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Lights, camera, triathlon!

Take an Olympic-distance tour of L.A. this September

By Brad Culp

The Kaiser Permanente Los Angeles Triathlon, part of the Life Time Fitness Triathlon Series, is one of those races that you have to do. On any other day of the year, Hollywood Boulevard is crammed with cars, tour buses, tourists and street vendors, but when the triathlon rolls through town, you'll have the boulevard all to yourself (and about 1,500 of your closest friends). It's truly a unique way to take in the City of Angels and we think it's a much better option than trying to negotiate L.A.'s legendary traffic.

The race

After a true ocean swim at Venice Beach, athletes are treated to an epic 40k bike course, without a doubt the gem of the event. Riders start off heading east on Venice Boulevard as they make their way toward the glitzy streets of Beverly Hills. From there, athletes head up Hollywood Boulevard and take in the sights, including Grauman's Chinese Theatre and the Walk of Fame. Don't take too much time finding your favorite actor's star, though: remember, it's a race. The second transition takes place in front of the Staples Center, in the heart of Downtown L.A. The 10k run is probably the most challenging part of the race, with a steep climb up Grand Avenue on each of the two laps.

Where to stay

It's a point-to-point race, so it's really

up to you as to whether you want to stay near the start or the finish. If you prefer to be close to the start, the Marina del Rey Marriott is the place to be. However, if you want to be close to downtown and the finish area, The Club Hotel offers a huge discount for athletes and is also home to the renowned Los Angeles Athletic Club—the perfect place to squeeze in any pre-race workouts.

While you're there

Take a stroll down the Santa Monica pier, located just north of Marina Del Rey. There you'll find a seemingly endless array of shops and restaurants, along with plenty of family-friendly entertainment.

If you'd rather experience the TV and movie scene, check out the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences and the Museum of Television and Radio, both located in Beverly Hills. ▲