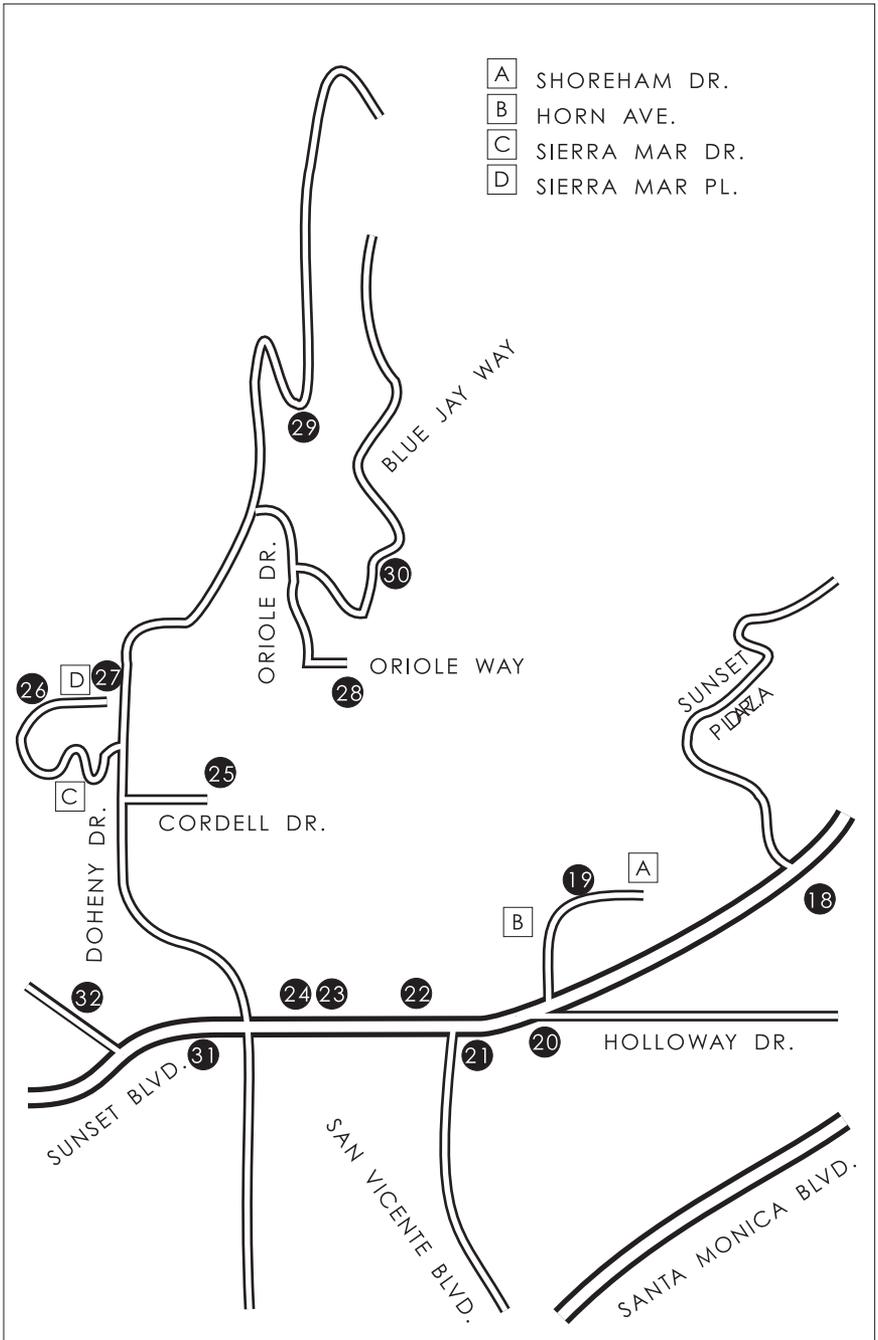

THE SUNSET STRIP

This is mostly a walking tour of what is often called “Hollywood’s playground”: the Sunset Strip. This tour also includes a few homes in the hills north of the Strip that are best reached by car. Most of the sites in this tour are within the city limits of West Hollywood. The dividing line between Los Angeles and West Hollywood is Sunset Boulevard; anything north of the Boulevard or east of the Chateau Marmont is within Los Angeles city limits.

