

Amazing small space makeovers **P. 50**

Sunset

LIVING IN THE WEST

Feel good dinners

Healthy and delicious soups, pastas, and risotto

Life-Changing Trips for 2012

Tuscan kale, white bean, and ciabatta soup

JANUARY 2012

HOMEMADE GOURMET

Roast your own coffee, make your own sodas

Southern California weekend

Inside Explore an artsy neighborhood on two wheels » Beer and brats in L.A. » A splashy new ode to the pool in Palm Springs »



1. Your ticket to ride

Long Beach is quickly becoming one of the most bike-friendly cities in the States. Get in on the action at **Bike Station**. Just a stone's throw from the East Village (and a block from the Metro Blue Line stop Transit Mall), the new building wrapped in golden aluminum posts is hard to miss. With rentals, a shop, and bike parking, this is the perfect starting point for emissions-free exploration. Rentals from \$8/hour, \$30/day; 223 E. First St.; bikestation.com

Long Beach day trip East Village

Why go now: Inspiration for the new year. As you cruise past galleries, theater companies, cafes, and scores of new indie shops, you might just decide to quit your day job and join the bohemians. **The crowd:** Artists, entrepreneurs, freethinkers, DIYers. **The look:** As eclectic as the people. Art deco buildings stand alongside live/work lofts and warehouse spaces within 50 square blocks on downtown's east side (eastvillage-longbeach.com for info and map).

Main hub: Linden Avenue at E. Broadway. **How to experience it:** On foot or, even better, by bike. SoCal's first separated bike lanes run down Broadway and Third Street, on weekly Bike Saturdays (bike-longbeach.org), two-wheeled travelers get discounts at participating shops and eateries. **Unwind:** At District Wine (31; 144 Linden; 562/432-0411), with its living room atmosphere and small-production wines. **The main event:** 2nd Saturday Art Walk (Jan 14; free; artwalklb.com), with open doors and live music. »»

BY JENNIFER M. VOLLAND | PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVE LAURIDSEN



2. Take a seat with the regulars

At **Berlin** coffeehouse, not only does the long communal table encourage chatting with your neighbor—a gallery owner or tattoo artist, perhaps—it also gives you a front-row view of the neighborhood. The high-ceilinged space is shared with Fingerprints Records, a Long Beach institution for collectible vinyl and in-store performances. 1, 400 E. Fourth St.; 562/435-0600.



5. Don't let a good thing go to waste

Long Beach Depot for Creative Reuse sees value in things thrown away, like bottle caps, fabric scraps, and buttons. The latest project by these self-proclaimed "craftivists": yarn bombs—knit scraps used to benignly tag things like parking meters. Closed Sat. 320 Elm Ave.; 562/437-9339.

3. Alfresco eats

Nab a sidewalk table under the bright yellow awning at **Crème De La Crêpe** (St. 400 E. First St.; 562/437-2222) for a savory buckwheat specialty like the cheese-filled Marocaine with spicy lamb sausage and cognac mushroom sauce. Or hit the patio at **Steamed** (St. 801 E. Third St.; 562/437-1122), whose vegetarian menu has a tasty pesto quesadilla and a wilted spinach salad.



4. Recapture the lost art of baking

As a child, **Justina Fenton** (above) watched her mother and grandmother make desserts from scratch. Today, she keeps the tradition alive by sourcing the finest organic ingredients for new artisanal bakery-creamery **Shortnin Bread**. Step into the Americana-inspired shop for treats like rosemary lime shortbread cookies, chocolate salted caramel tarts, and bourbon vanilla bean ice cream by the pint. 401 E. Third St.; 562/257-0081.



Getting to the East Village

Long Beach is about 30 miles south of downtown L.A. Take the Metro Blue Line from downtown L.A. to Long Beach's First St. station. From there, it's a 5-minute walk (or 2-minute bike ride). metro.net

Retail renegades

Three more shops you won't find anywhere else

GUILT-FREE BLOOMS

We know where our food comes from, but what about our flowers? **Primal Flower** stocks only responsibly farmed plants, grown locally and free of pesticides. And instead of arranging bouquets in new, imported containers, owner **Shelley Anders** encourages a "vase exchange," whereby her customers donate or trade all those unwanted vessels. 407 E. Third St.; 562/435-6205.

COOL STUFF FOR YOUR PAD

Tiny Hallway Spectacle is like a curiosity cabinet of days gone by. Check out quirky vintage finds like a 1920s limited-edition Jim Beam decanter, a 1930s prester-tone owl ice bucket, and a Royal portable typewriter from the '30s. Your grandmother's stuff never looked so good. 405 E. Third; 562/252-1225.

WHERE ARTISTS SHOP

Lyon Art Supply has been catering to artists since 1990. In addition to fine-art and drafting materials, this family-owned store carries a large collection of specialty papers. There's no better place to brush up on your origami. 441 E. Fourth St.; 562/435-1385.



MORE TO DO—NEAR YOU. For additional weekend trip ideas in your area, visit sunset.com/california