

CENTRAL LIBRARY

Self-Guided Tour



This self-guided tour of the Central Library begins in the Main Lobby of the first floor of the historic Goodhue building. Please take a few moments to enjoy some of the highlights of the Central Library.

The Central Library welcomes over 2 million people each year and is the largest public research library west of the Mississippi. The collection includes over 2.5 million items in many formats to meet the entertainment, homework and research needs of our community.

The Central Library is the headquarters of the Los Angeles Public Library, which includes 71 branches, a collection of 6 million items, and a wide array of online services at www.lapl.org

Stop 1 -- Main Lobby

Look up. Artist Renee Petropoulos created the vividly painted ceiling featuring names of Los Angeles novelists intertwined in the ceiling. Petropoulos' use of bright colors greatly differs from the soft pastel colors of the historic Rotunda.

Also, to contrast the historic building's symmetry, the artist painted her design off center which creates a sense of movement.



The **Computer Island**, located in the center of the lobby, connects you to the Library's catalog and databases to help you find the information and books you need. Additional computers can be found throughout the Library.

The **Information** and **Circulation Desks** are where you can get a free library card. Check out library materials for free. Sign up for a computer class. Pick up a copy of the "Library Events" Calendar.

The **Arnold and Blanche Winnick Popular Library** features



the latest popular material in all formats: hardbacks and paperbacks in various genres, mystery, romance, science fiction, magazines, videos, CDs, DVDs, audio books and bestsellers.

The **Library Store** offers unique items and gift ideas. Be sure to stop in. The store is operated by the Library Foundation of Los Angeles, with proceeds benefiting the Library.

Take the bronze elevators near the Library Store up to the Second Floor.

Stop 2: The Lodwick M. Cook Rotunda

This is the focal point of the historic Central Library building designed by Bertram Goodhue.

Look up. Can you guess how high the dome is? (64 feet)

The chandelier is made of cast bronze and weighs one ton.

- Represents the solar system with the globe surrounded by planets and a crescent moon in the chains.
- Features zodiac signs that ring the globe.
- Has 48 lights around the rim, representing the 48 United States in 1926 when the building opened.



The murals, painted by magazine illustrator Dean Cornwell depict four great eras of California history: discovery, mission building, Americanization and the founding of Los Angeles. The murals took five years to complete and were hung in

1933, after the Library opened. The decorative ceilings and designs around the murals were painted directly on concrete by Southern California artist Julian Garnsey.

Walk down the short corridor to the sculpture of the Golden Hand.

In the niche is a terra cotta sculpture of a hand entwined by the Serpent of Knowledge and holding the Torch of Learning. This symbolizes "the Light of Learning," which is the theme of the Central Library building. This is the original sculpture that adorned the top of the Central Library tower. During the building restoration, it was found to be too fragile to remain outside; an exact copy now sits atop the building.



Walk back to the Rotunda and enter

Stop 3: The Children's Literature Department

The Children's Literature Department is home to 250,000 books including special collections of children's poetry, fairy tales and international picture books. Children have their own computer center which features Kids' Path, the Library's special website for kids. In the picture book room you will find the 63-seat KLOS Story Theater which is used for puppet shows and other children's performances.



The walls are adorned with murals of California history by artist Albert Herter (this was originally the History Department).

Notice the carpet. The animals were inspired by wallpaper in the former Children's Department and if you look closely, you'll see that the background squiggles are actually the exact outline of figures from the Cornwell mural in the Rotunda.

Walk back to the Rotunda and enter

Stop 4: Teen'scape

Teen'scape gives teens a place of their own to work on computers, relax, study and read. Created in 1994, Teen'scape is the largest and most technologically advanced facility of its kind in the country.

Teen'scape features:

- a large collection of young adult books, comic books, magazines, study aides, college and career guides, videos DVDs, and CDs
- computer stations for Internet and word processing
- jumbo screen TV and lounge area
- free teen programs including art workshops, career counseling and musical performances



Walk through the Teen'scape exit behind the computers to

Stop 5: Stairway outside the Getty Gallery

In front of you there are three sculptures by artist Lee Lawrie:

The two sphinxes symbolize the hidden mysteries of knowledge. They guard the Statue of Civilization, a marble figure that symbolizes all that the Library represents. In her right hand is a book with quotations in five languages that read: "In the beginning was the word." (Greek) * "Knowledge extends horizons." (Latin) * "Nobility carries obligations." (French) * "Wisdom is in the truth." (German) * "Beauty is truth - truth beauty." (English)



Her left hand holds a torch resting on a turtle, representing civilization's dominion over land and sea.

