained neighborhood of small-scale, canal-front homes offers visitors a sort of mini-architectural walking tour of Los Angeles, with structures in what seems like every style from Craftsman cottage to the ultra-modern.



Venice dance marathon, ca. 1930s