



**T**HE Hollywood sign, the Walk of Fame, Beverly Hills and Rodeo Drive... all are iconic images of Los Angeles. The 'City of Angels' is a vast, sprawling metropolis with clogged freeways and a huge polyglot population that always seem to be chasing some dream or other. But she can also be full of surprises; a city that sits between the mountains and the seas and can offer something for everyone – even moments of quiet reflection. If you think you know LA, think again as we take you on a journey of discovery around this fascinating city as seen through the eyes of Angeleno travel journalist and blogger Eric Hiss, a man who has forgotten more about his city than regular guidebooks can ever show you.

**MEET YOUR HOST:**

**ERIC HISS**

**Occupation:** Travel Writer & Blogger  
**Age:** 40

**What do you love about Los Angeles?**

When I was a kid, I was fascinated by kaleidoscopes. I just couldn't understand how all those disparate pieces could shift around so randomly and yet somehow come together in this amazing pattern. That's the way I see LA and what I love about it. If you're a visitor, I'm sure LA can seem like this vast, postmodern puzzle as your plane approaches this 1,200km<sup>2</sup> city. But like that kaleidoscope that captured my imagination as a kid, LA is made up of very distinct pieces; lots of diverse neighbourhoods that have an undeniable personality.

**What's the best thing about it?**

There truly is a sense here that anything is possible. We have people who come here from all over the world to live their dream. So take figures as diverse as Walt Disney and Jim Morrison – chances are if they make it here, you will definitely be hearing about it. Of course you don't need to be a movie mogul or rock-star-in-training to enjoy a visit; millions of people travel here every year for as many reasons: to learn how to surf, go on a Hollywood-style shopping spree, do a yoga retreat, see celebrities, hike in amazing urban wilderness. That's just the beauty of the place: Find your passion and enjoy!

**Can you describe the people in three words?**

Outgoing, unconventional and independent. That means the vast majority of locals you meet are going to be friendly – or at least helpful. They also might be wearing clothes, hair, jewellery etc in a way you never thought quite possible before.



**When did you first fall in love with it?**

I was born in the old Queen of Angels hospital that used to be alongside the Hollywood Freeway. So apparently my love of LA (and travel) was pre-destined. I have to say though, that by nature of being a third-generation Angeleno, my orientation is very different from friends who are newer arrivals. They see a place like Olvera Street (near LA's founding site and oldest street) as a cool, colourful tourist stop with a Mexican accent. I see it as the place where my family often went on Sundays to eat hand-made tacos and where

my mother could speak Spanish and stay connected to her Latin roots.

**Would you ever live anywhere else?**

I have the good fortune to travel all over the world for my job but, for some reason, I always return. For me, it's just a potent cocktail that's a mix of family history and connection (my great grandfather actually founded one of the nearby beach cities), a love of living between the mountains and the sea, and the fact I am always startled and surprised by what you can experience here.

Photography by: JAMES KING

**ITINERARY #1 HIPPER THAN THOU**

LA usually glitters gold, but Silver Lake is where the scenesters hang out.



**HEYWOOD**  
3337 West Sunset Blvd, LA, CA 90026.

There are grilled cheese sandwiches and then there is Heywood's version which is the Holy Grail. These are creatively composed, steaming slabs of English Cheddar, French Brie and vegan Cheddar infused with ingredients like jalapenos and caramelised onions sandwiched between multiple bread choices.



**SILVER LAKE SHOPPING**  
Between Santa Monica Blvd and Micheltorena.

Silver Lake is the anti-Beverly Hills. You're much more likely to see Flea from the Red Hot Chili Peppers than a Gucci bag here. He is also a founder of Silver Lake Conservatory of Music, a suitably cool music store. Other hotspots include Vacation Vinyl and leather accessories at Dean.



**INTELLIGENTSIA**  
3922 West Sunset Blvd, LA, CA 90029.

Time for a caffeine jolt and a chance to sit in the shade and people watch. In the heart of the action at Sunset Junction, Intelligentsia is famous for its mellow roasted blends and hip denizens who idly over perfect espressos and peer over Macbooks.



**ECHO PARK NEIGHBORHOOD**  
West Sunset Boulevard, LA, CA 90029.

Head to Sunset Boulevard to mingle with the locals. If you want to fit in, forget designer duds; the look here is pure vintage hipster such as scuffed cowboy boots and other thrift-store finds. Preferred dining and drinking options include street tacos from the Tacos Arizas truck and a cold PBR (Pabst Blue Ribbon) beer from The Gold Room.

**DID YOU KNOW?**

**#1** When California still belonged to Mexico, LA's Westside was part of a large land grant called Rancho Las Cienegas.

**#2** If California were a country, it would have the world's ninth-largest economy, ranked by gross domestic product.

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