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Drive California

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Welcome!

Thank you for downloading our California Self-drive Guide. As you're likely to be in the planning stage for your next holiday, with the help of our Tourism Partners, we've put together a selection of driving itineraries, along with suggested key attractions to visit along the way.

Here at DriveAway Holidays, we believe that there's no better way to experience freedom than by taking a self-drive holiday. As the leading specialist in Australia offering worldwide car hire, motorhome rentals and European Peugeot Leasing, find the best deals from world-leading suppliers with the expertise and knowledge of our team; and take the road to freedom on your next self-drive holiday!

Drive safely,

The DriveAway Holidays Team



Holidays Matter!

Dollar has long been the car rental choice by value-seeking renters. So reserve your vehicle today with your DriveAway Holidays representative.

Do More with Your Dollar

Dollar features a wide selection of quality vehicles. © 2014 DCO Operations, Inc. or its affiliates.

The advertisement banner features a yellow background. On the left, a family of four is smiling from the back of a white motorhome. In the center, four cars are displayed: a blue minivan, a red sedan, a white SUV, and a red convertible. On the right, the Dollar Rent a Car logo is shown, consisting of a red diamond shape with a yellow circle inside, and the word "DOLLAR" in blue letters above "RENT A CAR" in red letters. Below the logo is the slogan "Do More with Your Dollar" in red.



Drive California...

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The Pacific Coast



Discover California

Bordering the west coast of the USA, and with its close proximity to Australia and New Zealand, California is the ultimate destination for all ages offering a wide range of attractions and activities including Disneyland, Hollywood, Yosemite National Park, Malibu Beach and the Golden Gate Bridge to name but a few.

The best way to discover California's beauty is to travel by car, motorhome or motorcycle and explore its vibrant cities, sleepy fishing villages, premier wine regions and the tranquil wilderness.

So just picture yourself now, driving along the Californian coastline in a Mustang, exploring the Napa Valley in a luxurious RV or cruising on a Harley Davidson along the winding road into Yosemite National Park, stopping when and where you choose to take in the scenery.

If this sounds like you, read on...

