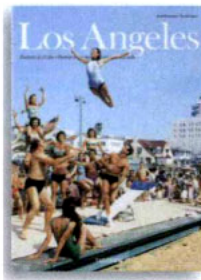


## INSIDER books

Our round-up of the best travel books to read this month

### Los Angeles: Portrait of a City

Jim Heimann and Kevin Starr  
(£44.99; Taschen)



The glitter and grime of today's sprawling Los Angeles metropolis may hide it well, but just over 150 years ago the self-styled City of Angels was little more than a desert wasteland. This exquisite – and weighty – book charts the rapid changes that turned an ancient Native American settlement into the pop-culture lodestone of the western world. From the first known photograph of the city, to the vintage glamour of Hollywood's '50s heyday, to the '90s race riots, each phase of LA's development is exposed in fascinating stills, accompanied by an informative commentary.



Part of LA's history:  
infamous gangster  
Mickey Cohen