

Westways Magazine

Day-Tripping: San Pedro

October 2007

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The southernmost tip of the city of Los Angeles is off the beaten path, but the entire world arrives here every day. As home to the behemoth Port of Los Angeles, goods form around the world land in San Pedro, where cruise ships set sail for exotic destinations. Downtown San Pedro comes alive with an art walk and festival on the first Thursday of every month. Stress echo with the languages of settlers from around the world – Italian, Croatian, Portuguese, Greek – and the dining scene reflects that breadth of flavors. Massive waterfront redevelopment, with glistening condominium towers rising over the marina, might speed the gentrification of this blue-collar community. But a strong maritime heritage is the soul of San Pedro, and its lighthouse still beckons to exploring minds.

Points of Interest Include:

Sixth Street Bistro

354 W. Sixth Street

310/521-8818

Peruse an eclectic menu, ranging from pizza to chicken tequila linguini to seafood paella, at this charming restaurant where live flamenco stirs the night air.

Angels Gate Cultural Center

Angels Gate Park

3601 S. Gaffey Street

310/519-0936

View the eclectic, inspiring creations of contemporary artists – from Southern California and from around the world – exhibited at two galleries housed in a converted military installations.

Korean Bell of Friendship and Bell Pavilion

Angels Gate Park, South Gaffey and West 37th Streets

Answer the toll of a 17-ton bell sheltered in an ornate pagodalike structure, donated to the people of the Los Angeles by Korea in 1976. But be patient – it rings just four times a year.

S.S. Lane Victory

Berth 94(Adjacent to World Cruise Center)

310/519-9545

Wander the decks of this restored 10,750-ton World War II Merchant Marine ship on a self-guided tour (group tours need appointments). Six times each summer, you can book a day cruise that approaches Santa Catalina Island before returning to port.

Los Angeles Maritime Museum

Berth 84 (at the foot of Sixth Street°)

310/548-7618

Submerge yourself in the legacy of L.A.'s maritime pioneers at a museum occupying the former Municipal Ferry Terminal, and browse an awesome collection of model ships from every era.

Papadakis Taverna

301 W. Sixth Street

310/548-1186

Learn from the Greeks how to celebrate life at this legendary restaurant where festive waiters sing and dance between serving big portions of moussaka, pastitio, and baklava. *Opa!*

Cabrillo Marine Aquarium

3720 Stephen M. White Drive

310/548-7562

Dive into the fascinating world of seal life at this kid-friendly aquarium on famed Cabrillo Beach, housed in a structure designed by now-celebrity architect Frank Gehry.

Point Fermin Lighthouse

807 W. Paseo Del Mar

310/241-0684

Blask in the glow of San Pedro history by touring one of the oldest lighthouses on the West Coast. The light has been removed, but the landmark's Victorian charm still shines bright.

To visit San Pedro, take the Harbor Freeway (I-110) south to its terminus, or travel west on Ocean Boulevard (SR 47) from Long Beach. You can pick up a free *Los Angeles & Long Beach harbors* map at your Auto Club office, or visit maps.aaa.com for door-to-door driving directions.