Drive the Pacific Coast Highway

Los Angeles - San Francisco

Day 1: Los Angeles

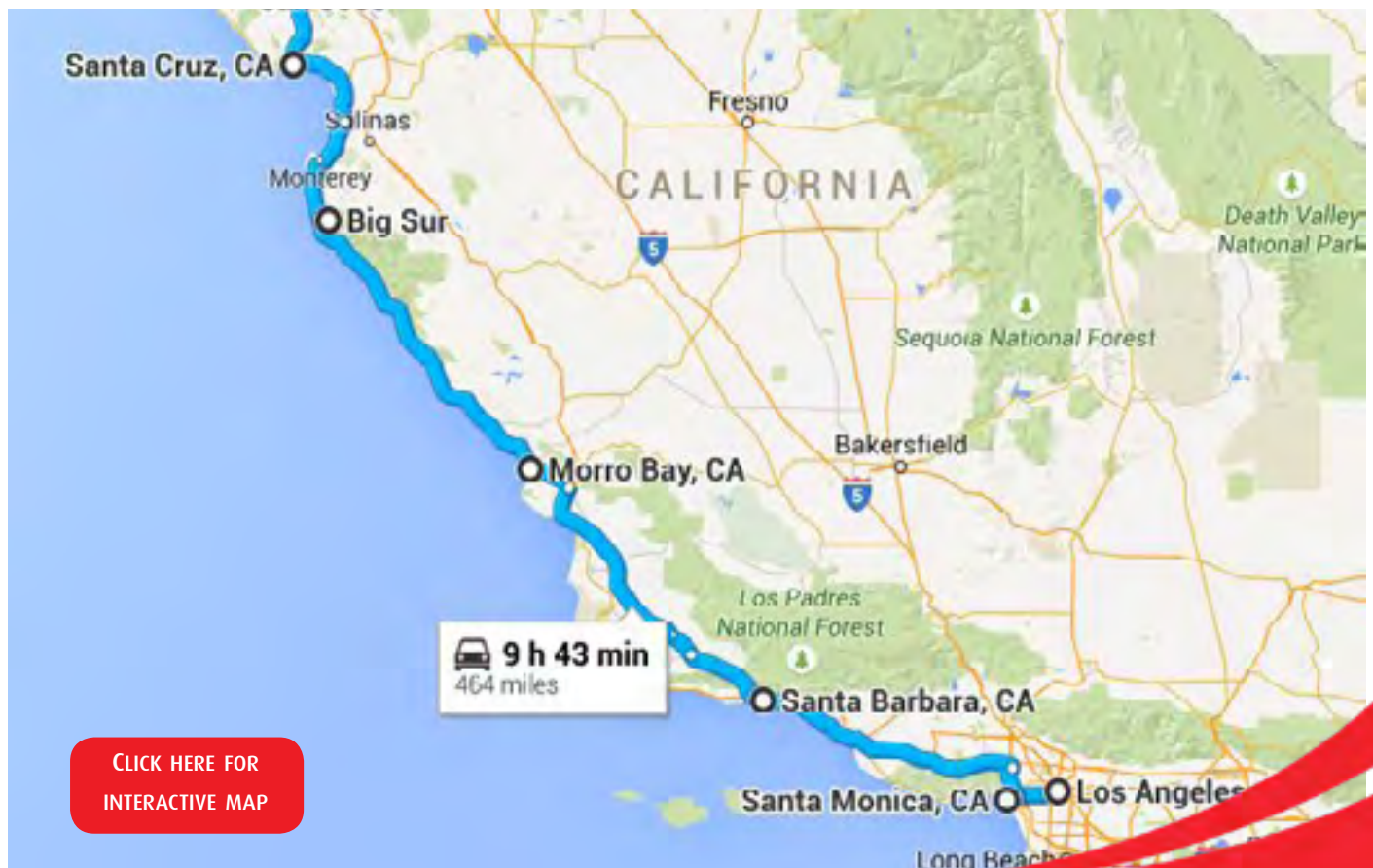
Also referred to as The City of Angels, Los Angeles is famed for its film and TV industry. With so much to see and do, spend your first day exploring some of the city's many attractions.

Day 2: Los Angeles to Santa Monica (16mi/25km)

Make the short drive west to the beach-front city of Santa Monica and spend the day at its famous Pier built in 1909. Explore the Aquarium and unwind at the beach. If time permits, take a short drive down the coast to Venice Beach, a renowned hangout for the creative and artistic.

LOS ANGELES ATTRACTIONS

- » The Hollywood Sign
- » Disneyland, Anaheim
- » Disney California Adventure Park
- » Universal Studios Hollywood
- » Rodeo Drive
- » Hollywood Walk of Fame
- » Grauman's Chinese Theatre
- » Santa Monica Pier
- » Venice Beach Boardwalk
- » Laguna Beach



Drive the Pacific Coast Highway

Los Angeles - San Francisco

Day 3: Santa Monica to Santa Barbara (90 mi/145km)

Head north along the coast along to Malibu Beach, marveling at some of the best real estate in the world. Continue onto Santa Barbara and visit its popular beach, East Beach, which boasts a stretch of white sand, palm trees and crystal blue water. Try surfing for the day, eagle para-gliding, kayaking, golfing, hiking or even go whale watching.

Day 4: Santa Barbara to Morro Bay (105mi/165km)

The picturesque fishing village of Morro Bay is the perfect spot for surfing and deep sea fishing. Kayak around the south part of the bay and have a picnic by the sand pit. Wildlife is abundant here and it is not uncommon to spot otters, sea-lions and many sea birds at the Embarcadero on the east side of the bay.

Day 5: Morro Bay to Big Sur (95mi/150km)

Fingers crossed for good weather because today is full of breathtaking coastal scenery! As you drive along the Pacific Coast Highway, the road wraps around the sea cliffs, offering many vista points where the Santa Lucia Mountains meet the ocean. Once arriving at Big Sur stroll through the town, enjoying the art galleries and perhaps spot some of the region's wildlife.



