

# where

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LOS ANGELES  
MARCH 2009

## PERSONAL *touch*

THE SALONS, SPAS AND  
PRIMPERS THAT GIVE  
CELEBS THEIR STUNNING  
SIGNATURE LOOKS

Spring Fling  
L.A. CHEFS'  
HEALTHY MENUS

Spring in Their Steps  
LOS ANGELES  
BALLET

Top of the Pops  
LADY GAGA  
AT THE WILTERN

Top of the Tube  
MELORA HARDIN  
OUT OF THE OFFICE

Some of the prettiest oceanfront in Southern California is 20 miles southwest of downtown, in the picturesque beach towns of Manhattan Beach, Hermosa Beach and Redondo Beach. Visitors are drawn to the scenery, laid-back attitude and active lifestyle, which includes swimming, sailing, beach volleyball and cycling and in-line skating along the beachfront path called The Strand. Quaint San Pedro, on the south side of the Palos Verdes Peninsula, is Cruise Central. The historic Queen Mary is permanently berthed in Long Beach.

## MANHATTAN BEACH

The Manhattan Beach populace seems armed with both discretionary income and a fun-focused life philosophy; stars such as L.A. Laker Luke Walton call this ritzy beach community home.

Most of the action is downtown, along Manhattan Avenue and Manhattan Beach Boulevard. Popular restaurants include Café Pierre (317 Manhattan Beach Blvd.), which recently celebrated its 30th anniversary. Boutiques reflect the intersection of beach lifestyle and luxury tastes. Manhattan Beach Brewing Co. is steps from the sand.

The Metlox plaza, on the site of the former Metlox Pottery factory, offers an array of shopping and dining, plus live music on Sundays from 2 to 4 p.m. Fresh Produce and True Religion boutiques, Trilogy Spa (designed by acclaimed architect Hagy Belzberg) and **Petros Greek Cuisine** are draws; design elements—including a 16-foot re-creation of a 1940 Metlox cubist dog—recall the site's history. Find hip Zinc Lounge at the Shade Hotel, adjacent.

The picturesque Manhattan Beach Pier, which extends 928 feet into the ocean, is at the end of Manhattan Beach Boulevard. At pier's end is the octagonal Roundhouse Aquarium; check out the shovelnose guitarfish! Beach volleyball is practically a religion here, and the beachfront on both sides of the pier is lined with nets. Many top women's and men's professional beach volleyball players got their start in the South Bay, and high-caliber tournaments and championships return every summer.

North of downtown on Highland Avenue, clubs and eateries such as **Upper Manhattan Lounge** offer a slice of South Bay life. **Manhattan Village** at Sepulveda Boulevard and Rosecrans Avenue offers Macy's and shops including Diane's Swimwear.

## HERMOSA BEACH

To the south, Manhattan Avenue jogs west and becomes Hermosa Avenue, leading to lively Hermosa Beach. The intersection of Pier and Hermosa avenues is the dining and entertainment epicenter; west of Hermosa Avenue, Pier Avenue becomes Pier Plaza, a pedestrian promenade.



## GREAT FIND BEACHY KEEN

South Bay native (and fashion business alum) Lori Ford and her Aussie restaurateur husband, Will, opened **Gum Tree** just a few months ago, but already the ecofriendly shop/cafe is gaining a cult following.

The wares on the retail side are a cool mix of vintage and modern: Retro enamel dishes and glass paperweights mingle with Jonathan Adler ceramics, Hable Construction pillows, Chan Luu accessories, Vilac wooden kids' toys, and boho-chic metallic leather Moroccan poufs. The adjoining cafe is a bright and airy spot for organic, locally sourced nosh, and perfectly complements the vibe of the shop—laid-back, stylish and beachy without a trace of cliché. 238 Pier Ave., Hermosa Beach, 310.376.8744, gumtreela.com