

From The City Of Beans To The City Of Angels

The Right Way To Travel Between Boston & Los Angeles

By Nia Murrell



Sunset snapped! Zuma Beach on way to Camarillo.

Whether you want to go to L.A. for good or just for a visit, there is definitely a right way and a wrong way to do it! Here are some often-practiced tips that can help you be successful in your cross-country trek.!

GETTING THERE

FLYING

There's no doubt about it—the easiest way to travel between Boston and L.A. is to fly. Unrestricted tickets from most commercial airlines can cost as much as \$800 (or more!), but you can almost always find a round-trip ticket from the same airlines for as low as \$300 (or less!) on discount websites. Yahoo!'s travel website (<http://travel.yahoo.com>) is a great place to find good deals, whether your travel date is fixed or flexible. And if you'd rather buy directly from an airline, your best bets will be from American Airlines (<http://www.aa.com>), who will refund the difference if you find a cheaper ticket elsewhere, or Song Airlines (<http://www.flysong.com>), where you can regularly find a Boston—L.A. ticket for \$99 each way. As tempting as it sounds, you probably shouldn't waste your time searching for deals on "discount airlines" like SouthWest or JetBlue; while these options are *great* for shorter distances, you'll end up paying more per flight to get all the way across the county.

DRIVING

Making the move to the Big City? It may be a good idea to drive your car, especially since you definitely don't want to be without wheels once you get there! Driving from Boston to L.A. (or the reverse) can take anywhere up from three days, depending on the number of

Malibu Valleys



drivers and the number of stops you make along the way. For sleeping arrangements, you're probably best off finding a place to lay your head as you go, even though this may seem a bit scary! There are so many hotels and motels along the way that is really isn't necessary to make reservations in advance, especially because you never know when you may get the urge to drive an extra hundred miles, or when you'll get delayed by a tornado (for example). If you don't want to leave your lodgings *completely* to chance, you should pick up AAA's travel books that are free to club members (if you're not a member yourself, chances are *someone* you know is, and would be willing to pick up the books for you!). Along with visitor attractions for each state you drive through, you will also find a complete listing of hotels and their price ratings, so that no matter where you end up, you can find a great place to stay. If you do decide to drive, there are a few places that should not be missed! Want to avoid the out-of-the-way drive to the Grand Canyon and still see



some great natural beauty? Zion National Park, located in the southwest corner of Utah, is a great place to drive through, especially since the 9 Highway (off I-15, on the way to Vegas!) leads you right through it; make sure you pull over at least a few times to fully admire the windblown cliffs. If you stay overnight in Albuquerque, New Mexico, be sure to go to Luigi's Restaurant for dinner; they have great pizzas and even better family service, along with a DIY salad/entrée bar for picky eaters. The best part is that no matter what route you take across the country, you won't have to worry too much about the expense because hotels and gas are both a *lot* cheaper in the middle of country!

SHIPPING YOUR CAR

Another alternative for getting your car to L.A. is to ship it; this is ideal if you don't want to add a lot of mileage to your odometer. While this sounds like an expensive undertaking, don't get overwhelmed! Dependable Auto Shippers (<http://www.dasautoshippers.com>) will ship your car from terminal to terminal (Burlington, MA to Carson, CA) for under \$1000. Just be sure that you can have someone drive you to drop off and pick up your car in each city!

BEING THERE

No matter what anyone tells you, there is one thing that you absolutely **HAVE** to do when you're visiting Los Angeles and it's not what you may think it is. No matter what, you *must* **rent a car!!!** You won't see much of anything if you don't

have a way to get there, and there is no such thing as the T in L.A! The cheapest ways to get a car are to either book a rental with your plane ticket on a discount airfare website, or to rent from Rent A Wreck (<http://www.rentawreck.com>). Don't worry, the cars you get from Rent A Wreck – although they may not be the nicest models – won't be dangerous or unreliable; they're just a cheap (as low as \$20 per day) way to get you from point to point!