Drive the Pacific Coast Highway

Los Angeles - San Francisco

Day 6: Big Sur to Monterey (22mi/30km)

Carmel-by-the-Sea has inspired artists and attracted celebrities for years. Rated as one of the Top 10 US destinations, this European style village is nestled alongside white sandy beaches. Take the 17 mile drive from Pacific Grove to Pebble Beach and onto Monterey and discover Spanish Bay, Cypress Point Lookout and Carmel Bay.

SAN FRANCISCO ATTRACTIONS

- » The Golden Gate Bridge
- » Alcatraz Island
- » Lombard Street
- » San Francisco Zoo
- » Fisherman's Wharf
- » Pier 39
- » Union Square
- » AT&T Park
- » Cable Car Museum

Day 7: Monterey to San Francisco (160mi/186km)

Explore the rugged coastline of Monterey. Once home to the sardine industry, Cannery Row is now a strip of gift shops, restaurants and bars. If time permits, spend the morning at Monterey's Aquarium. Head onto the vibrant city of San Francisco, the perfect destination for a few days' stay and the gateway to Napa Valley and Yosemite National Park. Drive over the Golden Gate Bridge and down the eight hairpin bends of Lombard Street before sampling a tasty meal at Pier 39.



The California Nature Trail

San Francisco, Yosemite National Park & Big Sur

Day 1 Day: San Francisco - Yosemite National Park (195mi/314km)

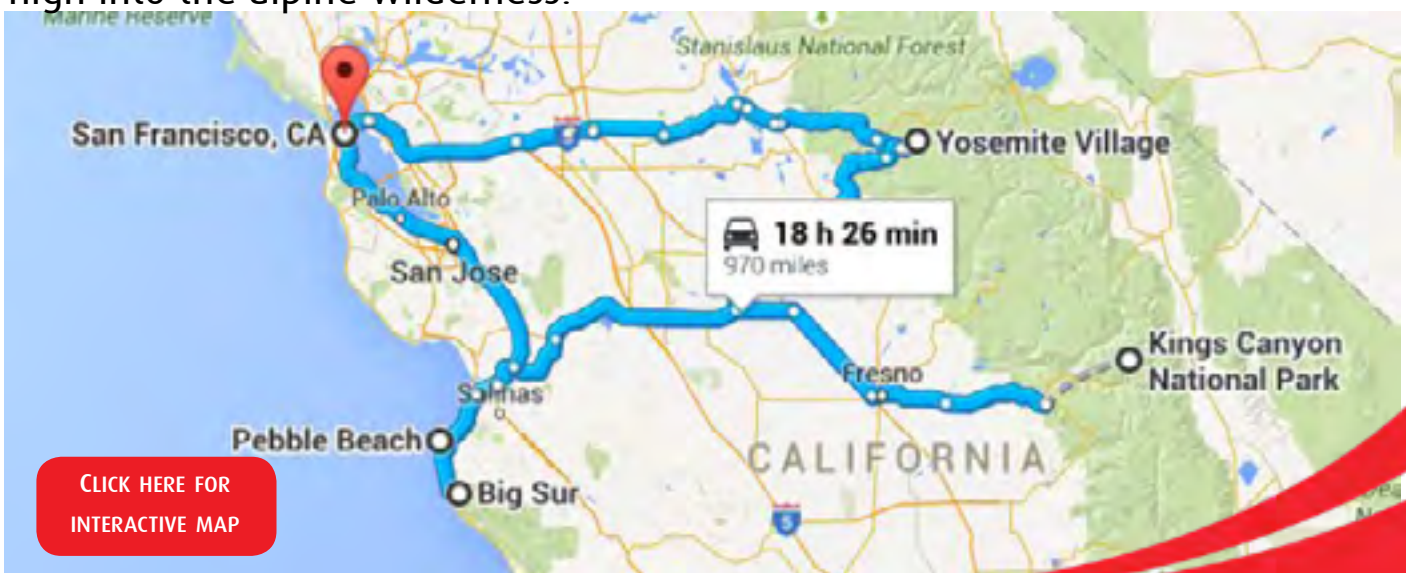
The drive takes just 4 hours from San Francisco to Yosemite. Take the I-580 east to I-205 and then Highway 120 into Yosemite National Park. The journey is breathtaking once you reach Big Oak Flat.

