



The sleek, low-lit lobby of **The Huntley** sets the stage for a luxe beachside escape with mod, international touches

Getaway to LA

A Short & Sweet Escape is Just a Couple Hours Away (Without Traffic of Course ...)

Written by Sarah Daoust

It's true: Summer is officially in the can. Those crazy, hazy, carefree days just flew by, and now you're pissed at yourself for never making the time to actually take a real vacation. But wait, you couldn't have taken a real vacation because the economy is in the shitter, you had to sacrifice your firstborn for the green to fill up the ol' gas tank every week and you're afraid to take more than a couple days off anyway since the douche two cubicles down has been trying to outshine you all summer!

944 understands. We're here for you. Now, hear us out before you dismiss the following two words, which normally conjure up unpleasanties like smog, traffic, congestion, and run-ins with Lindsay Lohan: Los Angeles. Despite some of the usual hassles associated with a trip to LA, two gems sitting waiting to make the trek up there worth your while. Each hideaway has its own distinct charm and vibe, but the best part is that both are ideal for a quick getaway — especially for those robbed of their summer vacations, who are looking for a slice of one just a half-tank of gas away. Tell them 944 sent you and thank us later.

The Huntley Hotel

Upon arrival, do this: Check in as quickly as possible (which shouldn't be a problem because the staff here is on their game) and head immediately to The Penthouse restaurant 18 stories up. If the jaw-dropping, 360-degree views of the Santa Monica coastline, Malibu Mountains and LA cityscape don't transform you into instant vacay mode, there is probably something very wrong with you.

Just kidding, but seriously, The Penthouse is where it's at. The seasoned touch of designer Thomas Schoos is evident in every thoughtful accent of the airy, contemporary-yet-whimsical space. You'll love the splashes of orange, rich chocolate and bronze that warm an otherwise breezy palette of sea foam green, ice blue and clean white lines. A 19-foot, backlit circular bar serves as the centerpiece of the restaurant, surrounded by six white-lacquered cabanas offering sheer white curtains for privacy, an indoor mother-of-pearl fireplace that invites you to lounge, retractable skylights overlooking comfy day beds, Murano Venetian chandeliers, twinkling votive candles and hardwood floors. You can sip a custom cocktail at sunset before diving into Executive Chef Seth Greenburg's famous scallops, and return the next morning for a leisurely, sun-filled brunch.

The 209 guestrooms at The Huntley (including 19 suites and a presidential suite) are a reflection of Santa Monica's chill beach vibe but add a luxe, international panache. Book a Signature Suite and enjoy your bath in the freestanding, oversized tub while watching a flick from the rotating, 42-inch flat-screen TV that doubles as a divider between the bed and living areas, then you can crash for the night in between 100 percent Egyptian cotton sheets. No pool or spa on the property, but the Santa Monica Beach directly across the street welcomes you to take a dip in its "pool" (aka the Pacific Ocean) free of charge, and a leisurely stroll down its idyllic sandy stretches is rumored to be just as therapeutic as a massage.

1111 Second Street, Santa Monica | 310.394.5454 | www.thehuntleyhotel.com

The London West Hollywood

What a difference a multimillion-dollar renovation makes. The only thing that remains from the former Bel Age hotel is its street address, which now belongs to The London — a stunningly glamorous departure from the indifferent “too cool for attentive service” attitudes that define many hotels in Hollywood. At The London, service means treating every single guest like an A-list celebrity.

Tucked away on a secluded, painstakingly manicured property just off the Sunset Strip, The London is easy to miss driving by — and the staff prefer it that way. When you arrive, you're whisked into the immaculate, euro-mod lobby — an elegant, marble-topped alternate universe where you are checked in with the utmost efficiency and escorted to your accommodations. And trust us on this one: Once you step into your room, you won't want to leave it. Each of The London's 200 spacious suites, designed by David Collins Studio, epitomize cosmopolitan luxury; think open floor plans, private terraces, large custom desks, lounge areas and the latest technology. Then there are the generous bathrooms, or rather, “bath environments” as The London likes to call them. Famed bath purveyor Waterworks tricked out each bath environment with posh amenities, including double showerheads, a soaking tub, hand-cut mosaic tiles and enough room to practice a cartwheel or two.

Actually, we can think of two good reasons why you might want to venture out of your room for a bit. Superstar Chef Gordon Ramsay just opened his own namesake elegant restaurant on the property; grab cocktails at the glowing bar then settle in for a romantic dinner. Or you can head up to the exclusive rooftop pool deck boasting unparalleled sweeping views of LA, decked-out cabanas, lush garden landscaping, a fitness center and concierge services. If all this indulgence isn't enough, rumor has it The Spa at The London West Hollywood is set to debut in a couple months. We can't wait.

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Killer views of the LA landscape are just one of the many perks of cribbing in one of **The London's** 200 oversized suites