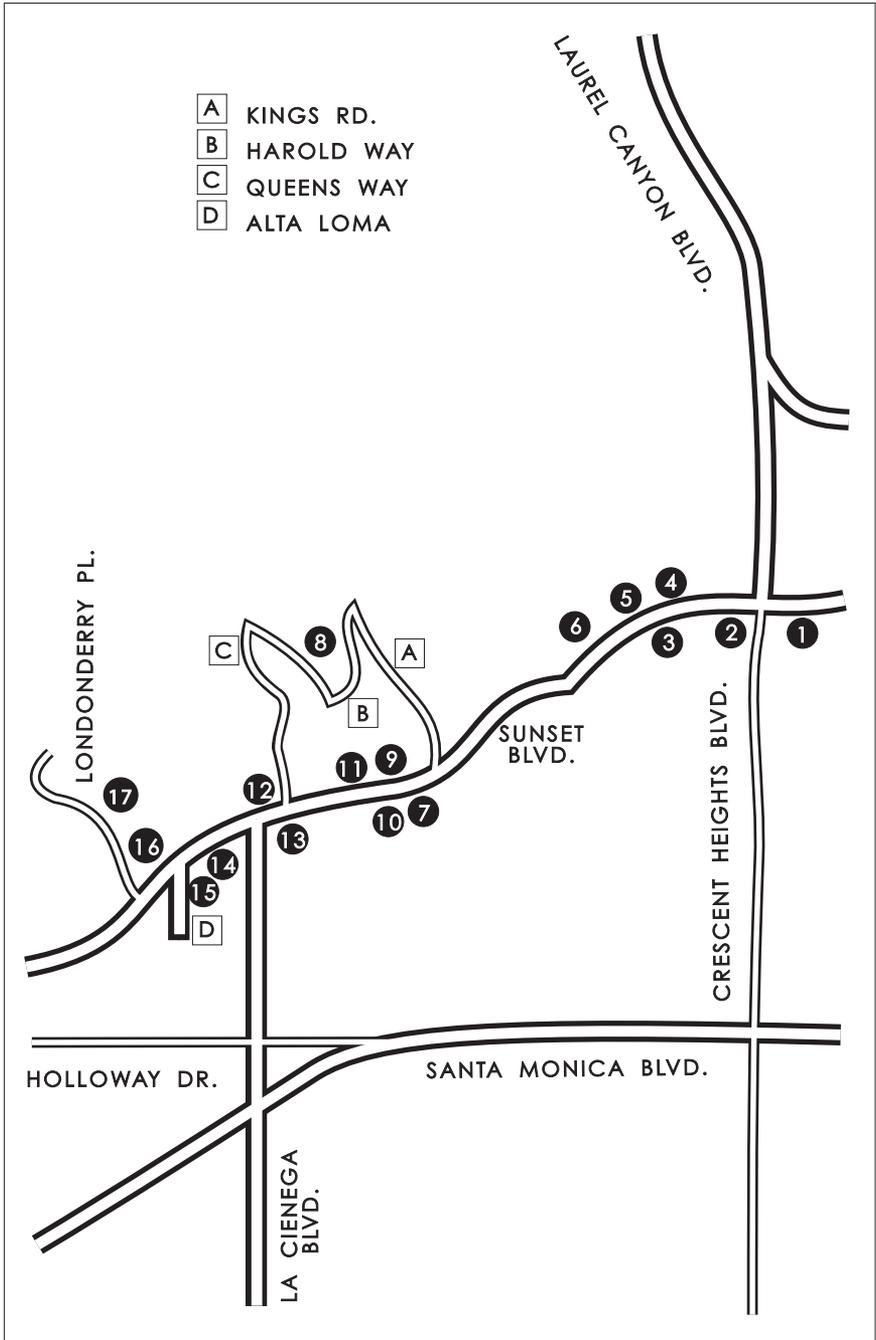
Sites south of Sunset Boulevard are included in the West Hollywood section. Those who walk the Strip should keep in mind that a few sites listed in the West Hollywood section, including the apartment where Sal Mineo was stabbed to death and the apartment where Judith Campbell Exner lived when she had her affair with JFK, are within one or two blocks of Sunset Boulevard.

