

MAR VISTA HISTORY

From farmland and Victorian architecture to farmers' markets and public art, the neighborhood of Mar Vista has transformed dramatically over the past 120+ years. This charming, laid-back community is now home to eclectic restaurants, independent shops, historic homes, and much more. Enjoy your exploration of Mar Vista's noteworthy art, architecture, and historical spots that make Mar Vista a wonderful place to visit and live.

TIMELINE

Starting 3,500 years ago, the Indigenous Tongva people lived in the Los Angeles Basin. The village of Saangna (Saan) was located by the river near Playa del Rey and Marina del Rey.

1819 The area we now know as Mar Vista was the center of a vast Mexican land grant named Rancho La Ballona.

1848 The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo formally ended the Mexican-American War and California falls under U.S. control.

1850 California becomes the 31st state of the Union.

1902 Los Angeles Pacific Railroad builds a line down the middle of what will become Venice Blvd. (for a time known as Electric Ave.), connecting downtown Los Angeles to the sea at Ocean Park. One stop along the route, known as the Venice Short Line, is located near modern-day Centinela Ave. and Venice Blvd.

1904 Ocean Park Heights became the first neighborhood near Venice/Centinela, featuring 196 acres of former farmland (mostly lima beans or celery) that are subdivided for homes. The subdivision was named after the resort community of Ocean Park just south of Santa Monica.

1916 Some community members vote to incorporate the area into a city, but the effort fails after a majority votes against the idea.

1924 A Chamber of Commerce was formed by local businessmen following the community's decision to establish a regional post office. Since Ocean Park had its own post office, it became evident that Ocean Park Heights needed to be renamed to avoid any confusion between the communities. Juanita Romero, a pioneer resident of Ocean Park Heights, proposed Mar Vista (which translates to "ocean view"). The name was derived from a new subdivision located two blocks west of the Chamber's headquarters, called Mar Vista Park.

TIMELINE Continued

1926 The community of Mar Vista voted to be annexed to the city of Los Angeles in 1926, the 70th community to do so, but it wasn't formalized until the following year.



1927 After Mar Vista is annexed to Los Angeles, the city takes over the county-operated library branch at 12117 Venice Blvd.

1940 The city of Los Angeles installs one of the first traffic signals in Mar Vista at what the newspaper the Venice Vanguard called "the dangerous intersection of Venice and Grand View."

1948 Architect Gregory Ain designs the Mar Vista Tract, consisting of 52 single-story homes featuring modern design with open floor plans and free-flowing landscaping.



1950 The famous Red Car trolleys make their last journey down Venice Boulevard on September 18, following the Pacific Electric Company's decision to replace rail service on the Venice Short Line with "motor coaches".

1951 Venice Blvd. becomes a divided four-lane highway with two lanes on each side, running east and west. Previously, both sides of the railway had traffic running in both directions. The former railway is converted into parking spaces.

2003 A new, 12,500-square-foot Mar Vista Library Branch opens with more than double the space of the former library to accommodate more books, people, and computers.

2007 The Mar Vista Community Council votes to create the Mar Vista Farmer's Market, an initiative developed by community members and local business owners. The market has since grown into one of L.A.'s most beloved and features dozens of farms and food vendors, plus DJs, live music, and more.

2017 Mar Vista is selected as one of the first Great Streets projects, an initiative that adds protected bike lanes, new and enhanced pedestrian crosswalks, community art installations, and other improvements along Venice Blvd.

DRAFT

MAR VISTA SELF-GUIDED TOUR #1

ART ON VENICE BOULEVARD

November 2025

BEFORE EMBARKING

Prepare for your tour with sunscreen, proper footwear, water, and friends with four legs or two. Enjoy a snack along the way. Do not disturb tenants nor violate private property. Be mindful of your surroundings. This tour is approximately 1.2 miles and takes about one hour if starting and ending at #1. Information about the murals are from the artist, if available. The @ symbol is for Instagram contact.

FROM YOUR COUNCILWOMAN

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CITY COUNCILWOMAN FOR CD11



MAR VISTA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Find us!

bla bla bla @marvista.org

MAR VISTA COMMUNITY COUNCIL EDUCATION, ARTS AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

Aaron Vanek, Chair
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Thank you and sources:

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Those marked with * are part of the Downtown Mar Vista Beautification Project, developed on behalf of CD-11 and LANI-Los Angeles Neighborhood Initiative with Transformation Arts.

