



Beverly Hills



A sprinkle of Hollywood glamour

Writer Amber Gibson

Los Angeles is a sprawling city with notoriously horrific traffic, but you can forget about driving once you're cloistered in opulent Beverly Hills. Although it's less than six square miles, the city receives more than six millions visitors each year. Walking is especially appealing with warm weather year-round although your arms may tire from carrying too many shopping bags. If you've seen *Pretty Woman*, you know this is the West Coast's shopping Mecca.

With a plethora of five-star hotels, you're surrounded by an incredible concentration of luxury. Keep your eyes peeled, you never know when you may spot your favourite A-list actor dining on Canon Drive or ducking out of a store in sunglasses and a wide-brimmed hat. Here ordinary people are treated like celebrities, so prepare to be pampered.

 **7AM** Start your morning with downward dogs, bridges and warrior asanas on the relaxing rooftop deck at Alo Yoga's flagship store. Sunrise sun salutations are a great



way to reinvigorate and recover from jet lag. Just remember that yoga is a practice of love, about honouring the body and not a competition. So don't compare yourself to the lithe tan yogis in class effortlessly balancing and contorting their bodies. Hydrate with a raw juice or kombucha afterwards.

 **10AM** Grab a healthy, delicious breakfast at M Café, a warm all-day European eatery specialising in macrobiotic cuisine free from refined sugar, eggs, dairy and red meat. For something sweet, try the housemade matcha granola with fresh berries and coconut yogurt or blueberry pancakes made with buckwheat, spelt and oat flour. Savoury favourites span the globe, from a breakfast enchilada with scrambled tofu to a Japanese bento box and avocado crispy toast seasoned with *shichimi togarashi*.

 **12PM** Shop 'til you drop starting at Rodeo Drive and wind your way along designer boutiques and specialty stores on Beverly Drive, Canon Drive and Brighton Way. Be sure to check out the sharp interior design of Emporio Armani's new multilevel store, men's haute couture at Battistoni's first US store and comfortable architectural footwear from ASKA Collection. Get your make-up done at Bobbi Brown's first West Coast beauty boutique before soldiering on to Balenciaga and Bally, both of which opened flagship stores last year too.

 **3PM** Relax after your spree at the Montage Beverly Hills' 20,000sqft spa featuring premier Swiss skincare by L. Raphael. Lighten skin and fade sun and age spots with white truffles and an advanced oxygen treatment. The Oxy Star Anti-Pigmentation treatment is worth every penny for the immediate radiant results and long-term benefits and Spa Montage is the only West Coast location to offer it. The brand's other specialty treatments include a diamond facial and tightening and toning body treatment incorporating cherry blossoms and mineral-rich Dead Sea salts.

 **7PM** Dinner time presents a dilemma with so many great choices, including Indian food at Spice Affair, steak at Wolfgang Puck's Cut and omakase sushi at Nozawa Bar. Or try celebrity chef and Chopped judge Geoffrey Zakarian's new restaurant Georgie, where the contemporary American menu is interspersed with Middle Eastern flavours. Parker house rolls are sprinkled with fennel and zaatar while roasted Jidori chicken is accompanied with green olives, harissa and tender artichokes. A trio of saffron, pistachio-rose and honey-orange blossom macaron ice cream sandwiches is a light, refreshing finish.

 **10PM** Party animals will enjoy the open-air rooftop at Mastro's Penthouse or sampling vodkas in the icebox freezer at Nic's Beverly Hills. When it's time to call it a night, retire to your Mediterranean-inspired suite (55 of the 201 guest rooms are suites) at the Montage Beverly Hills. The Spanish Colonial Revival architecture and European garden evoke the easy, breezy sophistication of 1930s Hollywood, particularly elegant when lit in a soft golden glow come evening.

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- The 40-minute Beverly Hills trolley tour is a great introduction to the art, history and architecture of the city if it's your first time.
- Fashionistas can pay homage to the designers, models and fashion legends honoured on Rodeo Drive's Walk of Style. Each plaque is embedded with a name, autograph and quote from the likes of Princess Grace and Salvatore Ferragamo.
- Satisfy your sweet tooth with liquid nitrogen scoops at Ice Cream Lab or chocolates at Edelweiss Chocolates. The latter has been making bonbons for princes and presidents since 1942. Their chocolate factory inspired the famous *I Love Lucy* episode.
- Visit the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences Museum then catch a movie screening at the Samuel Goldwyn Theatre, where the Oscar nominees are announced each year.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The luxurious Montage Beverly Hills; California's glitziest landmark. THIS PAGE: Shop 'til you drop at Rodeo Drive; sunshine and palms in dreamy Beverly Hills