1. FORMER SITE OF SCHWAB’S PHARMACY, 8024 Sunset Boulevard (southeast corner of Crescent Heights)

Schwab’s was the most famous drugstore in America, partly because its owner, pharmacist Leon Schwab, kept claiming that Lana Turner was “discovered” sitting on a stool at the soda fountain in his store. Turner herself has said on several occasions that there is no truth to the story, and it appears the tale was concocted by Schwab to lure customers to the store.



MAP 17 THE SUNSET STRIP



MAP 16 THE SUNSET STRIP



The moose and the squirrel were originally built to salute a sign across the street advertising a Las Vegas hotel. The sign featured a skimpily dressed Vegas showgirl.



A view of the Strip with the Santa Monica Mountains in the background.

There is, at least, truth to the story that in its heyday Schwab's was a popular hangout for writers and actors looking for work. In *Sunset Boulevard* (1950), William Holden called it "a combination office, coffee klatch and waiting room." Schwab filled prescriptions for studio executives and claimed he told them about some of the young budding actors who he thought were star material.

While Lana Turner was not discovered there, one regular, author F. Scott Fitzgerald, did have a heart attack there while buying cigarettes. Also, Graham Nash of Crosby, Stills & Nash met his wife there. The pharmacy was torn down in 1988 to make room for a block-long shopping complex anchored by Virgin Records.

2. FORMER SITE OF THE GARDEN OF ALLAH, 8152 Sunset Boulevard

Remember the song "Big Yellow Taxi," in which Joni Mitchell sang about paving paradise and putting up a parking lot? That was a reference to the tearing down of the Garden of Allah, another famous Hollywood landmark which once stood on the southwest corner of Sunset and Crescent Heights, directly across the street from Schwab's. The apartment/hotel was what one writer called the unofficial epicenter of Hollywood social activity during the 1930s and 1940s, with Frank Sinatra, Ava Gardner, Clark Gable, David Niven, Errol Flynn, the Marx Brothers, Robert Benchley, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Tallulah Bankhead, Clara Bow, Humphrey Bogart, Ernest Hemingway, and Leopold Stokowski among the major celebrities who were Garden residents at one time or another.

According to Bruce Torrence, author of *Hollywood: The First 100 Years*: "It was not uncommon to see tourists and movie fans lining the sidewalk just to get a glimpse of their favorite star." Torrence called the Garden's inhabitants "a fast-living, hard-drinking, high-rolling lot who burned



The Chateau Marmont.



The coroner's van and the media circus outside the Chateau Marmont on the day John Belushi died of a drug overdose.

out fast and took the Garden with them.” In 1950 the Garden was sold to Lytton Savings and Loan, which tore it down and built its home office at the site. The site is now a minimall and a branch of Great Western Bank.

