

Travel Talk

By Joel Goldman



LOS ANGELES - (Part II)

In my last column, I wrote of Los Angeles—its past and its present, and how Jewish life in the City of Angeles moved from Boyle Heights in the pre-1950s to Fairfax Avenue.

Fairfax Avenue in 1995 continues to offer many facets of Jewish living. However, L.A., as heavily populated and sprawling in size as it is, offers numerous other examples of Jewish culture.

There are approximately 650,000 Jews in Los Angeles. Further south, in Grange County, live another 85,000. One hundred and fifty congregations exist in L.A. There are three newspapers covering the Jewish community and two Hebrew language papers.

The Los Angeles Charlotte Jewish Federation occupies part of a thirteen story building on Wilshire Boulevard, and friends tell me it is fondly called "The Jewish Pentagon."

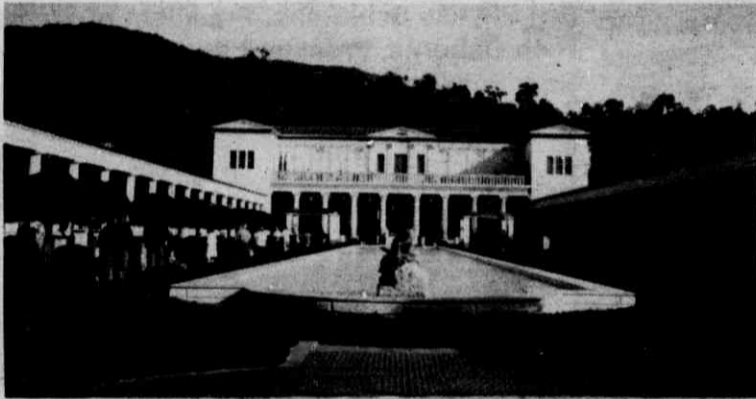
Of course, one need not be a resident of Los Angeles to appreciate its contribution to American Jewish culture. As a tourist, be sure to visit the Wilshire Boulevard Temple on Wilshire several miles east of Fairfax Avenue. For many years, the well known Edgar Magnin was the rabbi of this first Jewish congregation in the city.

The temple itself is a classic example of neo-Gothic architecture found in many European synagogues. In particular, note its large black Byzantine columns and detailed exhibit pertaining to the history of Los Angeles Jewry.

A second temple worth visiting is the Sephardic Temple, Tifereth Israel, on Wilshire Boulevard, one block west of Beverly Glen. It features an outdoor Span-

ish garden that compliments the temple's Sephardic architectural theme. Nestled among the condominium high rises of Wilshire Boulevard, the temple is a pleasant visual respite.

Museums featuring Judaica abound in L.A. The Hebrew Union College, next to the campus of the University of Southern California, offers the famous Skirball Museum. (During my last visit to Los Angeles the museum was scheduled to move to Sepulveda Pass above the San Diego Freeway between Westwood and the San Fernando Valley. Call 213-749-3424 to be sure the move has been completed.)



The J. Paul Getty Museum in Malibu

The Skirball highlights archeological exhibits and textiles important to Jewish life.

The University of Judaism, already at the Sepulveda Pass, presents sculptures by Aldo Casanova and Jenny Holzer as well as paintings by Fritz Hirshberger. Call 213-879-4144 for full details. And, while in that area, be sure to visit the Stephen Wise Temple. It is a study in contemporary religious architecture, resembling a modern college campus.

When visiting L.A. one would be remiss not to visit the Museum of Tolerance on W. Pico Blvd. Using films, photographs and artifacts, the museum depicts the history of the Holocaust. Three hour tours depart every fifteen minutes. Call 310-553-8403 to confirm precise

time. And what would a trip to Los Angeles be without the fun of seeing the sites surrounding the nation's second largest city.

To the south lies Orange County and a 26-mile drive down the Santa Ana Freeway takes you to Disneyland, Knotts Berry Farm and the uniquely different Crystal Cathedral. Continue south and you can enjoy the beautiful coastal towns of Newport and Laguna where marinas and art stores respectively abound.

North of L.A., in Pasadena, beckons the excellent Huntington Library featuring the Blue Boy painting as well as the Huntington Gardens. The Rose Bowl stands only a short drive away.

Another must-see delight is the Norton Simon Museum, where some of the world's finest art work resides.

To the west of Pasadena is Universal Studio and its famous studio tours in Burbank. In Malibu, along the Pacific Coast Highway, is the J. Paul Getty Museum. (It is best to call 310-458-2003 before visiting, inasmuch as "The Getty" had hoped for a target date of early 1996 for its move to Sepulveda Pass near the University of Judaism.)

And, while in Malibu, treat yourself to an 80 mile drive north on the Pacific Coast Highway to the towns of Ventura and Santa Barbara.

L.A....how far it has come from its Spanish adobe beginnings. It's a full grown metropolis now, perhaps a bit worn and tired from the trip, but nevertheless actively beckoning to be seen and enjoyed for the unique city that it is.



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