

# MY

# LOS

# ANGELES

SOME OF THE CITY'S MOST CREATIVE, INNOVATIVE RESIDENTS SHARE WHERE THEY GO FOR INSPIRATION, LIVE MUSIC, CUTTING-EDGE ARCHITECTURE AND REALLY GREAT TACOS.

BY SARAH ELBERT, DAVID HOCHMAN, SHANA TING LIPTON & ERIC HISS

PHOTOGRAPH BY PETER BOHLER

## CALIFORNIA STYLE

ACTOR/DESIGNER JOY BRYANT

To legions of *Parenthood* fans, Joy Bryant will always be Jasmine: the sweet but no-nonsense wife of Crosby (Dax Shepard) on the NBC show that ran for six seasons until its tear-soaked finale last year. Bryant, who started her career as a model, has other acting credits on her resumé—*Bobby*, *About Last Night*, *Spider-Man 2*—and an Amazon pilot just picked up for 2016: *Good Girls Revolt*, about a gender discrimination lawsuit brought by the female staff of *News of the Week* in the late 1960s (Bryant plays Eleanor Holmes Norton). But another current passion is Basic Terrain, a line of activewear she started with her stuntman husband, Dave Pope, who, it turned out, can also sew. Since then, from their home in Glendale, California, the two have designed a line of cool, comfortable clothes you can find (among other places) →

Joy Bryant at Griffith Park, overlooking Downtown L.A.





**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:** Dishes at Skaf's Lebanese restaurant; The Spare Room at The Hollywood Roosevelt hotel; Hiking in the Burbank Hills; YouTube music night.

## FEEDING THE HUNGRY

L.A. Kitchen Founder Robert Egger

Robert Egger is turning the soup kitchen on its ear. At his 20,000-square-foot, \$2.5 million processing center just east of Downtown Los Angeles, he employs individuals from troubled backgrounds to prepare meals with fruits and vegetables otherwise bound for dumpsters. "It's easy enough to cut the bruise off a wrinkled peach," Egger, 57, says. In 2016, his L.A. Kitchen aims to serve 3,000 daily meals to the public and 4,000 to seniors—all while giving a fresh career start to ex-cons, recovering addicts and youth exiting foster care.

—DAVID HOCHMAN

**MORNING RITUAL:** "I love an early breakfast at Nick's Café, right outside Downtown. It's one of these old-school holdovers where you can actually squint and imagine trucks from the 1930s and '40s pulling up."

**MALIBU MAGIC:** "Of all the LA-area beaches, Zuma has the prettiest waters and most beautiful sand. Oftentimes, it's very deserted. My wife and I go every Sunday morning for long walks."

**GREAT ESCAPE:** "Self-Realization Fellowship center atop Mount Washington has a peaceful, beautiful garden and insane views to everywhere: Cypress Park, FrogTown, the Los Angeles River, all of East LA, the iconic City Hall you see on po-



lice badges—just like on *Dragonet*. The nearby neighborhood of Highland Park is a shaggy, vibrant, resurgent community."

**URBAN TREKKER:** "I'm a city hiker. You give me the canyons of Downtown and I'm in heaven. When you look closely at the classic movie houses of Broadway—some cleaned up, some not—the beauty is absolutely overwhelming. Most people are rushing to work. I take my time to notice faces, to look up, to really be there."

**SWEET SOUNDS:** "I ran punk and jazz clubs years ago, and Burger Records is an indie label with a record store out in Fullerton that keeps the classic spirit alive. They do events, too. My favorite is called Burger-A-Go-Go, which is women-only bands and bands run by women. Women usually have to be on the defensive in rock 'n' roll but here they get to be on their own terms."