3. “ROCKY AND BULLWINKLE” STATUE, 8218 Sunset Boulevard

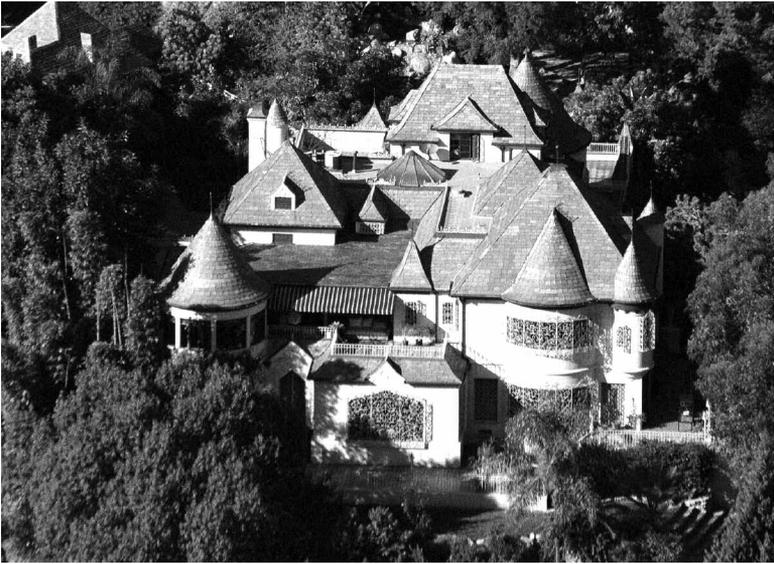
This converted house, once owned by Fess Parker, TV’s “Davy Crockett,” was for years the offices of Jay Ward Productions, the animation company that created “Rocky and Bullwinkle.” A 15-foot-tall plaster statue of the famous moose and squirrel still stands in front of the building, as does a small courtyard which bears signatures of June Foray (the voices of both Rocky and Natasha) and, strangely enough, the elbowprints of the cartoon’s writers.

The building is now owned by Hollywood Hounds, a doggie day center which offers doggie shiatsu massages, “pawdicures,” and even “muttrimonies” and “bark mitzvahs.”

4. CHATEAU MARMONT, 8221 Sunset Boulevard, (323) 656-1010

When celebrities visiting Los Angeles want to be seen, they often go to the Beverly Hills Hotel. When they wish to keep out of the limelight they often stay at the Marmont.

In his book *Life at the Marmont*, former owner Raymond L. Sarlot noted that the Marmont remains “one of [Hollywood’s] best kept secrets, much to the joy of its celebrated clientele. Not too many years ago a *Newsday* journalist cornered Jill Clayburgh sipping coffee at [the hotel’s coffee shop]. Following the usual career questions, she was asked to comment about her stay at the Marmont. ‘Oh, don’t mention the hotel,’ she said, crinkling her face. ‘Then all the tourists will come.’ A moment later, Clayburgh was on her way, but not before leaving the journalist with a



Johnny Depp's castle. His living room reportedly features an electric chair and a dummy awaiting execution.



Christina Aguilera's home above the Sunset Strip.

final thought. ‘If you must say something about this place, say it’s terrible. Please say it’s terrible.’”

The fact that tourists rarely discover the hotel is one of the reasons why stars like Marilyn Monroe, Nicole Kidman, Robert DeNiro, Josh Hartnett, Scarlet Johansson, Lindsay Lohan, Warren Beatty, Dustin Hoffman, John Lennon and Yoko Ono, Ringo Starr, Bob Dylan, Mick Jagger, Greta Garbo, Keanu Reeves, Leonardo DiCaprio, Matthew McConaughey, Sarah Jessica Parker, and the Eagles have all stayed for extended periods.

One former guest, John Belushi, did attract crowds when he died of a drug overdose on March 4, 1982, in bungalow 3. Several tabloids also claimed that Lindsay Lohan, who lived here almost for a year, overdosed on a dangerous cocktail of drugs on November 12, 2006.

In the movie *The Doors* (1991), Val Kilmer, playing Jim Morrison, was seen trying to leap out of a sixth-floor penthouse. The Righteous Brothers song “You’ve Lost That Lovin’ Feelin’” was reportedly written at the hotel. According to published reports, the hotel places screenplays in its night stands instead of Bibles.

5. CABO CANTINA, 8301 Sunset Boulevard (at Sweetzer), (323) 656-6388

This restaurant was formerly the Source, the natural foods restaurant where Diane Keaton dumped Woody Allen in *Annie Hall* (1977).

6. MANSION OWNED BY JOHNNY DEPP (high on the hillside just west of Sweetzer Avenue)

When actor Johnny Depp bought this 29-room mansion in 1995, some entertainment magazines reported that it was once owned by Bela Lugosi and that the Munchkins stayed there during the filming of *The Wizard of Oz* (1939). Hollywood historian Laurie Jacobson insists that neither claim is correct, and that the castle only *looks* like

the type of home the one-time *Dracula* star might have lived in.