Day 2: Yosemite National Park

Yosemite's pristine landscape is filled with rushing waterfalls, imposing cliffs and colossal monoliths. The vast granite cliffs of El Capitan, Half Dome and Tuolumne Meadows. The valley floor has been carefully laid out to manage the large amount of visitors and offers free shuttle buses between the main attractions on the valley floor. Make sure to plan in advance as Yosemite hosts 3.5 million visitors annually and it is necessary to book ahead if you plan to stay in or around the park. If you have time, venture up to Glacier Point for breathtaking views across the valley.

Day 3: Yosemite National Park to Big Sur (250mi/402km)

Travel south to Kings Canyon in Sequoia National Park, home to the gargantuan Redwood and Sequoia trees. Park and follow foot trails leading high into the alpine wilderness.



The California Nature Trail

San Francisco, Yosemite National Park & Big Sur

Day 3 Continued: Yosemite National Park to Big Sur (250mi/402km)

Next, head west toward the Pacific Ocean to Big Sur, frequently noted as the best view along the Pacific Coast Highway. There's plenty of space to camp in Big Sur State Park, or a selection of hotels in the town of Big Sur for those seeking a more luxurious option.

Day 4: Big Sur to San Francisco (140mi/225km)

As you head north along the coast, in less than an hour you'll reach Point Lobos State Preserve, hailed "the crown jewel of the State Park System". Here you can partake in a range of activities from scuba diving to photography to nature study. Point Lobos is home to a variety of unique and endangered flora and fauna, so enjoy these rare finds before heading off to Monterey Bay, where you can relax in the towns of Carmel and play golf and one of the world's most prestigious golf resorts - Pebble Beach. The final two stops are Ano Nuevo State Park and Big Basin Redwoods State Park. Check out the Northern Elephant Seal at Ano Nuevo, home to the largest breeding colony. Last but not least, travel to California's oldest state park, Big Basin, home to the largest continuous habitation of ancient coast redwoods south of San Francisco. Conclude this drive in San Francisco.