**THE FUTURE NOW:** "Google houses YouTube's filmmaking studio in the massive former Howard Hughes Airport in Playa Vista. The area around it is a thriving campus with all kinds of tech types dreaming about the next big app. I love how Los Angeles is doubling down on its future as a technology hub."

at Shop Bop, Ron Robinson/Fred Segal, Intermix, online at basicterrain.com and, soon, at Selfridges in London. —SARAH ELBERT

### WHERE DO YOU HEAD TO IN LA TO DECOMPRESS?

"I like to go hiking, and there are so many places in LA to do that. We live in Glendale, so we go to Burbank—most people don't think of it as having hiking trails, but if you look to the North, there are mountains and great trails that aren't as populated as Runyon Canyon or other trails. There's so much accessible green space—or maybe I should now say brown space—and that's one of the reasons I love living in California and especially LA. I can be at a really cool hiking spot within 15 or 20 minutes and you wouldn't even know that you're in the city, or go to the beach, or go two hours and be in the desert or six or more and be in the redwoods."

**FAVORITE PLACES TO SHOP?** "Definitely Ron Robinson/Fred Segal. I love the fact that it's one-stop shopping. I can go in there and shop for really great clothes or jewelry or home goods and then have an awesome Italian meal. It's a great place to find gifts for people or for yourself. And then I love going to the flea market in Pasadena for awesome shoes and great deals."

**GO-TO RESTAURANTS?** "There's a really great

Lebanese restaurant called Skaf's in our neighborhood, and it has some of the best food ever. Another favorite is Silver Lake Ramen. And a new one for me is Hatchet Hall, which is more in the Culver City area.

That's kind of like a superfly, really delicious, cool spot. And another spot I love is called Dog Haus, which is now a chain with hot dogs and hamburgers and stuff, but everything is on Hawaiian sweet rolls."

George Esquivel in front of Michael Heizer's 2012 *Levitated Mass*, with its 340-ton boulder, at Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

## SHOEMAKER TO THE STARS

DESIGNER GEORGE ESQUIVEL



For someone who could barely afford shoes growing up, George Esquivel has certainly made good. Raised in Orange County by a hard-working immigrant mother and a dad who served time in prison for murder, Esquivel was inspired to create shoes after a trip to Mexico in the early '90s ("Growing up in Southern California, you'd go to Mexico because you can buy tacos and beer at the age of

18," he says). While in Baja, he met a guy who made him a pair of shoes based on Esquivel's own design. Esquivel then decided to find someone to make his shoes locally, and—thanks to the power of admiration—he's since created shoes for

the likes of Gwen Stefani, LeBron James and Janelle Monáe. He was an acolyte of handcrafted heritage before *maker*, *handcrafted* and *heritage* became retail buzzwords. Esquivel currently is collaborating with Wisconsin shoe company Florsheim and sells beautiful footwear (with a rock 'n' roll edge) out of his showroom in LA and at various high-end retailers. —SARAH ELBERT

**WHERE IS YOUR TOP SPOT FOR CREATIVE INSPIRATION?** "The most creative place for me in LA is LACMA [Los Angeles County Museum of Art], and I go there a lot. There are always new exhibitions →

and exhibits. Even for colors or textures or materials, I just kind of hang out there. I've worked on a couple of projects with them and they're very supportive of creativity."

**ONE OF YOUR GO-TO RESTAURANTS IN LA?**

"I'm a huge window shopper and I like to combine shopping and eating—and the one stop where you can do that is Barneys in Beverly Hills. You go to Freds, the food is good, you run into friends and you can shop and hang out. It's like a big boutique—I really enjoy it."

**BEST PLACE FOR LIVE MUSIC?**

"We just went to the Troubadour to see a band play called Johnnyswim. It's a cool place. One of my favorite places where we used to go growing up was the House of Blues on Sunset, but it's since closed down. I like small venues and grew up going to all those places: Whiskey A Go-Go, the Hollywood Palladium, the Palace—but the Troubadour is still really pretty cool."

**WHERE ARE SOME UNEXPECTED GEMS WHERE YOU TAKE VISITORS?**

"My favorite thing to do is at The Hollywood Roosevelt: There's a place called The Spare Room, and it's a vintage bowling alley. It's a cool place where everybody goes. And as popular as it is, it's still kind of hidden, because they don't make a big deal out of it. Another hidden gem is a store in Orange County called A'maree's. People don't know about it and it's probably one of the most beautiful stores in the world. It's 9,000 square feet, on the water and people pull up to the store in their boats."

