



Photo: iStockphoto / Sean Pavone

Rodeo Drive and LA's other shopping options

In the heart of Beverly Hills, three blocks of Rodeo Drive are home to the epicenter of luxury, fashion and affluent lifestyle. It embodies all the glam of the big screen. Flagship locations for some of the most prestigious brands in the world are lined up—polished and elegant, but even if you're not a shopper, there's so much to take in. For fashion and trend lovers, this is Paradise!

by **Cindy-Lou Dale**
Photos: [iStockphotos.com](https://www.iStock.com/SeanPavone)

➔ Shopping couldn't get more impressive than doing so in one of the world's most famous luxury shopping destinations. With hundreds of thousands of lights lining the median of **Rodeo Drive**, you'll feel like royalty strolling along the famed street.

FAMOUS BRANDS – FAMOUS SHOPPERS

The elegant décor sweeps you into the season in stores like Barakat Gallery—purveyors of museum quality antiques, the cake design studio of La Patisserie Artistique, the collections of Chanel and Dior, and then Café Rodeo for lunch. Next, there's the high end fashion labels of Brooks Brothers, Battaglia, Bottega Veneta, Dolce & Gabbana, Giorgio Armani, Gucci, Guess, Hermes, Louis Vuitton, Michael Kors, Prada, Salvatore Ferragamo, Valentino, Versace and Yves St Laurent—to mention just a few. The jewelry stores of Bulgari, Cartier, Tiffany & Co., Van Cleef & Arpels and Westime. Shoe shops like Bally, Jimmy Choo and Tory Burch. To finish your day with a little

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celebrity spotting, there's the city's best sushi bar at Urasawa.

Yes, it's a famous shopping mecca whose name is synonymous with wealth and privilege. But there are truly few experiences that are more 'LA' than a shopping trip to Rodeo Drive, where palm trees and paparazzi compete for your attention amid the slew of designer labels; but for independent, trendy boutiques, Angelenos head to **Silver Lake**.

TRENDY AND INDEPENDENT

Formerly one of LA's rough suburbs, Silver Lake is now a trendy district of working Hollywood types—a tight-knit, active community with only owner run boutiques. "There are probably more artists per capita here than anywhere else in LA," says Vince Bilbrow, who's been supplying Hollywood with vintage clothes from his shop, **Ragg Mopp Vintage** (3816 Sunset), since 1998.

At **Matrushka** (3822 Sunset), owner Laura Howe designs and makes dresses using material she buys in Downtown LA. "We're lucky because we have a garment district here," she says, tending to a hem. "I can buy the fabric, come back here, cut it out, and have it in the window on the same day." Laura's dresses come in at least 20 styles, using an array of fabrics from bold graphic prints to whimsical pastels resembling an impressionist canvas. If you like a fabric, but not the cut, she can run up a brand new dress in an afternoon.

Asked about celebrity customers, Laura won't name them, or, rather,



Photo: Courtesy of Istenski Barinn

can't. "I'm just so bad with names," she shrugs, then mentioning that a *Desperate Housewife* and "that woman from those Wolverine movies" have been in.

Other interesting places to shop include **La Brea Avenue**—it's one of the arty areas of the city where you'll find some big name institutions alongside a great selection of boutiques and gourmet eateries. Another good shopping destination is **Melrose Avenue**, for some more affordable options.

WHAT ELSE?

There are of course more experiences to be had in LA and here are the highlights.

THE HOLLYWOOD SIGN

This sign on the hill is a big attraction for many people because in many ways it represents celebrity culture in Los Angeles. But believe it or not, tons of tourists try to drive up to the iconic Hollywood sign perched on the nearby hills. Not only does it cost you a ton in time and gas, but you can't even get that close by car. A good alternative is to hike the hills from Griffith Park.

THE HOLLYWOOD WALK OF FAME

With its famous "stars" of Hollywood, featuring iconic names in music, film,



Photo: iStockphoto / gregobagel

and television, it may be a hard one to pass up. But be warned, it attracts major foot traffic and it will be nearly impossible to pause and take a picture. You'll end up pushing and shoving just to get close to a particular star. Instead, visit one of the local museums, like the **Hollywood Museum** and you'll find plenty of cinema history and authentic movie props, plus you'll be able to browse without the impossible press of the crowd.

SPORTING EVENTS

People don't always think of Los Angeles as a big sports city, but these days they have some of the biggest names in professional sports, playing right in their backyard. While we know it can be hard to overcome your devoted fandom, it's definitely worth taking in an NHL or NBA game while you're in town. But if you're attending a game just for the sake of it, be sure to pick up Clippers tickets, as Lakers tickets will cost you a pretty penny. ❖



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FOLLOWED BY A BITE-SIZED TASTE OF PUFFIN

ICELANDIC OCEAN PERCH

Slow cooked ocean perch, beetroot purée, spicy butter, serrano ham, beetroot

ICELANDIC MINKE WHALE

Shallot vinaigrette, crispy Jerusalem artichokes

ICELANDIC SEA TROUT

Yuzu mayo, truffle mayo, crispy quinoa, apple

ICELANDIC PLAICE

Samphire, green asparagus, blood orange, lime beurre blanc

RACK OF FREE RANGE ICELANDIC LAMB

Lamb fillet, leeks, pickled onions, browned celeriac, baked carrots, spinach and dill cream

Dessert by pastry chef Axel P.

CHOCOLATE ROSE

Chocolate mousse, raspberry gel, Sacher layer