In fact, the castle was once owned by Hersee Moody Carson, the childless widow of a multimillionaire, and it was called the “Castle of the Fairy Lady” because she used to hold parties there for orphans on major holidays during the 1930s and 1940s. Before Depp shelled out \$2.3 million for the gated estate, it was owned by divorce attorney Michael Mitchelson, who lost it in a bankruptcy after being convicted of tax fraud.

What you can see from Sunset, behind thick foliage, is the backside of the mansion. The front entrance is on North Sweetzer Avenue.



The art deco Sunset Tower Hotel has been a Hollywood hot spot for more than half a century.

7. SUNSET TOWER, 8358 Sunset Boulevard, (323) 654-7100

This luxury hotel was once the home to Hollywood stars such as John Wayne, Marilyn Monroe, Clark Gable, Errol Flynn, Howard Hughes, Roger Moore, Truman Capote, and the Gabor sisters. One resident, Bugsy Siegel, was reportedly asked to leave after he was arrested for placing bets at the hotel.

The building itself is an intriguing 13-story Art Deco tower emblazoned with mythological creatures, zeppelins, airplanes, and Adam and Eve.

The hotel is occasionally used as a film location and has served as the outside of the Voltaire Restaurant in *Pretty Woman* (1990), John Travolta's hotel in *Get Shorty* (1995), and the site of Jamie Lee Curtis' wedding rehearsal in the 2003 remake of *Freaky Friday*. In the Hollywood satire *The Player* (1992), Tim Robbins was pitched a story idea by the hotel's rooftop pool. In *The Italian Job* (2003), Mark Wahlberg, Charlize Theron, and their fellow thieves rendezvoused here while plotting to re-steal gold they originally stole in Venice, only to be doublecrossed by Ed Norton.

8. LIBERACE HOME, 8433 Harold Way (between Kings and Queens Road)

Liberace lived in this 28-room mansion from 1961 to 1979. He told his biographer Bob Thomas, author of *Liberace*: "I tried to turn this place into a museum. In one month we had seventeen thousand reservations. But the neighbors complained" about traffic from the tourists. Liberace's museum was instead built in Las Vegas.

9. HYATT WEST HOLLYWOOD ON SUNSET, 8401 Sunset Boulevard (at Kings Road), (323) 656-4101

In the 1960s and 1970s, when the hotel was the Continental Hyatt House, and a favorite of rock and rollers, the hotel was better known as "The Riot House." According

to Art Fein's *L.A. Musical History Tour* book, "Led Zeppelin rented as many as six floors here for their carryings on. Their partying set a standard that has never been equaled, with orgies, motorcycles in the halls, and stories yet untold." Fein also reports that "The Rolling Stones movie *Cocksucker Blues* shows Keith Richards and Bobby Keyes throwing a television out a window of this hotel" and that the Doors' "Jim Morrison lived here until he was evicted by management for hanging out a window by his fingertips, dangling over the pavement." Little Richard lived here through much of the 1980s and 1990s.

10. HOUSE OF BLUES, 8430 Sunset Boulevard (at Olive), (323) 848-5100

Investors in this nightclub include Blues Brother Dan Aykroyd.

11. COMEDY STORE, 8433 Sunset Boulevard, (323) 656-6225

One of Los Angeles's premier comedy clubs, the Comedy Store has featured performances from every important comedian. The names of its headliners are vaunted on its outside walls. This was once the site of *Ciro's*, one of Hollywood's most popular nightclubs during the 1940s and 1950s.

The building is supposedly haunted. TV's "Access Hollywood" once brought in a psychic, billed her as a "spiritual journalist," and had her talk about angry mobsters still supposedly trapped in the building's basement.

