

# Sunset Boulevard

Cruising the Heart of Los Angeles

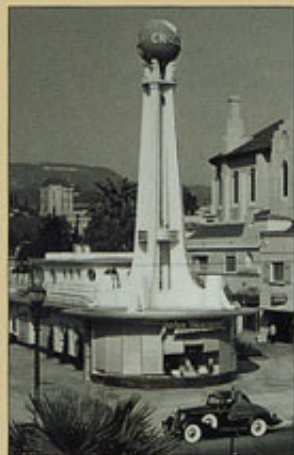


Amy Dawes



**Savvy residents know** that driving Sunset Boulevard from end to end is the best way to experience Los Angeles in a single sweep. Start at the city's historic birthplace near Union Station and head west to the ocean. Along the way, you'll slice through vibrant Echo Park, bohemian Silver Lake, resurgent Hollywood, the fabled Sunset Strip, luxurious Beverly Hills, exclusive Bel-Air, and charming Pacific Palisades, until you finally arrive at the evening panorama of colors for which the West's most famous street was named.

But Sunset is more than simply the blur seen from a speeding car. Cruising the heart of Los Angeles calls for a rich understanding—not just of what you'll see, but of what's no longer here to see, and why. Here, then, is a lively and definitive guide to this remarkable corridor—to its sights and sounds, to landmarks famous or scarcely recognized, to stories oft-told and hidden histories all but forgotten.

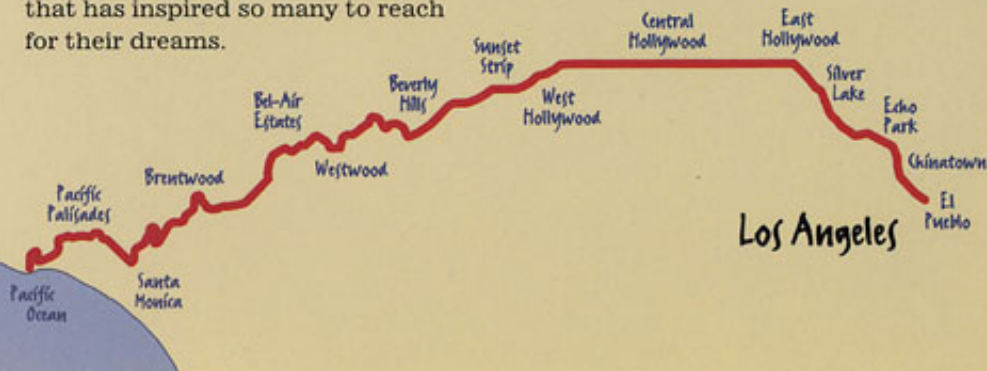


Take this book along on any number of outings and you'll come to know the men and women who paved the boulevard with their imagination and energy—people like Aimee Semple McPherson and Walt Disney, D.W. Griffith and Billy Wilder, the Warner brothers and Will Rogers,

and still more who flouted convention to make Sunset larger than life.

Here are maps that take the puzzle out of locating landmarks, tales that link the present to the past, and lists of shops and restaurants to enjoy while the boulevard carries you on countless adventures of your own making.

As it crosses through the heart of Los Angeles, this singular thoroughfare captures the energy of today's pulsing neighborhoods and the aura of possibility that has inspired so many to reach for their dreams.



Billy Vasquez

**Amy Dawes** spent her first night out in Los Angeles watching the band X perform at the Whisky a Go-Go on the Sunset Strip, after driving in from Alabama without waiting for her college graduation ceremony. Nonetheless, she received her degree in journalism from Auburn University, as well as a master's degree in professional writing from the University of Southern California. She spent nearly 10 years working at daily newspapers, including the *Los Angeles Herald-Examiner*; the *Los Angeles Daily News*; and *Daily Variety*, where she was a film, music, and theater reviewer and reported on the movie business. She has also contributed to the *Los Angeles Times*, *L.A. Weekly*, *Rolling Stone*, and *Buzz* magazine, and has written screenplays for feature films, including *Zoe* (as co-writer), which played at numerous film festivals, including Los Angeles' AFI. Her previous projects for Los Angeles Times Books include writing the text for *Imagining Los Angeles: Photographs of a 20th Century City*.

She lives with her husband, photographer Billy Vasquez, at the foot of the Hollywood Hills, a 10-minute walk from Sunset Boulevard. She can be reached at [usemycabeza@aol.com](mailto:usemycabeza@aol.com).



# There isn't a street

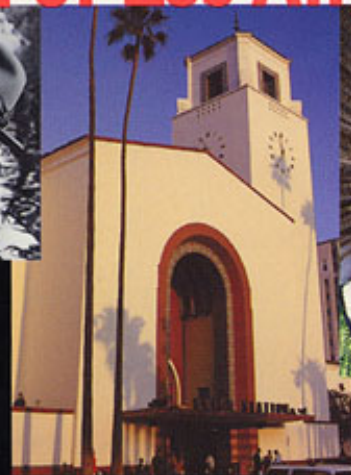
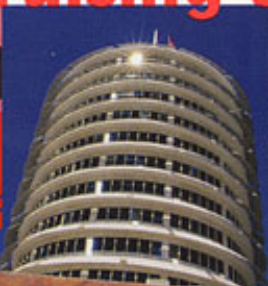
in the world like Sunset Boulevard. Dazzling and decadent, disturbing and dangerous, it stretches almost 23 miles from downtown Los Angeles to the Pacific Ocean. Along the way, the remarkable route boasts many stories—all of them a testament to the diversity, legend, and lore that make the City of Angels what it is today. ■ This definitive guide

proceeds from east to west, illuminating the rich human drama that has shaped the thoroughfare and the neighborhoods it traverses. Landmarks heralded or long forgotten, nightclubs and night life, dining destinations and shopping excursions—all are identified in a first-class journey through an unrivaled past and present.

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## Sunset Boulevard: Cruising the Heart of Los Angeles



**"I have walked,** roller-skated and biked from one end of Sunset Boulevard to the other.

I've basked in the sun at one end, walked through Olvera Street on the other, and watched the horses go by on the bridle path out in front of the Beverly Hills Hotel.

All of which leads me to say that this book has it. It is indeed Sunset Boulevard."

—Ray Bradbury, Novelist



Los Angeles Times  
BOOKS

**"One of the best-written,** most interesting books I've ever read! It's perfect for tourists and locals alike—in fact anyone with an appreciation of history and a sense of adventure."

—Huell Howser, Producer and Host of "California's Gold" on PBS