1. Whale Tail* (2021) SEI SHIURA 3796 STEWART

An interpretation of the theme of the Mar Vista neighborhood as "Ocean View" (from Spanish). Sei Shimura is an award-winning designer and artist born in Tokyo, raised in New York, and now based in Los Angeles. @sei.shimu

2. Coral Reef (2021) JESSICA SHANDLER 12623 VENICE

A beautiful coral reef, in keeping with the theme the Mar Vista "Ocean View" translation. Jessica Shandler is a henna artist based in Los Angeles. The influence of her henna works can be seen in her murals. @jchan_arts96

3. LAX 293 (2022) JULES MUCK 12601 VENICE

Thao French is a multidisciplinary artist known for her brutalist floral art and for founding Mindful Murals™, a creative social enterprise with the mission of bringing communities together through the power of art. Mindfulmurals@gmail.com

5. Venice Energy (2025) TOMMY WONDER & NASE POP 12525 VENICE

The bright and vibrant energy of LA—especially Venice Beach—inspired the palette and the way we combined our names. The result is a fusion of Wonder and Pops. @nasepop / @tommy_wonder

5b. (unknown) (2016) 12523 A/B VENICE

Peek behind the liquor store to see another wondrous mural.

6 Awesome Clouds (2017)

DJ NEFF

12517 VENICE

This client commission was inspired by cartoons and video games. The smiling cloud sign was the inspiration to imagine the world surrounding it. A world that feels joyful, and optimistic, full of love and growth. @DJN3FF

7. Octopus (2016) DJ NEFF

12515 VENICE

This pole shape became the concept of a tank containing a giant Pacific red octopus. It has an emotional awareness as it investigates a small fish, lending empathy to another despite its own captivity. @DJN3FF

8. Elephant (2015) DJ NEFF

12511 VENICE

With a combination of Holi elements and geometric designs, the artist Neff creates a bold and colorful juxtaposition. At the time of painting he lost a dear friend and fellow artist, Krush TWS. Can you spot the hidden letters KRUSH in honor? @DJN3FF

8b. (Mariachi player)

@G52CUBE (G52)

12511 VENICE (ABOVE)

9. (Skateboarder and critters)

@MADSTEEZ (MARK PAUL DEREN), @KATCH1, @RICHUNO

12503 VENICE

The murals are on the side of the Stohl Building, built in 1926 as the Mar Vista State Branch, the first bank in Mar Vista.

10. 3796 Colonial Ave

Flamingos (2025)

NICOLE SHERMAN

I wanted to bring some east coast over to the west coast using all acrylic paint. @nicolethesherm www.nicoleshermanart.com

Shiny Day (2025) LUCRETIA TORVA

I like to spread good cheer with my murals using colorful, shiny, eye-catching objects. @torvasm

Kaleidoscope Kelp (2025)

EVAN MEYER

This piece highlights the critical role that kelp forests play in marine ecosystems, as a joint initiative between Beautify Earth and Blue Robotics, to reconnect people to nature and community. beautifyearth.com / evanmeyer.io

11. (unknown) (2025) KENNY SCHARF

12421 VENICE

The grandchildren of the original owners of this 1964 self-serve car wash commissioned Scharf to do two new murals for their fall reopening.

12. The United Workers (2021)

JULES MUCK

12257 VENICE

"I was very sad to paint [this], as the owner made me paint over the memorial of [musicians] Lemmy, Bowie and Lou Reed, all of which were painted on or the day after each died." @muckrock

12a. Little Reminders (2019)

ERIKA LANE

3790 OCEAN VIEW AVE (UTILITY BOX)

A collaboration with Mitchelito Orquiola who now lives in the Philippines. Touched up after tagging in 2024. poetrylane.art @mitchelitoorquiola

13. (Mar Vista Bowl retrospective)

JONAS NEVER

12125 VENICE

The Grand View facing exterior mural features a colorful visual history of the Mar Vista Bowl. @NEVER1959

14. Freedom (2015) CRISTALLINA

FISCHETTI

3781 MOUNTAIN VIEW (UTILITY BOX)

A colorful, vibrant piece meant to heal, uplift, and inspire from this LA and Lon-

don-based artist. @abstract_medicine

15. Mar Vista Branch Library (2019)

12006 VENICE (UTILITY BOX)

FRONT AND SIDE PANELS: A Bad Case of

Stripes by Çiğdem Akbay

An homage to the children's book by David Shannon and the lima bean agricultural history of Mar Vista.