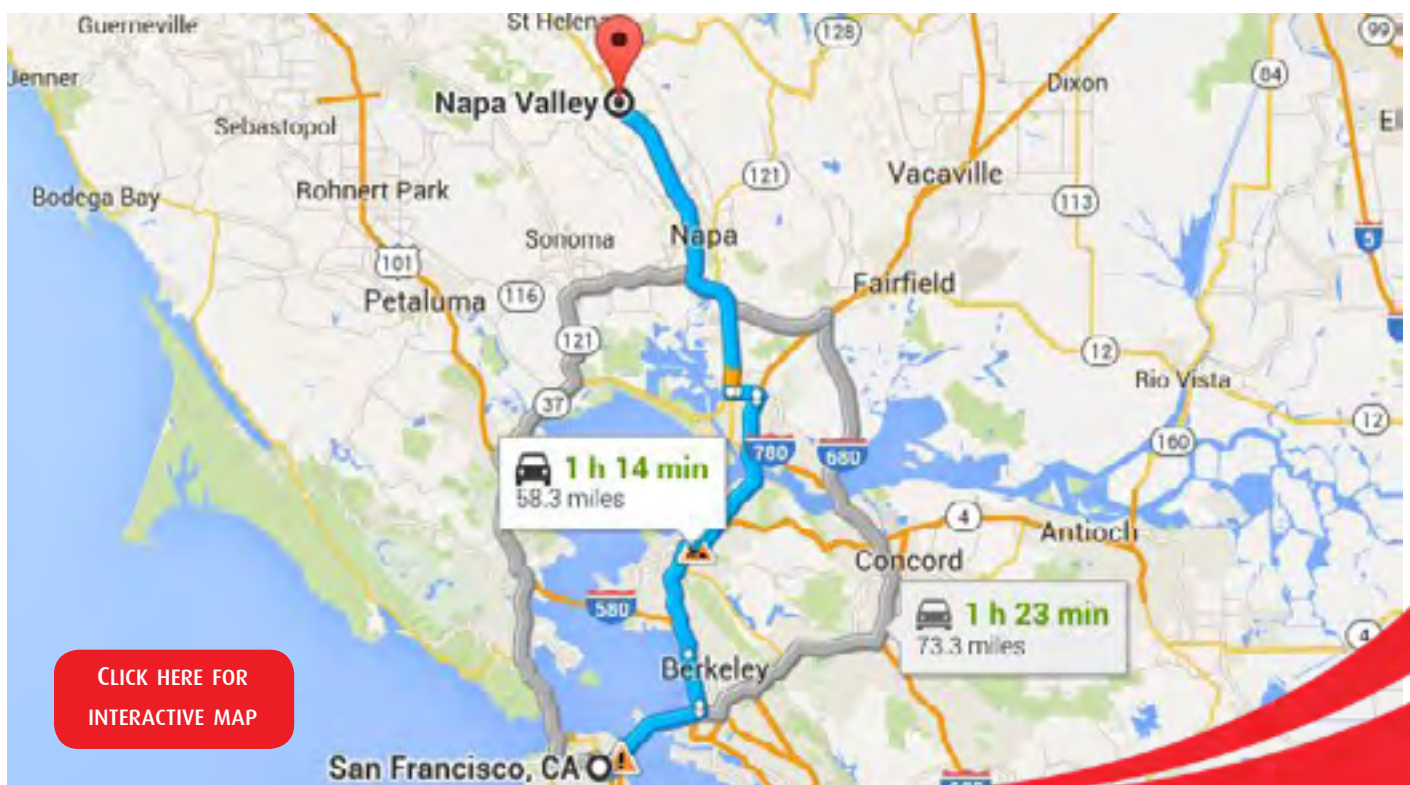
The Californian Vineyards

The Napa Valley

Day Trip: San Francisco to Napa Valley (60 mi/100km)

Just a short drive north of San Francisco lies the Napa Valley Wine Region. The most scenic route is northbound over the Golden Gate Bridge. Stay on Highway 101 until you reach Petaluma in southern Sonoma. Take the Highway 116 turnoff and merge left on Frates Road. Continue to follow the signs for approximately 23 miles until you reach the Napa Valley.

California State Route 29 fondly known as the Silverado Trail, will lead you around the eastern edge of Napa Valley's six towns: Calistoga, St. Helena, Rutherford, Oakville, Yountville and Napa. Take your time savouring some of the best wine the region has to offer. Built not far from Calistoga, Castello di Amorosa is a medieval replica castle holding 107 rooms over eight levels, both above and below ground. This opulent structure includes a moat, drawbridge, defensive towers, interior courtyard, chapel, torture chamber and great hall. To top it all off, wine is sold in the castle and available for visitors to taste.



[CLICK HERE FOR INTERACTIVE MAP](#)

The Californian Vineyards

The Napa Valley

Day Trip continued: Napa Valley to San Francisco (60 mi/100km)

For a little history you can visit the Beringer Rhine House, Napa Valley's oldest continuously operating winery. The town of Napa also offers a variety of restaurants and hotel options for visitors to revel in this quaint and inviting region, so take your time to explore. Take an overnight stop, continue up to Oregon or return back to San Francisco, stopping off for a stunning postcard view of the Golden Gate Bridge.