12. PIAZZA DEL SOL, 8439 Sunset Boulevard

This Spanish Revival apartment building was designated a historic landmark because of its beauty, not because of its notorious history. During the 1930s, this was the site of Lee Francis' "House of Francis," the classiest brothel on the Sunset Strip. The building now houses the

offices of several production companies—the names of which most people would not recognize. The brothels are now located in private homes above the Strip.

13. MONDRIAN HOTEL, 8440 Sunset Boulevard (at Queens Road), (323) 650-8999

This classy hotel caters to celebrities in the music, entertainment, and fashion industries. Members of Guns and Roses, The Who, Hole (including Courtney Love), the Smashing Pumpkins, the Cranberries, Public Enemy, Gipsy Kings, and Poison have stayed here, as have many actors. In *Doc Hollywood* (1991), Michael J. Fox stayed in room 1110. The hotel's nightclub, "Sky Bar," which provides panoramic views of the city, is so popular that hotel employees refer to it as "celebrity central."

14. SITE OF "77 SUNSET STRIP," 8532 Sunset Boulevard

Although fans of the popular 1950s TV series would never recognize it today, the front door of the Tiffany Theater is where Efrem Zimbalist, Jr., and Roger Smith played private eyes at the fictitious address "77 Sunset Strip."

The restaurant next to their offices, Dino's Lodge—which was once owned by Dean Martin—is also gone. It has been replaced by an office building housing Casablanca Records. Fans of the show will remember Edd "Kookie" Byrnes parking cars at Dino's Lodge.

15. SUNSET MARQUIS HOTEL AND VILLAS, 1200 N. Alta Loma Road

The Marquis has its own recording studio, making it a long-time favorite of recording artists. Aerosmith, the Rolling Stones, Hall & Oates, Ozzy Osbourne, and Dave Matthews are among the musicians who have stayed and recorded there.



Sunset Plaza is another great place for people-watching.

When the *Playboy* building was next door, *Playboy* executives would bring the bunnies here for afternoon dalliances.

The hotel's Bar 1200 (formerly the Whisky Bar) is a long-time Hollywood hangout.

16. APARTMENT AT 1326 LONDONDERRY VIEW (one block north of Sunset, off Londonderry Place)

Jane Wyman lived in apartment 5 here in the late 1930s, just three blocks from Ronald Reagan's house at 1128 Cory Avenue. After they married on January 26, 1940, Reagan moved in with her. However, the apartment proved to be too small after their first daughter, Maureen, was born, and the Reagans built a house at nearby 9137 Cordell Drive (covered later on the tour, page 129).

17. FORMER HOME OF DAVID SCHWIMMER, 1330 Londonderry Place

Schwimmer lived in this traditional-style home when he starred on NBC's "Friends." In 2001 he moved to a larger \$5.5 million home in Hancock Park.

18. SUNSET PLAZA

This is a two-block cluster of hip outdoor cafes, boutiques, hair salons, and other stores whose prices rival those of Rodeo Drive's. It is one of the best people-watching places in town.

19. SHOREHAM TOWERS, 8787 Shoreham Drive (at Horn)

David Lee Roth and Neil Sedaka are among the many celebrities who have lived in this condominium complex. A house that Humphrey Bogart shared with Mayo Method, his second wife (and the one who stabbed him), once stood on this site.

In 1969, Art Linkletter's daughter Diane jumped to her death from a sixth-floor apartment here after taking LSD. In 1995, another tragedy occurred when ballet star turned actor Alexander Godunov died in his condo of alcohol abuse.

20. BOOK SOUP, 8818 Sunset Boulevard

This independent bookstore caters to the entertainment industry and does quite a few celebrity signings, making it an excellent place for celebrity sighting.

Book Soup appeared in *Single White Female* (1992) as the store where Jennifer Jason Lee worked, and in 2005's *Bewitched*, where Will Farrell spotted Nicole Kidman wiggling her nose and tried to recruit her as his leading lady.

21. THE VIPER ROOM, 8852 Sunset Boulevard

On October 31, 1993, 23-year-old River Phoenix died of a drug overdose outside this nightclub once owned by Johnny Depp.