SIDE PANEL: Welcome to Mar Vista

BACK PANEL: Lima Wood

Artist Kimberly Karukoh @koko_and_co_ Gifted by SPARC. Art curated by @chigmaproductions, approved by CD-11 Mike Bonin, funded by DCA.

16. Blue Woman in Thought (2016)

MARCEL "SEL" BLANCO

12034 VENICE BLVD

A woman gazing outward as birds take flight, symbolizing imagination and freedom. Growing up in West Los Angeles, Sel created this piece as a way to give back to the neighborhood that shaped and continues to inspire him. @sel_dog
HIDDEN TREASURE! Between 12114-12120 Venice is a mural by Love Annie (Annie Preece) created for Mission Harbor Behavioral Health.

17. Whales' Song (2021)* JEN LAVITA

12102 VENICE

Gliding effortlessly through a dreamy oceanscape, this mural depicts whales singing a song of their beauty. @JenLevitaArt

18. Love, Mar Vista (2019) DJ NEFF

12120 VENICE

The concept is that of a classic postcard which showcases the different themes of community within Mar Vista. The letters represent: M = music, A = arts, R = biking, V = coffee, I = yoga, S = landscape (canals), T = farmers' market, A = bowling. @djn3ff assisted by @mitchelitoorquiola

18a. Life & Death (2023)

ART: MITCHELITO ORQUIOLA & JEN LAVITA;

WORDS: ERIKA LANE

VENICE AND GRAND VIEW (UTILITY BOX)

An evolving portrait gallery of influential people we lost and commemorate. The poem was written in 2023, the art has been changing since the originals were created in 2017; the most recent completed in 2024. @JenLevitaArt

18b. Curiosity WORDS: JOHNNY CHO

VENICE AND GRAND VIEW (UNDER BIKE LANE STREET SIGN)

An LADOT haiku.

19. Peace For All (2016) DESIGN:

CHALAVIE - ART: MITCHELITO ORQUIOLA, JEN LAVITA, CHALAVIE, BETHANY RICHARDS

12207 PACIFIC

This mural was done for the community to promote a sense of unity, love and peace that we all share just by being a part of the same fabric of Mar Vista. A poem by Erika Lane is woven into the design. @JenLevitaArt

19a. A Vital Call for Healing

(2016) POEM: ERIKA LANE

"I wanted the words to go with the theme of cycles, cleaning, etc. because it is shared with the dry cleaner wall." poetrylane.art

20. Alley Art

3815 - 3809 GRAND VIEW

A collaboration between multiple artists: @love.pinkriches, @being.bethanymae, @wikidcanvas, and Mitchelito Orquiola

What it is to be (2019) WORDS:

ERIKA LANE

"This place holds a special place in my heart because it is just me & my poetry, and much longer than all of my other words around the city. It is more in depth, and requires you to take a second to stop and read it."

Miles Davis (2019) Art: Nikki

Portman; Words: Erika Lane

"The first mural I did for Mar

Vista so it holds a special place in my heart along with Miles himself." @portman_studios

21. (Mar Vista history)

JONAS NEVER

12200 VENICE

@NEVER1959

22. Beach day with the dragon (2016) RAS

12210 VENICE (RECYCLING BIN)

This was made digitally to represent a pleasant beach day, but as you can see the boy gets distracted by seeing a dragon reading on the beach. @beckabunss

23. (Woman's portrait) CHRISTINA

ANGELINA + DJ NEFF

12218 VENICE

@starfigtera (Christina Angelina) + DJ Neff

24. Mr. BBaby (2021) MR B BABY

12404 VENICE

"Happiness is created." @mrbbaby

25. The Music Box MITCHELITO

ORQUIOLA, JEN LAVITA, NIKKI PORTMAN

SE CORNER OF VENICE AND WADE (UTILITY BOX)

Featuring local musicians that we know and love. Citizen Cope has been in the neighborhood for years and is amazing. His real name is Clarence Greenwood. @portman_studios / @jenlavitaart

Sacred Flower & Law (2021)*

MERAKAI ART COLLECTIVE

MULTIPLE LOCATIONS - CAN YOU FIND THEM ALL?

Five medallions were installed on five streetlights along Venice during the pandemic. Based in Los Angeles, artist Erick Reyes' career began circa 2015 showcasing digital art pieces influenced by sacred geometry. He later developed his own style of subconscious abstract art painting. @merakiartcollective

