



THE WEST



Malibu

Locals call it “the Bu”—a laid-back, celebrity-filled strip of a city that sparkles in the collective consciousness as a sun-drenched state of mind. With the busy Pacific Coast Highway running through and no discernible center of town, some of the best of Malibu, which has around 13,000 residents, can disappear in a drive-by. The staggering natural beauty of the sea and mountains is obvious, but pull off the road and stay awhile, and you’ll find more: a world-class art museum, local wines, top-notch restaurants, and chic shops.

— BY LOUISE TUTELIAN

FRIDAY

1 *The Wind, the Waves*... 5 p.m.

What’s so appealing about Malibu’s little slice of coast? Visit **Point Dume State Preserve** (Birdview Avenue and Cliffside Drive; 818-880-0363; parks.ca.gov), and you’ll see. A modest walk to the top of this coastal bluff rewards you with a sweeping view of the entire Santa Monica Bay, the inland Santa Monica Mountains, and, on a clear day, Catalina Island. A boardwalk just below the summit leads to a platform for watching swooping pelicans and crashing waves. To feel the sand between your toes, drive down Birdview Avenue to Westward Beach Road and park at the very end of the lot on your left. You’ll be looking at Westward Beach, a gem that most visitors miss. Strike a yoga pose. Sigh at will.

2 *Chasing the Sunset* 7 p.m.

Little known fact: Most of Malibu faces south, not west. That means sitting down at just any seaside restaurant at dusk won’t guarantee seeing a sunset over the water. But the aptly named **Sunset Restaurant** (6800 Westward Beach Road; 310-589-1007; the-sunset-restaurant.com) is a sure bet, with just the right orientation. Claim a white leather banquette, order a carafe of wine and a tasting plate of cheeses, and settle in for the light show.

3 *Shore Dinner* 9 p.m.

If you’re going to spot a celebrity, chances are it will be at **Nobu Malibu** (3835 Cross Creek Road, in the Malibu Country Mart; 310-317-9140; nobumatsuhisa.com; \$\$\$), one of the famed chef Nobu Matsuhisa’s many restaurants. The sushi is

sublime, and the entrees measure up. Reservations are essential. The front room is convivial but noisy; the subtly lighted back room is quieter.

SATURDAY

4 *Walk the Pier* 9 a.m.

The 780-foot long **Malibu Pier** (23000 Pacific Coast Highway; 888-310-7437; malibupiersportfishing.com) is the most recognizable (and, arguably, only) landmark in town. Take a morning stroll out to the end, chat with the fishermen, and watch surfers paddle out. You’ll be walking on a piece of Malibu history. The pier was originally built in 1905 as a loading dock for construction material, and it was a lookout during World War II. It crops up in numerous movies and TV shows.

5 *Ancient Art* 10 a.m.

The **Getty Villa** (17985 Pacific Coast Highway; 310-440-7300; getty.edu) is just over the city’s southern border in Pacific Palisades, but no matter: it shouldn’t be missed. The museum, built by J. Paul Getty in the 1970s to resemble a first-century Roman country house, contains Greek, Roman, and Etruscan vessels, gems and statuary, some dating back to 6500 B.C. On the second floor is a rare life-size Greek

OPPOSITE Beach and pier at Malibu, the little slice of Pacific coast that celebrities like to call their own.

BELOW Kai Sanson, a surfing instructor, initiates students into the ways of the waves.





bronze, *Statue of a Victorious Youth*, a prize of the museum. In the outside peristyle gardens, watch the sun glint off bronze statues at the 220-foot-long reflecting pool. Admission is free, but parking is limited, so car reservations are required.

6 *Magic Carpet Tile* 1 p.m.

Even many longtime Angelenos don't know about the **Adamson House** (23200 Pacific Coast Highway; 310-456-8432; adamsonhouse.org), a 1930 Spanish Colonial Revival residence that's a showplace of exquisite ceramic tile from Malibu Potteries, which closed in 1932. Overlooking Surfrider Beach with a view of Malibu Pier, the house belonged to a member of the Rindge family, last owners of the Malibu Spanish land grant. Take a tour and watch for the Persian "carpet" constructed entirely from intricately patterned pieces of tile. Other highlights: a stunning star-shaped fountain and a bathroom tiled top to bottom in an ocean pattern, with ceramic galleons poised in perpetuity on pointy whitecaps in a sea of blue.