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Tall palms near the Santa Monica Pier; The Little Door; The Hollywood Roosevelt; The Last Bookstore; La Quinceanera cocktail at Gracias Madre.



## MAKING LEGENDS

Riot Games CEO Brandon Beck

The West Los Angeles headquarters of video game company Riot Games embodies its "gamer's games" credo. The campus is festooned with player-made art and occasional cosplay, and it's home to PC Bang play stations inspired by Korean gaming centers. Visitors are greeted by an installation of Annie and her controllable minion, Tibbers, from League of Legends—the company's free-to-play online multiplayer runaway hit (the most-played game

in the world). Founded in 2006 as an indie game startup, Riot Games is, today, an e-Sports tournament giant with a global presence; Chinese tech behemoth Tencent is now the sole stakeholder. It's clear that its co-founders Brandon Beck, CEO, and Marc Merrill, president, have hit the sweet spot between business and play, and that their native LA is the perfect theater for their studio's innovation and creativity. The city—particularly pockets of the West Side and so-called Silicon Beach—has drawn an influx of technology startups. "It's exciting to see more tech companies calling LA home," says Beck, "[and] a lot of it is driven by the increasing convergence of technology with entertainment/media, which have always been core to Los Angeles." In this vein, LoL's e-Sports events have brought fans to iconic venues like Lakers base the Staples Center. But Beck says he and Merrill have a soft spot for the Galen Center at the University of Southern Califor-

nia, their alma mater. "We held our first arena event ever there, and feeling the capacity crowd shake that place was a dream fulfilled." —SHANA TINGLIPTON

**WHERE ARE YOUR FAVORITE LA RESTAURANTS FOR CREATIVE BRAINSTORMING?** "LA is so diverse that different off-ramps on the I-10 can basically transport you to China for authentic hot pot at Mon Land Hot Pot City, Seoul for *sundubu jjigae* at BCD Tofu House, Japan for *tsukemen* ramen at Tsujita LA or Mexico for artisanal *cochinita pibil* tacos on homemade tortillas at Guisados."

**FAVORITE BURGERS?** "Going to call it a three-way tie between the hickory burger at The Apple Pan, Double-Double at In-N-Out and the truffle burger at Umami Burger."

**WHAT IS THE MOST ALMOST-UNREAL VIEW IN LA, WHICH LOOKS LIKE IT SHOULD BE IN A VIDEO GAME?** "There is a beautiful hike up Temescal Canyon, off of Sunset Boulevard, atop the Santa Monica Mountains that provides an

incredible 360-degree view of the coast and the city. It's especially striking during sunset when the sky turns neon pink, when light bounces off the smog at just the right angle."

**COOLEST ARCHITECTURAL SPACES IN LA?** "Probably Disney Hall for being an engineering and acoustic feat, but also for being so gutsy and free spirited that it became an instant LA icon. Also, the Griffith Observatory—perched on the hills with an incredible view of the city, a beautiful park and a classic art deco-inspired building, complete with a cool planetarium for a dose of science."

**BEST LIVE MUSIC VENUE IN LA FOR A FULLY IMMERSIVE EXPERIENCE?** "The Hollywood Bowl. It's an awesome place to kick back and see a show under the stars with thousands of passionate fans. Many people bring picnics and most nights are BYOB. The venue plays host to all kinds of eclectic offerings from philharmonic collaborations to [electronic dance music] DJs."

# REDEFINING TELEVISION

HULU HEAD OF MARKETING  
JENNY WALL

Jenny Wall spends a lot of time thinking about what draws audiences to TV shows. For the past two decades, she has worked with entertainment powerhouses including HBO and Netflix to promote such popular shows as *House of Cards* and *Arrested Development*. Now at Hulu, she's busy launching shows such as *Casual* (which recently earned a Golden Globe nomination) for the popular streaming network. She also loves to explore LA, often with her toddler son in tow.

