

**T**his year's Golf Industry Show in Southern California comes with just one rule: If you're driving, only attempt to navigate the region between 10 and 2. That's 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. or 10 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Don't bother to stray farther than walking distance the rest of the time.

You'll thank me later.

As a lifelong resident, I've witnessed the traffic move from major inconvenience to a state of pure absurdity. Even with major road construction usually timed for nonrush hours, we still have plenty of two-mile trips that take 40 minutes. So on behalf of my neighbors, I apologize in advance should you get stuck in traffic while daring to take in some of the unique sights and sounds of Southern California.

But to get some flavor of the region, I suggest you stray from the Disney theme parks. Our region, contrary to popular belief, is rich in culture, scenery and, most importantly, great Mexican food.

With that in mind, I break up my recommendations by region and priority (well, my priorities).

First, some Orange County suggestions for those of you staying near the the Golf Industry Show's Anaheim base.

**Culture:** While not this area's strong suit, I'd recommend a visit to the Irvine Museum ([www.irvinemuseum.org](http://www.irvinemuseum.org)) to take in some classic California plein-air paintings. This great little collection, located in the ground floor of a swank office building, will take you back in time and show off California landscapes from around the turn of the 20th century. You'll wonder why painters like Guy Rose aren't held in the same regard as that Monet dude. Oh, and it's free.

**Coast:** Check out Balboa Island ([www.balboaisland.com](http://www.balboaisland.com)) for sure. This region of pricey homes and even pricier yachts still features a quaint, old California feel with family-run businesses serving up chocolate-covered bananas and an old-time amusement park ([www.thebalboafunzone.com](http://www.thebalboafunzone.com)). A great place to take the family.

**Mexican food:** You'll have to head east but not too far from the Anaheim Convention Center

## To Live And Sightsee in L.A.

BY GEOFF SHACKELFORD



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if you want some fresh, flavorful food. Placentia's El Farolito (201 S. Bradford Ave, 92870) has been around for ages and features big portions, low prices and a rarity in Southern California — easy parking.

Now, if you should dare to venture up to the Los Angeles area, here are a few tips along the same lines.

**Culture:** If you want to see the city in a fresh way but still feel obligated to do the tourist thing, The Getty Center is your place ([www.getty.org](http://www.getty.org)). The family will love the tram ride, views, inspiring architecture and affordable cafe. The art is pretty good, too. For an alternative, the recently reopened Griffith Park Observatory ([www.griffithobs.org](http://www.griffithobs.org)) is a stone's throw from the Hollywood sign and is wildly popular for the same reasons as the Getty.

**Coast:** If you've brought the family, the Santa Monica Pier ([www.santamonicipier.org](http://www.santamonicipier.org)) features an amusement park and great fun at all hours of the day. If you want something a little quirkier and more entertaining, Venice Beach ([www.venicebeach.com](http://www.venicebeach.com)) is just south of the pier and looks a lot like the Atlantic City boardwalk, with 10 times the madness (but all of the same T-shirt and luggage shops).

**Mexican food:** Located in multiple locations, La Serenata ([www.laserenataonline.com](http://www.laserenataonline.com)) features dishes and tortillas you haven't had anywhere else. (But other than the cow tongue, it's all straightforward stuff with an emphasis on seafood.) El Cholo ([www.elcholo.com](http://www.elcholo.com)) is also in three locations (Santa Monica, Pasadena and La Habra) and features classic, family-style cuisine at great prices. Just watch the potent margaritas.

And remember: 10 to 2! You heard it here first.

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