



## HISTORY OF GRAND AVENUE



In the 1870s and 1880s, Grand Avenue was known as Charity Street, a main thoroughfare for the affluent neighborhood of Bunker Hill in downtown Los Angeles. Huge Victorian homes perched above the thriving retail area allowed local industrialists and politicians to look down across their growing city.

With the expansion of the Pacific Electric Railway in 1902, many wealthy citizens began to move to the suburbs, leaving their old Queen Anne homes for newer, grander mansions. Over the next several decades, the once exclusive neighborhood of Bunker Hill fell into decay, prompting writer Raymond Chandler to dismiss it as “the rot in the heart of the metropolis.” The federal government launched an urban renewal campaign that cleared the slums for private development shortly after World War II.

In the 1960s, Bunker Hill was completely bulldozed and plans emerged to reinvent the avenue into the epicenter of Los Angeles. Interestingly enough, except for the opening of the Music Center complex in 1967, for the next several decades there was nothing much to see besides desolate streets and open plots of land. Much of the subsequent commercial development occurred in the 1980s, giving Los Angeles its current spectacular skyline.

Today, with over five million visitors annually attending Tony award-winning performances, viewing Venice Biennale-winning art, and making the pilgrimage to the newest cathedral in the United States, there is no question that Grand Avenue has become a must-see cultural destination, and a street where the city's history meets the future.

Photos by Mike Rosenthal and Edmund Barr



## EXPLORE THE ARCHITECTURE

OF GRAND AVENUE

a downtown Los Angeles walking tour

101 FREEWAY

**P** = PARKING

THE CATHEDRAL OF OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS



The Center at Cathedral Plaza  
555 W. Temple St.

INFO  
Cathedral 213/680-5200  
Center 213/680-5273  
olacathedral.org

**THE GALERO GRILL \$**

THE CATHEDRAL OF OUR LADY OF THE ANGELS



Photo by Jules Shulman and David Glomb

In 1996, the celebrated, Pritzker Prize–winning architect Rafael Moneo was commissioned to design The Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels as a new and vibrant expression of the 21st-century Catholic peoples of Los Angeles.

The 6.5-acre site that overlooked the Hollywood Freeway did not deter Moneo. As many European cathedrals are built near rivers, Moneo considered the freeway as Los Angeles’s river of transportation, the connection of people to one another.

Inspired by these themes of light and journey, the architect flooded the cathedral with natural light filtered through Spanish alabaster windows. The cathedral is built with architectural concrete in a color reminiscent of the sun-baked adobe walls of the California missions.

The dynamic, contemporary cathedral has virtually no right angles. Individuals enter on the south side of the cathedral through a monumental set of bronze doors cast by sculptor Robert Graham. A 50-foot concrete cross "lantern" adorns the front of the cathedral. At night, its glass-protected alabaster windows are illuminated and can be seen at a far distance. In 2002, the 11-story complex was completed and became the first Roman Catholic cathedral to be erected in the western United States in 30 years.

Free guided tours of the cathedral for individuals or small groups (10 people or less) are available during weekdays. No reservations are required. For groups of 10 or more, please call the Group Tour Department at 213/680-5215.

MUSIC CENTER



Photo by Federico Zignari

Designed and built by Welton Becket and Associates in 1967, the original Music Center is composed of the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion, the Mark Taper Forum, and Ahmanson Theatre, and is home to the Los Angeles Opera, Center Theatre Group, and Music Center Dance. The host of the Academy Awards for many years, the Dorothy Chandler Pavilion is a modern interpretation of the ancient classical pavilion. In an effort not to show its back to any part of the city, it is completely encircled by 92-foot-high fluted concrete columns. For balance, the two smaller theaters are enclosed inside their own 47-foot high colonnade.

The newest addition, Walt Disney Concert Hall, was designed by Pritzker Prize–winning architect Frank Gehry and opened in October 2003. Walt Disney Concert Hall, home to the Los Angeles Philharmonic, Los Angeles Master Chorale, and the Roy and Edna Disney/CalArts Theater known as REDCAT, was nearly 16 years in the making.

The concert hall began in 1987 when Walt Disney’s widow, Lillian Disney, made an initial gift of \$50 million to create the venue as a tribute to her late husband and his love of music. Frank Gehry’s fluid, multifoliate design actually predates his famous Guggenheim Museum Bilbao: seven steel-clad sections fold in on each other like the petals of a flower to create the spectacular exterior. The acoustical marvel and stunning new Los Angeles landmark also consists of outdoor gardens, an atrium, and two amphitheatres.

Tickets for self-guided audio tours of Walt Disney Concert Hall may be purchased at the concert hall lobby box office. Music Center tours are offered TUES–SAT; visit Plaza information kiosk for schedule. For additional tour information, call 213/972-4399.

THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART



Photo by Squids & Nuns

Designed by renowned Japanese architect Arata Isozaki, MOCA at California Plaza uses uncommon forms—pyramids, cubes, and cylinders—and combines them with unusual materials to produce a distinctive building with nods to famous Los Angeles landmarks and history. From the street, the building’s north and south wings come together with a copper-sheathed barrel vault to form a gateway to the museum. This massive vault encases an arched window of delicately veined onyx and houses the MOCA boardroom and library. Pyramidal skylights of red Indian sandstone on red granite punctuate the roofline and allow natural light to illuminate galleries that feature artwork from 1940 to the present.

Situated below the barrel vault is the ticket booth, reminiscent of those found in historic Los Angeles theaters. Paneled in green aluminum and outlined in a bright pink diamond pattern, it echoes the color scheme of the well-known Beverly Hills Hotel. A sweeping staircase, suggestive of Marilyn Monroe’s famous white dress from the movie *The Seven Year Itch*, leads from street level to the sunken entry court. The galleries are located on this level.

Since opening in December 1986, this landmark building has received accolades from critics and the general public. In 1991 it was named one of the 10 best works of American architecture completed since 1980 in a national survey conducted by The American Institute of Architects.

Take a guided tour of current exhibitions at noon, 1pm, or 2pm, THURS–MON. Free with museum admission. 213/626-6222

TEMPLE STREET

**P**

MUSIC CENTER



Ahmanson Theatre  
Mark Taper Forum  
Dorothy Chandler Pavilion  
Walt Disney Concert Hall  
135 N. Grand & 111 S. Grand Ave.

INFO 213/972-7211  
musiccenter.org

**KENDALL'S BRASSERIE \$\$**  
**PINOT GRILL \$\$**  
**SPOTLIGHT CAFÉ \$**

**P**

**P**

**P**

1ST STREET



**P**

**P**

2ND STREET

**PATINA \$\$\$**  
**CONCERT HALL CAFÉ \$**

**P**

KOSCIUSZKO WAY

**P**

THE MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART



MOCA at California Plaza  
250 S. Grand Ave.

INFO 213/626-6222  
moca.org

**PATINETTE \$**