—ERICHISS



**WHERE ARE YOUR TOP SPOTS FOR TAKING VISITORS?**

"Riding bikes from Venice to Malibu is a nice way to spend the afternoon, soaking up the sunshine and enjoying local highlights like beach volleyball, the Venice Boardwalk and Santa Monica Pier. Hiking Runyon Canyon is also a great way to get the big picture, because you can see LA from Downtown to the beach with the added bonus of spotting a few celebrities with their dogs along the way!"

**ARE THERE SOME UNEXPECTED PLACES YOU'VE FOUND THAT ARE PERFECT FOR SMALL CHILDREN?**

"We love to go to the Noah's Ark exhibit at the Skirball Cultural Center, the Annenberg Community Beach House in Santa Monica and any of the amazing farmers markets around town."

**BEST PLACES TO TRY NEW WINES?** "Silver Lake Wine is a great wine shop. Bar Covell in Los Feliz and The Little Door restaurant in West Hollywood are also must-visits with great wine selections."

**ANY FAVORITE SPOTS FOR WRAP PARTIES THAT ALSO ARE OPEN TO THE PUBLIC?** "Three places stand out for me: The Hollywood Roosevelt Hotel for its historic qualities, the vegan restaurant Gracias Madre (this from a voracious meat eater) and the Pacific Design Center."

**FAVORITE PLACE TO DECOMPRESS?** "Yoga class at Exhale, spin class at YAS Silver Lake or a nice weekend in Palm Springs."

THIS PAGE, CLOCKWISE FROM LEFT: Tropicana at The Hollywood Roosevelt; Walt Disney Concert Hall; A show at the Hollywood Bowl.





## INSPIRED BY THE EVERYDAY

ARTIST PAE WHITE

You can't miss the 26 miles of vibrant, custom-dyed cords spread throughout the northern and southern corridors at LAX's Tom Bradley International Terminal. Unveiled in mid-2015, "ΣLAX" is a suspended public art installation by Pae White, the Pasadena-born artist whose work incorporates crafts, architecture and design. Despite the eye-catching nature of her geometrically intricate piece, White stresses that she was less interested in its colorful cords than in the utilitarian brackets that support them. The multimedia artist, whose work has been exhibited around the globe and regularly in mid-Wilshire's 1301PE gallery, which represents her, is passionate about overlooked objects and spaces. In 2001, she and architect Tom Marble collaborated on whimsical seat fabric designs for the city's Metro buses. Inspired by a visit to the Metropolitan Transportation Authority archives, White created a design based on the graphic ephemera she found there:

"old tickets, old receipts, anything the MTA felt was worth saving but is really ephemeral." Even after decades in LA, she still sees beauty in spaces that most Angelenos zoom past in their cars, such as the loop from the I-105 toward LAX: "The elegance of the turn and the transition from the city heading to the airport is one of the most amazing experiences in LA." —S. T. L.

**WHAT IS THE BEST ARCHITECTURE IN LA?** "The coroner's building near USC Medical, the Sparkletts water treatment plant in Eagle

Rock, the DWP Building on Daly [in Lincoln Heights] and Beckman Auditorium at Caltech. The campus in general has amazing architecture."

**WHERE IS THE BEST PLACE TO BUY EPHEMERA AND KNICKKNACKS?** "Hughes Estate Sales in Altadena and Downtown LA and small charity thrift stores like The Huntington Collection in Pasadena."

**ANY BOOKSTORE PICKS?** "The Last Bookstore [in Downtown LA]; Vroman's Bookstore in Pasadena, which has been around forever; and Hennessey + Ingalls."

## THE HIGH-END TACO KING

Chef Ray Garcia

It's an open secret that many top restaurants in Los Angeles are run by anonymous Latin American chefs. Those hard-working line cooks and grill masters mostly play second fiddle to the celebrity toques at the helm—but not Ray Garcia. With two new restaurants that fuse local and global flavors, the Angeleno native is winning raves at Broken Spanish and B.S. Taqueria for being, well, the Mexican-American star of the show.

—DAVID HOCHMAN

**CHEF'S CHOICE:** "Cassia in Santa Monica is my new favorite restaurant of the moment. The chef, Bryant Ng, and I both went to UCLA around the same time.