California Day Drives

San Diego

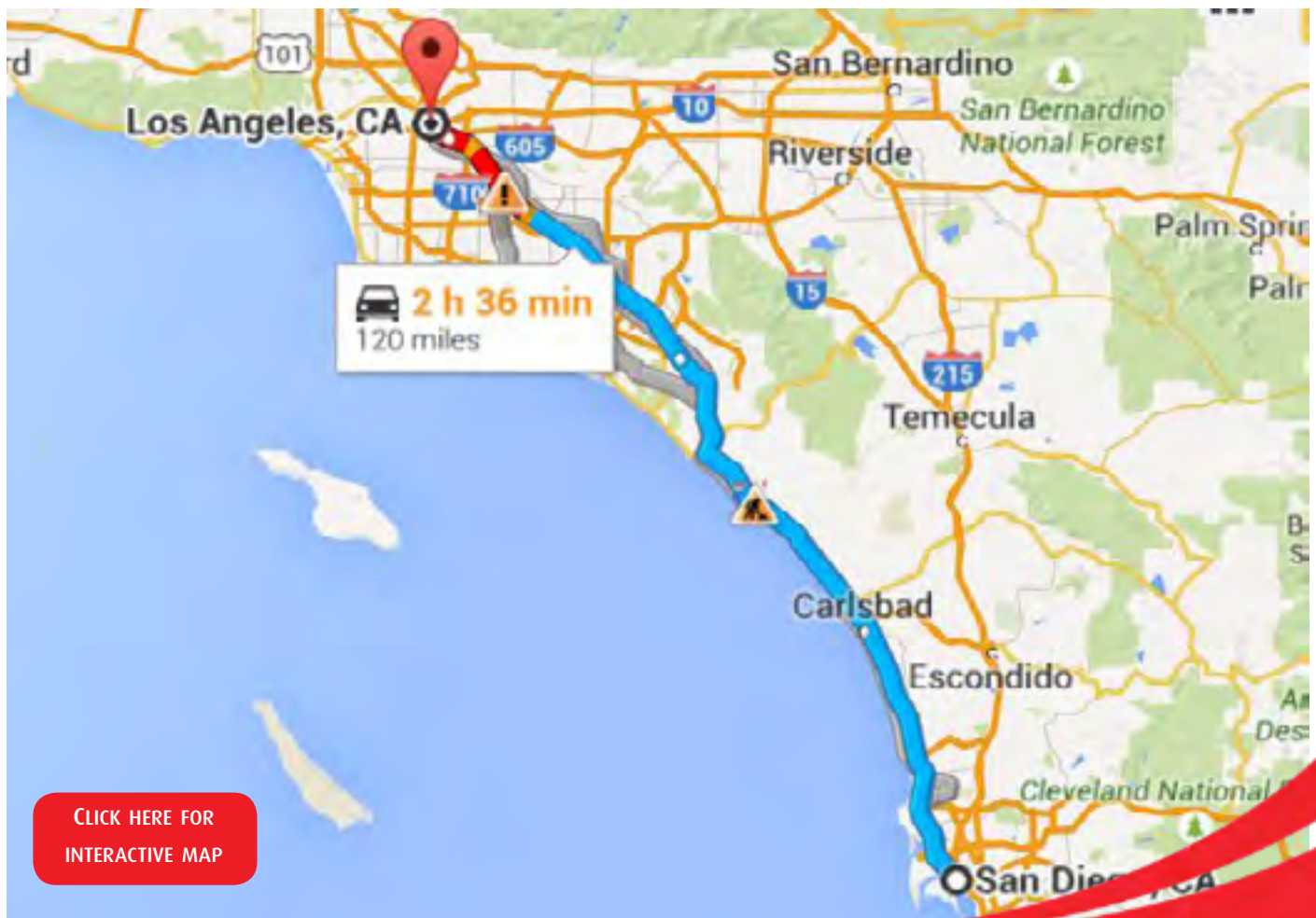
Side Trip: Los Angeles to San Diego (120mi/190km)

A popular drive from Los Angeles is to the stunning city of San Diego. Located near the border of Mexico this city has a wonderful climate all year round. If you want to experience California's Golden Age of Surf, drive down Historic Highway 101 otherwise known as the Coastal Highway.

Whilst visiting the city, check out San Diego's Gaslamp Quarter with its Victorian buildings, now home to some of the city's finest restaurants, pubs and nightclubs.

