



NEWS FROM

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Get Away In Your Hometown—Summer Vacation In LA

By Laura N. Chick

It is summertime, Fourth of July is already gone, and many of us are looking to get away. This year record high gas prices at the pump are causing many of us to think twice about driving up the coast or some other faraway location.

But forgoing the journey doesn't mean you have to forgo the vacation as well. How about vacationing this year in one of the most traveled to destinations in the world—Los Angeles? Yes, and I bet even if you have lived here for many years like I have, it has been some time since you have actually been a visitor in your own hometown.

Los Angeles is known to have some of the most gifted entertainers and musicians in the world. Many of these fabulously talented people, as well as visiting artists, are featured in free summer concerts across the city.

Let's start at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art in the Mid-Wilshire District. Not only do they have one of the greatest permanent art collections in the world, each Friday night through October, they have free jazz concerts in the Times Mirror Central Court. This jazz series is celebrating its 15th year and presents some of the greatest jazz musicians around. Be sure not to miss the dazzling vocalist Barbara Morrison on August 31st.

Speaking of jazz, the 12th Annual Central Avenue Jazz festival takes place July 28th and 29th. In addition to the jazz music there is a wide variety of ethnic cuisine and arts and crafts available for sale.

Grand Performances is Southern California's largest presenter of free performing arts programming with an incredible diversity of entertainment. The performances are on Friday, Saturday and Sunday throughout the summer and are staged at the California Plaza downtown.

Each Sunday the Valley Cultural Center presents Concerts at Warner Center Park in Woodland Hills. Make special note of one of the three original Supremes, Mary Wilson, on August 26th.

There are also Movies in the Park each Saturday night. On August 11th they will commemorate the 30th anniversary of the death of Elvis Presley by screening Viva Las Vegas co-starring Ann Margaret.

Picnicking is one of the great rites of summer and there are plenty of special places to do that. Will Rogers State Historical Park not only has great picnic and kite flying areas but you can also visit Will Rogers' 31-room ranch house while you are there.

The recent Griffith Park fire has reminded all of us what a treasure we have. Among the many picnic areas in the Park are the Old Zoo where you can sit at tables placed around obsolete animal cages. Following the picnic you can visit the Los Angeles Zoo and see Spider City before it leaves on October 31st.

San Pedro, home of the Port of Los Angeles, has the Ports of Call with many inviting shops and restaurants right along the water. While you're there, be sure and visit the historical Phineas Banning residence in nearby Wilmington.

This column has just scratched the surface of fun and interesting things to do this summer. I would love to have your suggestions for fun activities as well. Please send them to controller.chick@lacity.org.

Quick links to the activities mentioned above:

Friday night jazz at LACMA: www.lacma.org

Concerts in Warner Center Park: www.valleycultural.org

Visiting the Los Angeles Zoo: www.lazoo.org

Visiting Will Rogers State Park and Ranch: www.willrogers.com

Weekend concerts www.grandperformances.org

www.centralavenuejazzfestival.com

www.lacity.org/rap/dos/parks/griffithPK/griffith.htm

www.sanpedro.com