

# **QANTAS**

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**From hippie to hipster**  
Taste-testing Byron Bay's  
hottest new restaurants

**Mr Ambassador**  
Kim Beazley opens up  
on life in Washington

**The new Myanmar**  
A mystical blend of parks,  
pagodas... and punks



**New horizons**  
The best resorts to recharge the  
body and soothe the soul

The Line Hotel  
in LA's hip 'hood,  
Koreatown

# QBusiness.

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## LA storeys

So much more than Tinseltown, Los Angeles also knows how to do business.



# STAY



## THE LINE HOTEL

📍 3515 Wilshire Boulevard, LA  
 🌐 thelinehotel.com

Roughly equidistant between Downtown and Hollywood, Koreatown is arguably the hippest neighbourhood in Los Angeles. If any further evidence was needed, witness The Line. Housed in a striking 1960s modernist building, its airy foyer is decorated with old T-shirts and features a series of circular booths that make ideal meeting spots. At one end is the café, serving excellent coffee by local roasters LAMILL; at the other is the Pot Lobby Bar, which turns into a club by night. The regular rooms are chicly decorated but rather small, although even the tiniest feature floor-to-ceiling windows with spectacular views of the city.

**Business facilities** There's a 24-hour business centre and several meeting rooms, ranging from small boardrooms to a ballroom, and a private outdoor sundeck.

**Wi-fi** Complimentary

**Food and wine** Signature restaurant Pot is Korean fusion, while on the second floor by the pool is The Commissary, a veggie-focused café in a plant-filled greenhouse.

**Fitness and wellbeing** The fitness centre has cardio machines and free weights, plus guests have complimentary use of designer bicycles, with helmets and locks.

**Run route** A 7.5-kilometre run east down Wilshire Boulevard and around MacArthur Park and back should take about 30-40 minutes.



### Business Travellers' Guide



The Line's interiors are furnished by LA designer Sean Knibb, who draws from local influences

# Los Angeles

STORY BY **BRENDAN SHANAHAN**

## HOTEL NORMANDIE

📍 605 South Normandie Avenue, LA

🌐 [hotelnormandie.la.com](http://hotelnormandie.la.com)

“Old Los Angeles” might seem like a contradiction in terms but the Hotel Normandie is about as historical as this town gets. Opened in 1928 in what is now Koreatown, the Normandie was originally a boarding house for single men and has been home to several celebrated characters over the years – English author Malcolm Lowry wrote his masterpiece *Under the Volcano* here. After years of neglect the hotel was recently renovated and is now a model of historical adaptation. With hardwood floors, a subdued palette and wet bars, the rooms have a clubby (dare we say masculine?) vibe. Drenching Art Deco showerheads are the guiltiest of pleasures in drought-affected California.

**Business facilities** The hotel doesn't have a business centre but guests have access to extra laptops in their rooms. A library-quiet meeting room features leather Chesterfields and a 150-person-capacity ballroom is also available.

**Wi-fi** Complimentary

**Food and wine** Cult hamburger bar Cassell's serves great breakfast and burgers but Le Comptoir, the intimate counter restaurant that takes seasonal local food to obsessional heights (the chef grows the vegetables on his own farm), is perfect for a one-on-one or solo dinner.

**Fitness and wellbeing** The gym is complimentary but is at the WilFit Sports Club a block away. Gym clothes and towels are provided and every cardio machine has internet.

**Run route** Head west around the corner on West 6th Street and run about five kilometres to the Miracle Mile neighbourhood, where you'll find the site of the La Brea Tar Pits. Depending on how long you spend at the Ice Age-fossil excavation site, there and back might take an hour.

**THE STANDARD**

📍 550 South Flower Street, LA  
 🌐 standardhotels.com

One of two Standard hotels in Los Angeles, this Downtown property occupies the former headquarters of an oil company and its design inspiration feels like a cross between the sensibilities of Stanley Kubrick and Kanye West. With many of the features of the old building still intact, The Standard is almost like a witty parody of a business hotel: note the original oil-rig corporate art in the foyer and the name-tag stickers that double as room numbers. Rooms are mod-minimalist with low-platform beds and famously huge showers, while even the smallest have



vast windows with views of Downtown LA's skyscrapers.

**Business facilities** A business centre with three computer terminals and a printer is

available, plus two formal meeting spaces for hire.

**Wi-fi** Complimentary, except at business-centre terminals.

**Food and wine** The rooftop, which has a pool and bar area

with panoramic views of the city, is a well-known party spot. It can get very full and rowdy at weekends but, thankfully, guests don't have to join the often-long queue. Downstairs, the 24/7 Restaurant (yes, that's its name) opens out into an oasis-like patio shaded by yucca trees.

**Fitness and wellbeing** The 24-hour gym is a quirky, retro treat with wood-panelled walls, tartan carpet and pictures of the Incredible Hulk to inspire you.

**Run route** Head south-east (away from the freeway) on West 5th Street, left on Main then left at the fork with Alameda. Once around Los Angeles State Historic Park and back is about 9.5 kilometres.

**WORD OF MOUTH**



**BREAKFAST MEETING**

**Checkers Downtown**  
 📍 535 South Grand Avenue, LA  
 🌐 checkersdowntown.com

Finding a suitable space for a meeting without the echo of clattering dishes, pumping music and loud monologues from fellow diners (this is LA) can be difficult. Checkers Downtown, in the Hilton Checkers hotel, offers a more subdued environment, with lots of low-kilojoule options and an outdoor patio area. A private dining room for up to 15 people can also be booked.