SAN DIEGO ATTRACTIONS

- » San Diego Zoo
- » USS Midway Museum
- » Balboa Park
- » Lego-land California
- » Coronado Beach
- » Gaslamp Quarter
- » The Old Town
- » Seaport Village
- » House of Blues
- » Horton Shopping Plaza



California Day Drives

San Diego / Palm Springs

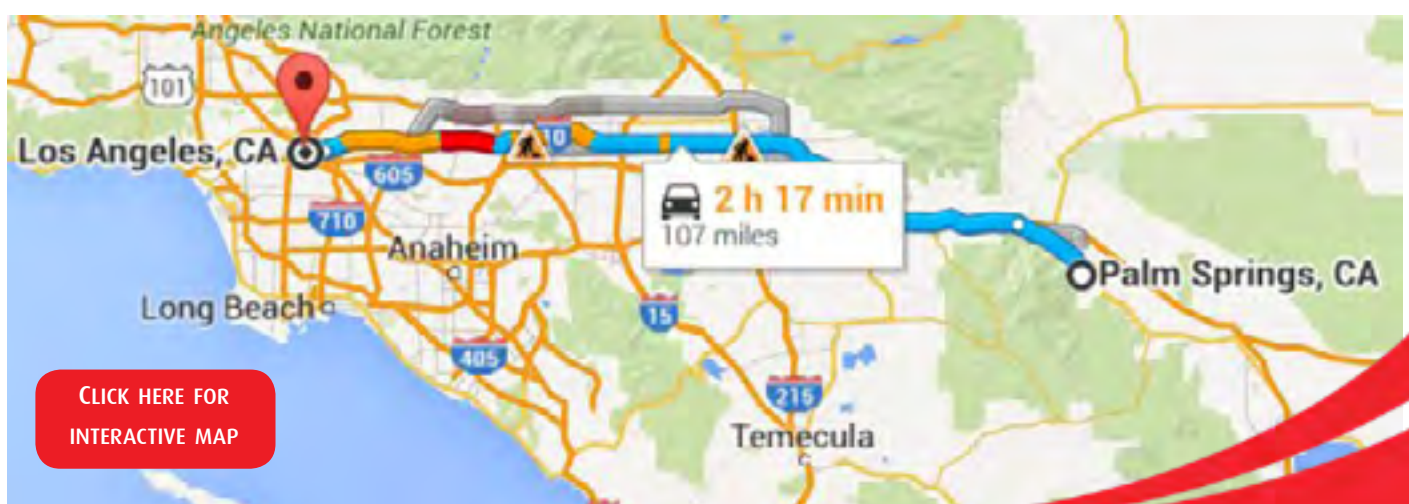
Side Trip continued: Los Angeles to San Diego (120mi/190km)

The San Diego Zoo is one of the most renowned in the world with its endangers species breeding programs. Here you can see polar bears, pandas and many other animals.

A trip to the historical Old Town (the birthplace of California) is a must has here you will experience a taste of Mexico, along with other cuisines from Italy, Asia, South America, Creole and more with over 30 restaurants and 20 museums and historical sites.

Side Trip: Los Angeles to Palm Springs (100mi/160km)

Located towards the top of the Colorado Desert, Palm Springs is a glamorous resort style oasis in the Californian desert that offers hiking, modern architecture, spectacular natural beauty and a host of outdoor activities. For the ultimate weekend getaway take the Interstate 10 East towards Phoenix, then take the exit for Highway 11 or Indian Canyon Drive. Once you notice the lavish homes, golf courses and palm trees you can be sure you have arrived in Palm Springs.