Once you reach Los Angeles, you'll find an overwhelming abundance of things to do, and there is no doubt that any guide book, website, or L.A.-based movie can give you hundreds of ideas about where you'd like to visit. Whether you want to match your hand- and footprints with Hollywood's elite on Hollywood Boulevard or visit the famous Muscle Beach in Venice, you can certainly

find out how to do these things in any place dedicated to Los Angeles tourism. There are places you should not skip over when you have the time to visit.

HOLLYWOOD

If you head over to Hollywood, there's no way you'll be able to miss the Walk of Fame, Grauman's Chinese Theatre, the Hollywood Wax Museum, or the Kodak Theatre; you might even be lucky enough to find yourself in the midst of a movie



premiere, movie set, or awards show! But while you're in the area, be sure not to skip over Gelato Paradiso on Hollywood Blvd., located almost directly across from the famous cemented celebrity prints. Here you'll find L.A.'s most authentic Italian gelato; it's tastes so good you'll think you're in Rome! Another great place to eat in the area is Roscoe's Chicken & Waffles. Located on Gower St. between Hollywood and Sunset Boulevards,

Roscoe's is where you can fill your stomach with an unlikely (but *very* tasty) combination. The fried chicken and waffles are literally perfect, and their side dishes (like macaroni and cheese, sweet potatoes, fresh biscuits, and sweet potato pie) can be added to make the meal. Fresh-squeezed lemonade helps you wash it all down. Be sure to show up with an empty stomach!

SANTA MONICA & VENICE

While you're visiting the Santa Monica/Venice area, you'll definitely get a fair dose of street performers and shopping! The Santa Monica Pier is also a great place for couples, friends, or families – really anyone who likes amusement park



rides, arcades, and great junk food! While you visit the pier, be sure to walk all the way to the end, where quite a few locals will set up their fishing gear. It's amazing how quiet this part is compared to the hustle and bustle of the rest of the pier, and on a clear day you'll get a beautiful view of the Pacific Ocean all the way out to Catalina, one of California's

Channel Islands. Don't forget to look down for a glimpse at the dolphins and seals! At the Venice Beach boardwalk, aimless exploration will help you find some of the most bizarre and entertaining antics and shopping. One little-known highlight is Gingerbread Court, a small nook of shops found between Sunset and Paloma Avenues towards the northwestern end of the boardwalk. The shops here hold some of the area's more useful and interesting items, like nice jewelry, Tibetan- and Asian-inspired trinkets, and unique and stylish clothing. You'll also find a *really* great slice of apple pie at Sean's Café at the end on the right!

MALIBU



From the Santa Monica area, you have a great opportunity to see some of the coast's natural beauty by driving north through Malibu up to Camarillo. A twenty-minute drive up Pacific Coast Highway will find you in Malibu's Cross Creek shopping area, where you can stop for coffee, lunch, or (rather pricy) clothes shopping; you also have a pretty big chance of seeing a celebrity, since many of Hollywood's finest

either reside or retire in the hills and beachfront properties of Malibu. Stopping for lunch? Be sure to visit John's Garden for handcrafted sandwiches and tasty salads. If you pass through at dinnertime, stop at Cholada on PCH for perfectly

mastered Thai food. Another 40 minutes up the coast and you'll find yourself just feet from looming red cliffs, massive sand dunes, and the most breathtaking views of the Pacific Ocean. If you'd like to add some mountains into the mix, drive through Decker or Malibu Canyon for more of nature's beauty. A tip here: pick up these roads from the 101 Freeway (take the Route 23/Westlake Blvd exit for Decker Canyon or the Las Virgenes Road exit for Malibu Canyon) and you'll get some stunning (and sometimes unexpected) views of the ocean as you get closer to the coast.



The Hollywood sign is on the hill.

Even though Boston and Los Angeles are two very different cities, any Bostonian can definitely find at least a few places where they will feel quite at home – whether you're visiting, or literally making a new home out of the place.

Hopefully these tips will help you accomplish your goals as inexpensively as possible! [e-mail the author](#)

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