He's doing something similar to what I'm trying to do by taking recipes from his childhood and updating and elevating them. In his case, it's Southeast Asian food. The chopped escargot with naan is insane!"

**BIG-DEAL MEAL:** "There are fewer and fewer places that cater to the highest level of ingredients, service and experience, but Providence does it. I'm in awe of Michael Cimarusti. What a great splurge to put yourself in his hands with the tasting menu."

**MARKET DAY:** "El Mercado de Los Angeles in Boyle Heights is a fun spot. It's an interesting mix of horrible Mexican junk food—you gotta try Tostilocos—to

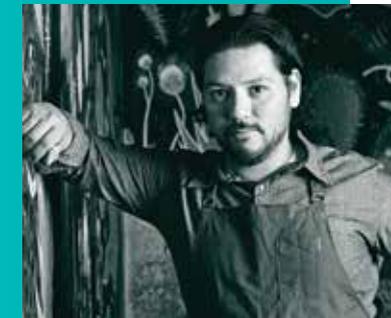
handmade tamales with some of the best carnitas you'll ever experience. Visitors to LA don't often get a chance to see true, authentic Latino culture, but here it is, down to the two-cent magnets that won't stick to your fridge."

**HAPPY DAY OUT:** "Assuming it's not Labor Day weekend, we like to relax and catch a breather on the beach near my home in Playa del Rey. My favorite spot is a little south of the jetty just before Dockweiler State Beach. It's quiet and peaceful except for the occasional plane taking off from LAX overhead—but even that's cool."

**TIME CAPSULE:** "My father and grandfather took me to Griffith Park to ride the minitrains, and now I take my toddler, Grant. There's a little area to ride ponies. Then you get on the min-

ature train. As a kid, it feels like it's taking you 20 miles, but it's actually just a small loop."

**ROOT, ROOT, ROOT:** "I grew up not too far from Dodger Stadium. We'd go once a week and sit out in the left field pavilion. I'd take my mitt and sit there eating my Dodger dog, which from a chef standpoint is now a bit underwhelming. I still go when I have time, but I don't sit in the pavilion anymore."



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**WHAT IS LA'S MOST EXCITING ARTS DISTRICT?** "Boyle Heights is where things are taking off. My studio's in Highland Park and the change there is really amazing, too."

**YOU FASHIONED MARZIPAN SOFT TACOS FOR ONE OF YOUR PROJECTS. WHAT'S YOUR FAVORITE TACO TRUCK IN LA?** "The best in all the city is La Estrella on York [in Highland Park]. It's a truck that doesn't have an engine; it just sits there. The shrimp tostadas at El Mar Azul, a blue truck at Sycamore Grove on Figueroa, are like nothing in LA. They've been around for 30 years or more."

**RIGHT, FROM TOP:** Beckman Auditorium at Caltech; Hughes Estate Sales; Dodger Stadium; La Estrella food truck in Highland Park; Making a blackberry sherry cobbler at Cassia.



## NEW & ICONIC LA HOTELS

Whether you like new and modern or classic and traditional, there's no shortage of options in Los Angeles.



**Andaz West Hollywood**  
A rock 'n' roll past has given way to chic, music-inspired art and décor, with stunning LA views.



**Beverly Wilshire**  
This hotel hasn't lost any of its luxe polish since Julia Roberts charmed her way through *Pretty Woman*.



**Mr. C Beverly Hills**  
Merging European elegance (the C stands for Cipriani) with old Hollywood glamour.



**Shutters on the Beach**  
A charming New England-style inn that sits right on the beautiful Santa Monica beach.



**Chateau Marmont**  
This iconic spot has been sheltering A-listers since it first opened its doors as a hotel in 1929.



**The Hollywood Roosevelt**  
An illustrious past meets the present in sleek, modern décor—and it's got a scene for everyone.



**The Langham Huntington**  
This landmark property in Pasadena, with a sprawling spa, will leave you feeling like royalty.



**Sunset Tower Hotel**  
Art deco architecture meets minimalist décor and '40s allure in this favorite celeb hideaway.