

Why There's Never Been A Better Time To Visit Los Angeles

By Correspondent Carrie Bell

MARCH 6, 2025



January 7 started like any other Tuesday night at [Los Angeles' Carmel](#) since the upscale Melrose Avenue Mediterranean restaurant opened eight months earlier – packed, buzzing and full of joyous faces savoring mushroom cigars and red snapper schnitzel. But then abnormally strong winds picked up. Hurricane-force Santa Anas started whipping fiery embers erratically across town in both directions, mercilessly spreading what would become the third and fourth biggest wildfires in California history.

“The entire block lost power around 8 p.m., [which left] the restaurant so dark with no music or computers,” says Carmel executive chef and co-owner Asaf Maoz. “But we were full [so] we worked in the kitchen with headlamps and iPhone flashlights. We managed to turn it into a magical night full of candles and jazz.”

That charmed feeling didn't last long. Carmel shuttered for three days as the outage persisted. Overnight, and for the month that followed, a debilitating pall fell over the city as a series of 10 ferocious blazes decimated

large swaths of Los Angeles County, destroying at least 16,249 structures (11,500 of which were homes), displacing more than 10,000 families, killing at least 29 people and likely causing upwards of \$250 billion in damages and economic loss.

Hospitality's Early Response

"When disaster strikes, our industry plays a critical role in recovery," says Daniel del Olmo, president of Sage Hospitality Group, which counts [The Pierside Hotel](#) and [Hotel Per La](#) among its local lodgings. "[The industry's] purpose is to enrich lives, which means showing up when people need us most."

Evolving Strategies

[The Pierside Hotel](#) featured a romantic February package that included a donation to the LAFD alongside bubbles and chocolate. [Lawry's Prime Rib](#) hosted the sold-out [Chefs Love LA](#) event on February 27, which brought together top chefs like Suzanne Goin, Daniel Boulud, Katianna Hong, Curtis Stone and Michael Cimarusti among others to benefit [Restaurants Care](#) and WCK.