On her crown is a miniature model of the Library, two angels for the City of Los Angeles, and the bear and star for the State of California.

In the panel of her skirt are symbols of ancient and modern civilizations. From the bottom up you see: Blank for the unknown ages of man * Pyramids of Egypt * Ship for Phoenicia *

Winged Bull for Babylonia * Tablets for Judea * Dragon for China * Siva for India * Lion Gate of the Palace of Ninos & Parthenon for Minoan and Grecian civilizations * Wolf with Romulus & Remus for Rome * Notre Dame for Medieval Christian Europe * Buffalo, Covered Wagon and Liberty Bell for the United States

To the left of the stairway is the **Annenberg Gallery**, which features materials from the library's extensive special collections and the **Getty Gallery**.

Enjoy our current exhibit and return to the Rotunda. Now walk down the corridor on your left and stop at the Atrium balcony.

Stop 6. Tom Bradley Wing

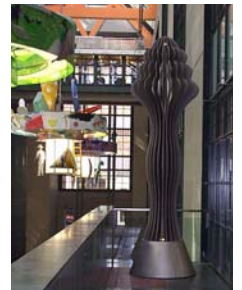


In 1986, two arson fires ravaged the library, destroying 400,000 books and damaging 800,000, of which 95 percent were saved. The Rotunda is named in honor of Lodwick M. Cook, who spearheaded the "Save the Books" campaign that helped raise more than \$10 million to replace library materials lost and damaged in the fires.

After the fires in 1986, the Central Library underwent a \$216 million improvement that included the renovation of the historic building and the addition of the Tom Bradley Wing (named in honor of L.A.'s former mayor). The project doubled the size of the Central Library to 540,000 square feet.

The three chandeliers, created by Therman Statom, are made of aluminum and fiberglass and weigh 2,000 pounds each. Each chandelier represents one of three themes: the natural world, the man-made world and the spiritual world.

Each escalator landing features a lantern designed by Anne Preston called "Illumination," which refers to light, understanding and books. Each of the 13-and-a-half-foot-tall functional artworks is in the shape of an upside-down human profile.



The atrium is eight stories high and provides natural light to the reading rooms on each floor. Each floor in the Bradley Wing houses a different Subject Department.



Turn left from the atrium and walk to the elevators.

Artist David Bunn utilized some of the library cards made obsolete by the new automated catalog to provide a 'core sample' of the library and its Subject Departments.

Take an elevator down to the first floor.

Directly ahead as you exit the elevator you will see the entrance to the MarkTaper Auditorium. To your left, looking outside the glass doors you will see the Ries Niemi designed fence and gates which enclose the courtyards along Fifth Street. Multilingual inscriptions are rendered in the ornamental metal of the fence and gates.



Return to the Atrium area and enter Stop 7: International Languages Department



This is a typical Subject Department. Each Department is managed by informed library staff who can help you find what you need.

Walk straight forward from the entry to the Fletcher Jones Language Learning Center. This area contains books, tapes, CDs, DVDs, and

videos to help people learn over 28 languages.

Notice the historic Ivanhoe frieze by Julian E. Garnsey and A.W. Parsons. These life-size figures illustrate Sir Walter Scott's story of "Ivanhoe" and the days of romance and chivalry. Colors, coordinated with ceiling decorations painted on the concrete beams, are suggestive of Old Normandy.



Exit the Department, turn left, walk down the corridor to exit the Library through the Flower Street doors to the Maguire Gardens.

If you have time, visit the exhibit in the First Floor Galleries to your left and right as you near the Main Lobby. Also, notice the **Caroline and Henry E. Singleton Literacy Center** (on your left) which offers materials and resources for adults to improve their literacy skills.

Stop 8: The Maguire Gardens

This is both a garden and large environmental art project by several artists.

The central piece, by artist Jud Fine, is called "Spine." It includes a series of fountains, sculptures, and inscriptions.

As you explore, notice that on either side of the pools are stair risers which record many types of written expression, including the languages of music and high mathematics.



To the right of the Spine pools, as you exit the library, you will see the sculptural pool by Laddie John Dill which utilizes various media to elicit the land formations underneath the Library.



The grotto fountain, designed by landscape architect Lawrence Halprin, pays tribute to the principle of civil liberties and each individual's inalienable right to knowledge. Its theme is rooted in the principals of democracy, drawing upon the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution and the words of Frederick Douglass.

**This concludes the Central Library Self-Guided Tour.
Thank you for visiting and come again soon.
Enjoy your library!**