**BUSINESS DINNER**

**Providence**  
 📍 5955 Melrose Avenue, LA  
 🌐 providencela.com

Providence has been open for 10 years and shows no sign of waning as one of LA's favourite fine-dining destinations. The restaurant – which has two Michelin stars – places its emphasis on exquisite seafood in a stunning yet understated dining setting and offers dégustation options that won't leave you feeling like you have been force-fed. Two private dining rooms are also available.



**DINING ALONE**

**Sushi Tsujita**  
 📍 2006 Sawtelle Boulevard, LA  
 🌐 sushitsujita.com

LA's huge Japanese population means the city has the best Japanese food this side of Tokyo. Luckily, few things lend themselves to the contemplative act of solo eating like a sushi bar. Sushi Tsujita is down the street from Tsujita LA Artisan Noodle, the original ramen spot that spawned the new joint. This sushi-focused incarnation serves *omakase* (chef's choice) meals highly rated by its regulars.



**DRINKS WITH CLIENTS**

**The Normandie Club**  
 📍 3612 West 6th Street, LA  
 🌐 thenormandieclub.com

In the same building as the Normandie Hotel, though not part of it, The Normandie Club is comfortable and dark, with deep leather seats and a small outdoor area. The exclusive feel belies an unpretentious atmosphere, with friendly staff mixing cocktails and pouring Japanese whisky and craft beer. In the back is The Walker Inn, a reservation-only private room.



**COFFEE PIT STOP**

**Demitasse**  
 📍 135 South San Pedro Street, LA  
 🌐 cafedemitasse.com

LA is a great coffee town and Demitasse is just one of many cafés that approaches its coffee with a level of seriousness usually reserved for open-heart surgery. Its three locations – Downtown, Santa Monica and Wilshire Boulevard – offer their home-blend roast, created after endless experiments and plantation field-trips. An emphasis on seasonality, though, means the flavour varies over the year.

## WHEN IN LA...

- Negotiating LA freeways can be nerve-shattering but if you must use them, try following a bus or a slow-moving truck and let the madness fly past.
- If you're going only a few kilometres, try avoiding freeways altogether. The local roads ("surface streets") take longer but are less aggressive and infinitely more interesting. Choose "avoid highways" in your GPS preferences.
- Tipping in America is inconsistent, verging on completely arbitrary. Even the locals have no idea what is normal. Rule of thumb: 15 per cent for meals, \$1 a drink at bars (\$2 for cocktails) and about \$5 for valet. If you get bad service, don't be afraid not to tip – this is America, baby, and you get what you pay for.
- Culver City is LA's new hotspot of contemporary art galleries. It's also where you'll find Blind Barber ([blindbarber.com](http://blindbarber.com)), a hairdresser and barbershop that gives you a free drink with your shave and becomes a nightclub in the evenings.
- The Time Travel Mart ([timetravelmart.com](http://timetravelmart.com)) looks like a regular store but sells products such as Mammoth Chunks and Primordial Soup in a can. A non-profit enterprise, the shop sells "souvenirs" to fund writing classes for children. If you come up with a good-enough product idea, the store will create and sell it!



## BETWEEN MEETINGS?

The Inner Peristyle is a peaceful sanctuary at the heart of the J. Paul Getty Museum

**1.** One part storage unit, one part art prank, the Museum of Jurassic Technology ([mjt.org](http://mjt.org)) is arguably the weirdest hour you can spend in LA. Purporting to be the collection of "Owen Thum" (both elder and younger), this cult "museum" seems to have no clear curatorial program and exhibits objects as discordant as dioramas of trailer parks and portraits of Russian cosmonaut dogs. It may be a big in-joke but it's a strangely fascinating one.

**2.** The newly opened Broad Museum ([thebroad.org](http://thebroad.org)) is the hottest museum ticket in town but, with advance bookings hard to come by, use the opportunity to instead visit The Getty Villa. A satellite of The Getty Center ([getty.edu](http://getty.edu)), the villa was built to house J. Paul Getty's extraordinary collection of classical art. A faithful copy

of a Roman mansion from the city of Herculaneum, the building and grounds are as beautiful as the contents. You could easily spend a full day here.

**3.** There are a lot of awful Hollywood tours but this one is the real deal. Philip Mershon ([felixinhollywoodtours.com](http://felixinhollywoodtours.com)) has a reputation as one of the best tour guides in LA and his passion for the history of Hollywood is contagious. Unlike most tours, these are on foot and cover only a relatively small area. About 90 minutes long and in groups of no more than eight, the tours are a genuinely nostalgic window into a bygone era.

**4.** Established in 1934, The Original Farmers Market ([farmersmarketla.com](http://farmersmarketla.com)) is a pleasantly ramshackle collection of market stalls. Originally a fresh produce market, it's now

mostly a collection of restaurants, bakeries and cafés – including legendary diner Du-par's, which still keeps its hotcakes recipe in a safe. Be sure to check out Monsieur Marcel ([mrmrmarcel.com](http://mrmrmarcel.com)), a superb gourmet grocer and kitchen-supply store with hard-to-find products.

**5.** Anyone with hopes to make it big in comedy comes to LA eventually, which is why stand-up here is a must-see. There are fancier comedy clubs than The Comedy Store ([thecomedystore.com](http://thecomedystore.com)) but this old workhorse on Sunset Boulevard has a grungy charm that seems to suit the hardscrabble life of the comic. Although only aficionados would recognise most of the acts, many are brilliantly funny and it's not uncommon for big names to do unannounced shows, especially later in the night. ●