Depp told an interviewer he named the club "after a group of musicians who called themselves Vipers. They were reefer heads and they helped start modern music."

In the 1940s, the club was known as the Melody Room and was a notorious hangout for Los Angeles mobsters.

22. THE WHISKY A GO GO, 8901 Sunset Boulevard (at Clark Street), (310) 652-4202

This was the West Coast's first discotheque. "Go-go" dancing was born here.

23. THE ROXY, 9009 Sunset Boulevard, (310) 276-2222

The Roxy is one of Los Angeles' top music clubs and showcases for new talent. Although nearby restaurants claim otherwise, John Belushi had his last supper here at On The Rox, an exclusive private club above the Roxy.

24. RAINBOW BAR AND GRILL, 9015 Sunset Boulevard, (323) 278-4232

Vincente Minnelli proposed to Judy Garland, and Marilyn Monroe met her future husband, Joe DiMaggio, on a blind date, when the Grill's predecessor, the Villa Nova Restaurant, was here.

25. HOUSE AT 9137 CORDELL DRIVE (north of Doheny Drive)

Ronald Reagan lived here with his first wife, Jane Wyman, from 1941 until their divorce in 1948. According to Anne Edwards' biography *Early Reagan*, he separated from Wyman several times during 1947 and 1948, and during two of those separations he moved into the Garden of Allah. After the house was sold, Reagan moved back to an apartment at 1326 Londonderry View.

26. FORMER JERRY SEINFELD HOME, 9444 Sierra Mar Place

Seinfeld lived in this gated, 6,000-square-foot mansion from 1992 to 1998, the years when his eponymous

show, “Seinfeld,” was the highest rated sitcom on television. The house, just off windy Sierra Mar Drive, was later sold to one of his executive producers, who in turn sold it to an unknown party who, according to neighbors, used to get visitors at all hours of the day and night, some leaving used condoms on the street.

The house was sold again for in 2004 for \$5.1 million. Previous tenants included the Smothers Brothers, David Geffen, and actor George Montgomery, whose daughter Elizabeth was “Samantha” on TV’s “Betwitched.” The house is now inhabited by a real-life witch.

27. “DISNEY’S THE KID” HOUSE, 9405 Sierra Mar Place

Located a short stroll up the street Seinfeld’s former house is a modernistic house that has been a frequent film location. This was Bruce Willis’ house in the *Disney’s The Kid* (2000). Three years after the movie filmed, the house’s owner was brutally beaten to death here.

28. FORMER MADONNA HOME, 9045 Oriole Way

Madonna bought this gated three-bedroom house for \$3 million in 1989 from Allen Questron, the former president and CEO of Neiman Marcus, and sold it for \$2 million during California’s 1994 real estate slump. Subsequent owners included Leonardo di Caprio.

29. HOUSE AT 1654 DOHENY DRIVE

This three-story Spanish house is famous for two reasons. According to her memoir *Madame 90210*, Hollywood madam Alex Adams operated a brothel here for several years before her 1988 arrest.

The house was subsequently rented by actress Shannen Doherty during the years she starred on “Beverly Hills 90210.” According to a lawsuit filed by her former

landlord, Doherty trashed the home and left in the dead of night owing \$14,000 in overdue rent.

30. BLUE JAY WAY (side street off Oriole Drive)

In his book *L.A. Musical History Tour*, Art Fein reports that “George Harrison rented a house on this street in 1968, just before the Beatles recorded *Magical Mystery Tour*. Their publicist Derek Taylor had such difficulty finding the place in the fog one night that Harrison penned ‘Blue Jay Way,’ a dreamy paean to it, which emerged on that album. The street might still be hard to find, because residents report that the street sign is frequently stolen by Beatle(klepto)-maniacs.”