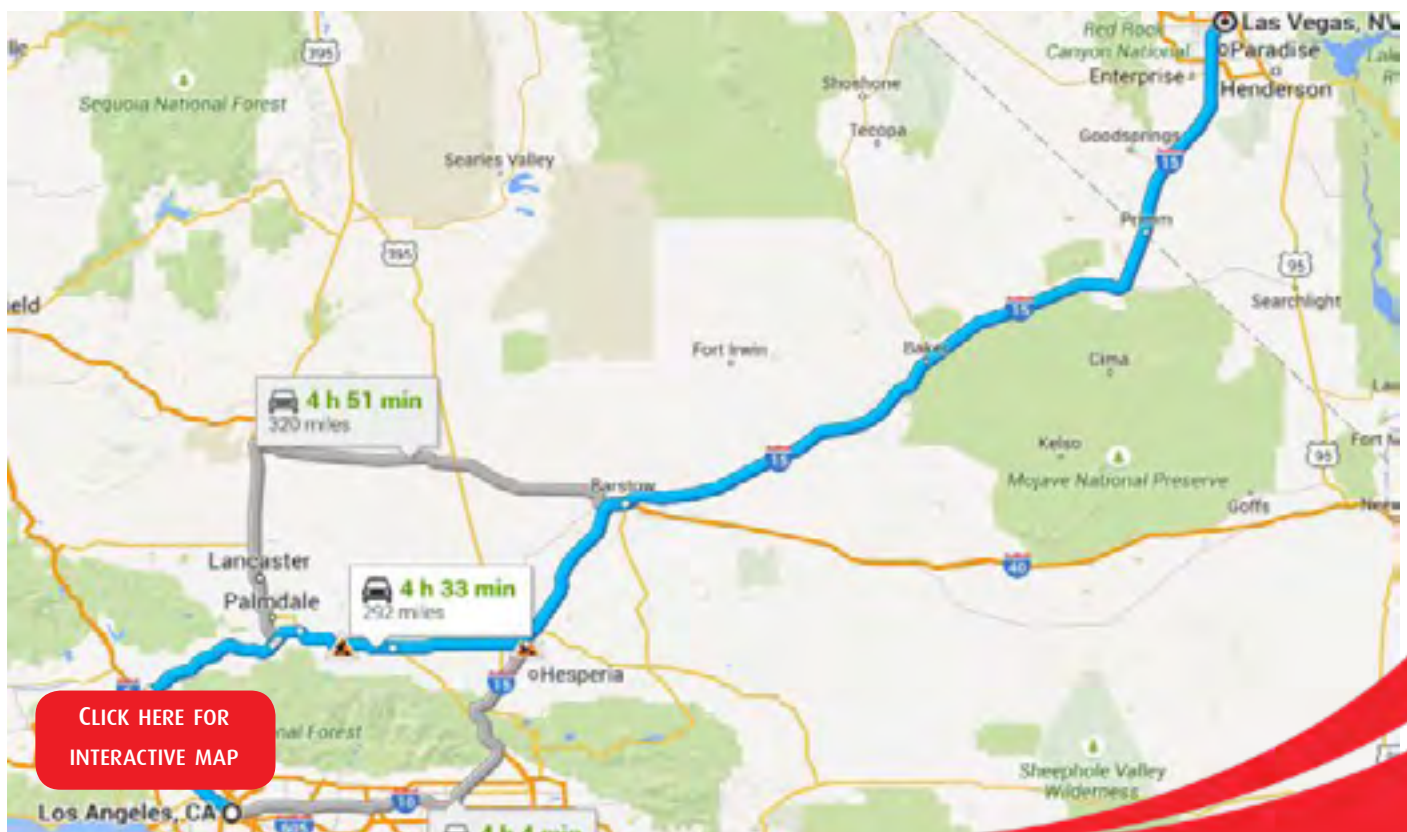


California to Nevada

Las Vegas

Side Trip: Los Angeles to Las Vegas (270mi/190km)

The drive from Los Angeles to Las Vegas is extremely popular and can be completed in just over 4 hours, but allow time to stop off along the way. First take the US 101 and then head onto the I-15N. The first stop off the highway is at Mormon Rocks - massive sandstone rock formations. Time permitting, take exit 153a and head along old Route 66 from Victorville to Barstow. Along this drive you will see many old diners, an ostrich farm and Bottletree Ranch, full of metal tress made with old bottles. Back on the I-15N, take the Ghost Town Road exit, and left onto Yermo Road as you arrive at Peggy Sue's 50s Diner. Built in 1954, this is a great spot to indulge in everything from hamburgers to apple pie. Head back onto the I-15N and take exit 239 for Zzyzx Road a popular "oasis" stop in the Mojave Desert where you will discover some interesting history. Next stop is Baker, home to The Mad Greek - a famous 24 hour diner. Continue along I-15N across the boarder into Nevada, arriving at the party capital of Las Vegas.



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