

LOS ANGELES, CA

By Regina Lynch-Hudson



Los Angeles skyline

CITY SMARTS

Everyone knows Los Angeles as the national center for motion picture and television production. More than this, from downtown to Hollywood, and from Santa Monica to the San Fernando Valley, Los Angeles is bustling not only with entertainment business, but also with business in direct international trade, tourism, aerospace technology, business and professional services, health sciences and wholesale trade. The Walt Disney Company, Occidental Petroleum Corporation, Countrywide Financial Corporation, DirecTV Group Inc. and Amgen Inc. are among the largest public companies based in Los Angeles.

The city's size — four million people in the City of Los Angeles, and 10.3 million people in Los Angeles County overall — provides endless opportunities for large and small businesses to thrive. Whether it's entertainment in Hollywood and Burbank, financial and legal transactions in Westwood and downtown, or high-end retail in Beverly Hills, there is something going on in all sectors of the city. The diversity of the population in Los Angeles lends itself to the widest variety of cultural and business endeavors while the millions of tourists who visit the city annually contribute to this diversity.



Doing Biz In features continuously updated coverage of a full spectrum of top cities where readers conduct business. Publicist and travel writer Regina Lynch-Hudson has penned destination catalogs and articles for companies such as Vacation Express, AirTran Airways and North American Airlines. She also organizes cultural press trips, and handles destination marketing for resorts, bed and breakfasts, and tourism boards. More information on The Write Publicist & Co. can be found at www.thewritepublicist.com.

JETSETTER

Milliner Lyn Frances Sykes runs one of the most successful e-commerce hat businesses in the country. "My mother, my aunt and grandmother were the sharpest dressers at my church, during my impressionable years," proudly recalls 53-year-old Sykes. "When we moved to Los Angeles in the mid-'60s, my mother boldly continued her Midwestern style." By the early '90s hats became an obsession to Sykes — under every tilted brim she visualized the faces of the strong role models who wore theirs like halos. While surfing the Internet, the jetsetter stumbled across the Wombourne School of Millinery in faraway Wolver Hampton, England. Despite lacking immediate funds to go, the divorced mother of two sons dreamed of studying abroad. Years later, an airfare war enabled the starry-eyed Southern Californian to hop a flight to London, followed by a meandering train ride to the countryside of Wolver Hampton. Thus, Lyn'O'vations was born. "In L.A., I am in the middle of trendsetters, and can do business worldwide via the Internet," she says. Today, Sykes fills hat orders all over the globe, and has just launched her "hat ornaments" collection for the Christmas season. Lyn'O'vations, www.lynovations.com



Lyn Frances Sykes

GETTING AROUND

In order to enjoy all that Los Angeles has to offer, an out-of-town business professional should rent a car. Every major airport in Los Angeles is served by several convenient auto rental agencies. Guests can take advantage of reasonable rental rates from the well-known Enterprise Rent-A-Car. 1.800.261.7331, www.enterprise.com. Visitors who would rather not drive should not fret. In fact, with at least 200 Metro Bus lines and four Metro Rail lines, Metro can take you just about anywhere in Los Angeles County. 1.800.COMMUTE, Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, One Gateway Plaza, www.mta.net/default.asp

SURVIVAL KIT

Don't forget your sunglasses, sunscreen and surfboard when traveling to L.A., as you'll want to escape to the beach to catch a wave. Plus, wherever you stay, you're never too far from a wide variety of entertainment options, including movies, museums and music.

CATCHING ZZZ'S

The diversity of Los Angeles extends to its hotels. Guests looking for a classic should visit the Millennium Biltmore Hotel, a downtown landmark that can provide business travelers with everything needed in terms of luxury and comfort. The Millennium Biltmore is located in the heart of downtown Los Angeles, so business travelers can be close to all of the action. 213.624.1011, 506 S. Grand Ave., www.millenniumhotels.com

Visitors who don't want to stay in downtown might try the W Hotel in Westwood, known for its modern elegance. The W is an oasis tucked in a neighborhood close to theaters and restaurants galore. 310.208.8765, 930 Hilgard Ave., www.whelots.com

In Hollywood, reserve a room in the Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel, where stars have stayed for ages. Recently renovated, the hotel offers classic architecture along with modern luxury. 800.950.7667, 7000 Hollywood Blvd., www.hollywoodroosevelt.com

THE POWER LUNCH

Those who want culinary excellence in downtown, even in the middle of the day, should try The Water Grill. 213.891.0900, 544 S. Grand Ave., www.watergrill.com. Downtown locals regularly grab lunch at Philippe The Original, where first-time diners should order the French Dip. 213.628.3781, 1001 N. Alameda St., www.philippes.com. For entertainment power lunches, try Barney Greengrass. 310.777.5877, 9570 Wilshire Blvd., info-beverlyhills@barneys.com. The Ivy is another power lunch spot for the entertainment-minded. 310.274.8303, 113 N. Robertson Blvd.

CULTURAL CHOW

Don't leave L.A. without going to Harold and Belle's. There's excellent dining, New Orleans-inspired Creole Cuisine and friendly service. Hollywood celebrity spotting makes it a to-do spot. Favorite menu items include Shrimp Scampi and Bread Pudding with bourbon sauce. 323.735.9023, 2920 W. Jefferson Blvd.

CYBER SITE

Susina Bakery & Café is ideal for travelers to work on a laptop while sipping a café au lait and nibbling on a Madeleine. 323.931.4943, 7122 Beverly Blvd.

NETWORKIN'

Hard workers should surf www.blacknla.com for the best venues where blacks network for business. Listings of local businesses, organizations and highlights of professional people are included.

TO DE-STRESS

Whether a traveler is the boss or merely "the apprentice," several hours of recreation can be had at the Trump National Golf Club, where travelers can rent clubs and enjoy ocean views while hoping to score a birdie or two. 310.303.3240, One Ocean Trails Drive, Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275, trumpnationallosangeles.com

FOOTLOOSE & FANCY-FREE

Given that more than 25 million tourists visit Los Angeles annually, there is always something to enjoy. Several downtown museums are worth visiting, including the Museum of Contemporary Art which always has a wonderful exhibit on hand. 250 S. Grand Ave., www.moca.org

Just about every night there is a show in the Performing Arts Center of Los Angeles County, located in downtown, comprised of the Walt Disney Concert Hall, the Ahmanson Theatre, the Mark Taper Forum and the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion. 135 N. Grand Ave., www.musiccenter.org

FLIGHT TIME

Los Angeles International Airport is served by nearly 90 passenger and cargo airlines, and contributes more than \$60 billion annually to the Southern California economy. www.lawa.org/lax

AirTran Airways offers daily low-fare flights to Los Angeles, and more than 50 major U.S. cities. AirTran Airways is the world's largest operator of the Boeing 717. 1.800.AIR.TRAN, www.airtran.com

SOMEONE HELPFUL

Thanks to our friends at The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau and other tourist venues for providing us with facts, figures and fun information for this article. The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau, www.seemyla.org

AT

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