31. “BIG SLEAZY” PRIVATE INVESTIGATIONS, 9200 Sunset Boulevard

Anthony Pellicano, the infamous private eye who earned the epithet “the Big Sleazy,” long before the indictments kept coming, initially pled guilty to keeping an arsenal of hand grenades and illegal explosives in his office here in the Luckman Plaza. In 2006 Pellicano was indicted a second time on 112 different charges of wiretapping and witness tampering. Pellicano allegedly spied on Hollywood celebrities (and sometimes their wives) on behalf of his famous clients.

His clients included some of the biggest names in Hollywood, including former Creative Artists Agency head Michael Ovitz; manager-producer, and later Paramount Pictures head, Brad Grey; director John Tiernan (best known for *Die Hard* and *The Hunt for Red October*), who pled guilty to wiretapping; and \$900-an-hour “superlawyer” Bert Fields. Fields and Pellicano worked hand in hand trying to discredit the family of the 13-year-old boy who originally accused Michael Jackson of child molestation. Fields also has been the chief defender of Tom Cruise’s manhood and religion. A

target of the federal grand jury investigation probing Pellicano, Fields evaded his own indictment when Pellicano refused to testify against him. While Pellicano's other employers distanced themselves from the disgraced P.I., Fields helped the embattled Pellicano financially by establishing a fund to support the education of Pellicano's children.

Pellicano, who cultivated his image as a tough, baseball-bat-wielding intimidator of opposing parties in lawsuits, was tied to a number of disturbing incidents and suspected of hiring thugs to terrify several members of the press. Anita Busch, a former *Los Angeles Times* reporter who was writing about actor Steven Segal, another Pellicano client, discovered a dead fish and a threatening note on her broken car windshield. Journalist-turned-director-and-producer Rod Lurie suspected that Pellicano arranged for Lurie to become a hit-and-run victim while he was bicycle riding. Pellicano suspiciously called him the following day to ask about his injuries. Similarly, Ned Zeman, a staff writer for *Vanity Fair* who was doing a separate piece on Segal, was threatened on a Laurel Canyon road when a dark Mercedes that had been following him pulled alongside his car. A man in the Mercedes pointed a pistol at Zeman and pulled the trigger. Instead of firing, however, the man said "Stop!" and then "Bang!" He was clearly trying to tell Zeman what might happen if he did not abandon the article.

As this book goes to press, Pellicano is awaiting trial.

32. SIERRA TOWERS, 9255 Doheny Drive

Paparazzi can often be seen milling outside this exclusive 32-story condominium, where tabloid headliners Matthew Perry, Cher, Elton John, and Kate Moss all own units.

Former residents include “Dragnet”’s Jack Webb, who lived and died here; Joan Collins, George Hamilton, David Janssen, Sidney Poitier, and jockey Bill Shoemaker. Lindsay Lohan bought a unit here, but never moved in.

Actor Peter Lawford also lived here in the late 1960s and early 1970s, after he sold his beach house in Santa Monica. Lawford moved out of Sierra Towers after the 6.4 earthquake that shook Los Angeles on February 9, 1971, reportedly because he did not like the way the building swayed in the quake.

(SIGHTSEEING NOTE: Tourists who wish to combine the Sunset Strip and Beverly Hills tours can do so by continuing west on Doheny. Hillcrest Drive—which is where the Beverly Hills tour in this book starts—is just two blocks west of Sierra Towers on Doheny. See page 19.)

QUITE A FEW CELEBRITIES own or have owned homes in the so-called bird streets north of the Strip—streets with names like Swallow, Robin, Oriole, Thrasher, and Blue Jay. Among them are Jennifer Aniston (who once rented her house to Sasha Baron Cohen and his fiancée, Isla Fisher), Jodi Foster, Tobey Maguire, Megan Mullally, Keanu Reeves, Winona Ryder, Tori Spelling, and Alan Thicke.

Other celebrities who own homes in the neighborhood include Halle Berry, Jim Brown, Herbie Hancock, Richard Lewis, Jon Lovitz, Johnny Mathis, Leslie Nielsen, and KISS’s Gene Simmons.

Former residents include Courteney Cox, who, in the late 1980s, owned another home at 8815 Appian Way. This was the same home Carole King lived in when her 1971 album “Tapestry” was released.