Summary Article: Los Angeles
From The Columbia Encyclopedia

(loʊs ənˈdʒɛloʊs, lōs, ənˈdʒɛləz”), city (1990 pop. 3,485,398), seat of Los Angeles co., S Calif.; inc. 1850. A port of entry on the Pacific coast, with a fine harbor at San Pedro Bay, it is the second largest U.S. city in population and one of the largest in area. Two mountain ranges, the Santa Monica and Verdugo, cut across the center of the city.

Economy and Transportation

Los Angeles is a shipping, industrial, communication, financial, fashion, and distribution center for the W United States and much of the Pacific Rim. It is also the motion picture, television, radio, and recording capital of the United States, if not the world, housing numerous studios. Once an agricultural distribution center, Los Angeles is a leading producer of clothing and textiles, aircraft, computers and software, paper, toys, glass, furniture, wire, biomedical products, electrical and electronic machinery, pharmaceuticals, petrochemicals, and fabricated metal. Tourism, printing and publishing, food processing, and oil refining are also important.

Los Angeles has one of the busiest ports in the United States, with roughly half of its commerce coming from other nations, and its international airport is one of the world's busiest. The metropolitan area's vast freeway system has made Los Angeles the archetypal auto-dependent urban area. The huge number of motor vehicles, combined with the city's valley location, often creates dangerously high smog levels. A light-rail system (opened in 1990) and buses alleviate freeway congestion only a little; a new subway (completed 2000) also provides insignificant relief.

Maintaining an adequate water supply has long been a problem for Los Angeles. The city obtains most of its water from California's Central Valley to the north. In 1992 the city ended protracted litigation with environmentalists when it agreed to curtail water diversion in certain areas until ecological recovery had been achieved.

Communities of the Metropolitan Area

The vast Los Angeles metropolitan area covers five counties (Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and Ventura) and encompasses 34,000 sq mi (88,000 sq km) with over 14.5 million people. As Los Angeles rapidly expanded throughout the 20th cent., it absorbed numerous communities and enclosed independent municipalities. Among the communities now part of Los Angeles are Central...
City, Hollywood, San Pedro, Sylmar, Watts, Westwood, Bel-Air, and Boyle Heights. Independent municipalities surrounded by Los Angeles include Santa Monica, Beverly Hills, and San Fernando. Incorporated cities in the broader metropolitan region with populations of 80,000 or more include Alhambra, Anaheim, Burbank, Downey, El Monte, Fullerton, Garden Grove, Glendale, Huntington Beach, Irvine, Inglewood, Lakewood, Long Beach, Moreno Valley, Norwalk, Oceanside, Ontario, Orange, Oxnard, Pasadena, Pomona, Rancho Cucamonga, Riverside, San Bernardino, Santa Ana, Santa Clarita, Santa Monica, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks, and Torrance, in addition to Los Angeles itself.

**Points of Interest**

In Los Angeles are the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and its Broad Contemporary Art Museum; the Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA); the Broad (2015), which houses philanthropist Eli Broad's contemporary art collection; the J. Paul Getty Museum and Getty Museum Villa; the Hammer Museum at UCLA; and historical, film, industrial, and science museums. The large Music Center includes the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion (1964), with four theaters; the Ahmanson Theater; the Mark Taper Forum; and, across Grand Ave., Frank Gehry's Walt Disney Concert Hall (2003), home of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Also downtown is the monumental Our Lady of the Angels cathedral (2002), designed by Raphael Moneo, and Caltrans District 7 headquarters, designed by Thom Mayne. Los Angeles has botanical gardens and many parks, including Griffith Park, with a zoo and an observatory (including a planetarium), and Angels Gate Park, with the massive Korean Bell of Friendship. The La Brea Tar Pits are famous for Ice Age fossils. Other area attractions include the Santa Anita racetrack, Knott's Berry Farm, and Disneyland (at Anaheim). The motion-picture and television industries, the proximity of many resorts, theme parks, and beaches, and a climate that encourages year-round outdoor recreation attract millions of tourists annually. Among the city's many educational institutions are the Univ. of Southern California; the Univ. of California, Los Angeles; the Los Angeles and Northridge California State Univ. campuses; Occidental College; Loyola Marymount Univ.; Pepperdine Univ.; and the Colburn School of Performing Arts.

In 1982 the Los Angeles area gained its second National Football League franchise (the other being the Rams) when the Oakland Raiders moved to the city. In 1995, however, the Rams moved to St. Louis, and the Raiders subsequently returned to Oakland, Calif., leaving the city without a professional football team until 2016, when the Rams returned. The NFL's San Diego Chargers moved there in 2017. In baseball, the National League's Los Angeles Dodgers and the American League's Anaheim Angels represent the area. The metropolitan area also has two National Basketball Association teams (the Lakers and the Clippers) and two National Hockey League teams (the Kings and Anaheim's Mighty Ducks).

**History**

The site of the city was visited by the Spanish explorer Gaspar de Portolá in 1769, and in 1781 El Pueblo de Nuestra Señora de los Angeles de Porciúncula (Town of Our Lady the Queen of the Angels of Porciúncula) was founded. Located on the Los Angeles River, the city served several times as the capital of the Spanish colonial province of Alta California and was a cattle-ranching center. In 1846 Los Angeles was captured from the Mexicans by U.S. forces. The arrival of the railroads (Southern Pacific in 1876; Santa Fe in 1885) and the discovery of oil in the early 1890s stimulated expansion, as did the development of the motion-picture industry in the early 20th cent.

During World War II Los Angeles boomed as a center for the production of war supplies and munitions,
and thousands of African Americans migrated to Los Angeles to fill factory jobs. After the war massive suburban growth made the city enormously prosperous, but also created or exacerbated a variety of urban problems. In 1965, the African-American community of Watts was the site of six days of race rioting that left 34 people dead and caused over $200 million in property damage. Tom Bradley, the city's first black mayor, was first elected in 1973.

In the 1970s and 1980s Los Angeles experienced dramatic growth through immigration. In 1990 the Hispanic population of metropolitan Los Angeles was almost 5 million (almost 40% of the population) and the area's Asian population was over 1.3 million. In addition to an already well-established Japanese-American community, recent immigration has come from China, South Korea, Vietnam, Cambodia, the Philippines, and other nations.

In the 1980s, violent gang warfare over the illegal drug (especially “crack” cocaine) trade became a serious problem for law enforcement officials. In Apr., 1992, the acquittal of four white Los Angeles police officers on charges of police brutality (they had been videotaped beating a black motorist) touched off race riots in south-central Los Angeles and other areas. Fifty-eight people died, thousands were arrested, and property damage totaled approximately $1 billion. Natural disasters have also taken their toll. Portions of Los Angeles are subject to wildfires and rockslides, and the 1994 earthquake centered in Northridge in N Los Angeles, which killed 72 and cost $25 billion, was only the latest to have caused damage to the city and surrounding areas. Attention was again riveted on Los Angeles during the O. J. Simpson trial, which ended in acquittal in 1995. In 2005, Antonio Villaraigosa was elected mayor, becoming the first Hispanic to hold the post since 1872; Eric Garcetti, elected in 2013 to succeed him, became the city's first Jewish mayor.

Bibliography

APA

Chicago

Harvard

MLA