7 *Vino on the Green* 4 p.m.

The drive to **Malibu Wines** (31740 Mulholland Highway; 818-865-0605; malibuwines.com) along the serpentine roads of the Santa Monica Mountains is almost as much fun as tipping a glass once you get there. Set on a serene green lawn, the tasting room is really a covered outdoor stone and wood counter. Sidle up and choose a flight of four styles. Or buy a bottle and lounge at one of the tables. (Tip: Regulars request the horseshoes or bocce ball set at the counter.) And don't miss the collection of vintage pickup trucks spread around the property.

8 *Farm to Table* 7 p.m.

Terra (21337 Pacific Coast Highway; 310-456-1221; terrarestaurantla.com; \$\$\$), in the building that was once the original Malibu jail, is an intimate gathering place serving organic meats and nonfarmed fish, with most produce grown in its own gardens. Choose from the menu of the season; past diners have been

delighted to find dishes like oven-roasted organic baby beets or pounded filet mignon with Terra Farms arugula. In warm weather, French doors open to a spacious patio decorated with thousands of fragments of broken Malibu Potteries tile, the better to ward off evil spirits.

SUNDAY

9 *Ride the Surf* 10 a.m.

Surf shops offering lessons and board rentals line the Pacific Coast Highway (P.C.H. in local lingo), but Kai Sanson of **Zuma Surf and Swim Training** (949-742-1086; zsstraining.com) takes his fun seriously. Sanson, a Malibu native, will size you up with a glance and gear the instruction to your skills. Lessons for two are \$90 a person. His tales of growing up in Malibu are free. Locals also give high marks to **Malibu Makos Surf Club** (310-317-1229; malibumakos.com).

10 *Brunch in Style (or Not)* Noon

Put on your oversize sunglasses if you're going to **Geoffrey's Malibu** (27400 Pacific Coast Highway; 310-457-1519; geoffreysmalibu.com; \$\$\$). Geoffrey's (pronounced Joffreys) is the hot meeting spot for the

ABOVE A beach view from the bluff at Point Dume. Sweeping vistas here take in Santa Monica Bay, the Santa Monica Mountains, and, on a clear day, Catalina Island.

BELOW Tasting the reds at Malibu Wines.



well-heeled with a hankering for a shiitake mushroom omelet or lobster Cobb salad. Its Richard Neutra-designed building overlooks the Pacific, and every table has an ocean view. If you just want to kick back with *The Malibu Times*, head to **Coogie's Beach Café** (23750 Pacific Coast Highway in the Malibu Colony Plaza; 310-317-1444; coogies.malibu.menuclub.com; \$\$) and carbo-load with Coogie's French Toast: bagels dipped in egg whites with cinnamon sugar and served with peanut butter and bananas.

11 *Shop Like a Star* 2 p.m.

Whether it's diamonds or designer jeans you're after, the open-air **Malibu Country Mart** (3835 Cross Creek Road; malibucountrymart.com) is the place



to cruise for them. Its more than 50 retail stores and restaurants include Ralph Lauren, Juicy Couture, and Malibu Rock Star jewelry. In an adjacent space is luxe **Malibu Lumber Yard** shopping complex (themalibulumberyard.com), with stores like Alice + Olivia and Tory Burch.

ABOVE The Getty Villa museum, built by J. Paul Getty to resemble a first-century Roman country house.



THE BASICS

Malibu is 25 miles or a 45-minute drive (with minimal traffic) from Los Angeles International Airport. A car is essential.

Malibu Beach Inn
22878 Pacific Coast Highway
310-456-6444

malibubeachinn.com
\$\$\$

A blend of chic and Zen tranquility with waves breaking below.

Casa Malibu Inn on the Beach
22752 Pacific Coast Highway
310-456-2219
\$\$
A hideout for celebrities from Lana

Turner to *Jamie Lee Curtis*.

Villa Graziadio Executive Center
Drescher Graduate Campus of Pepperdine University
24255 Pacific Coast Highway
310-506-1100
villagraziadio.com
\$\$\$
Views of the ocean and mountains.