First Saturdays in Leimert Park Launches a Series of Free Events Leading Up to LA28

The October 3 opening is an ongoing invitation every first Saturday of the month to experience the Village's Black-owned businesses, music, food and culture.

LOS ANGELES, CA, UNITED STATES, October 2, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Leimert Park Village will launch First Saturdays on October 3 as the opening event in a community-led series designed to bring visitors and spending into the historic business district while preparing its merchants, artists, and cultural institutions for the global attention surrounding LA28. From 10 a.m. to 7 p.m., 43rd Street and Degnan Boulevard will become a walkable outdoor gathering place filled with shopping, food, music, creative activities, and family experiences. The free event presents Leimert Park as it has long existed: a place where Los Angeles gathers to celebrate life, creativity, history, and community.



First Saturdays offers activities for children, adults and families throughout Leimert Park Village. ALL CHILL Hip Hop Ice Cream Shop will host an in-store craft class, while LORE will present a children's storytime featuring Brown Skin, Curly Girl by Paula Swearingen.

The Leimert Park Village Merchants Association (LPVMA) established First Saturdays independently as Los Angeles prepares for the 2028 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The series is not presented as an official LA28 program.

Event: First Saturdays in Leimert Park Village
Date: Saturday, October 3, 2026
Time: 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
Location: 43rd Street and Degnan Boulevard, Los Angeles
Admission: Free
Activities: Vendor marketplace, merchant specials, jewelry-making, plant bingo, music and family activities
Metro: Take the K Line to Leimert Park Station and walk a short distance to the Village

Instagram: @leimertparkla

“This event is the first in a series leading up to LA28,” said Karen A. Clark, co-owner of the Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center, treasurer, and an executive board member of LPVMA. “We invite communities from across Southern California and beyond to get to know us and experience how Leimert Park Village brings cultures and history together. First Saturdays creates a platform to showcase the cultural richness that Los Angeles will share with visitors from around the world, especially in 2028. The support of District 10 Councilwoman Heather Hutt and the local community is instrumental in the activation of events like this."

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>
> *Karen A. Clark, co-owner of the Barbara Performing Arts Center.*

Leimert Park Village has long joined culture with commerce. The City of Los Angeles Department of Cultural Affairs identifies the Village as a historic center for Los Angeles’ African American cultural community. Its artistic life expanded in the late 1960s with the Brockman Gallery, and the Vision Theatre began serving the neighborhood as the Leimert Theatre in 1932. Over generations, merchants, musicians, artists, writers, restaurateurs, and community leaders have made the Village a destination where independent businesses also function as gathering places.

The history of the Village remains visible in Leimert Plaza Park, the Vision Theatre, and the storefronts and cultural spaces along Degnan Boulevard. First Saturdays carries that legacy forward by turning a day of discovery into direct support for the people who sustain it.

Jocelyn C Chambers, community organizer and founder of BLK Events LA, serves as a production partner for First Saturdays. BLK Events LA provides LPVMA with end-to-end production support, including organization, logistics, and marketing.

“Sandra Mejia of The Plant Chica and Milan Dwimfo of Sika x Queen Midas Gold first brought up First Saturdays as a way to bring people to the Village consistently and support the business owners who make it what it is,” Chambers said. “I hope it reminds natives, transplants, and tourists alike that Black-owned businesses are worth supporting all 365 days of the year — not just during Black History Month, Juneteenth, or Black Business Month. Consistency is the definition of support. Making ORA and Harun your regular coffee stops, LORE your learning haven, and ALL CHILL the place to satisfy your sweet tooth helps them stay open so they can keep supporting the community they opened for.”

Chambers said the event asks visitors to see Leimert Park as a living cultural center, not only a historic one. “Leimert Park is considered the mecca of Black culture for a reason,” Chambers

said. “We often consider that history, but I’m not sure we consider its present or future. When we spend time in Leimert Park and contribute to it with our creativity and our laughter, we become part of that mecca. We create the history we get to learn from and look back on with loving eyes.”

Visitors can move through the Village at their own pace, meet the entrepreneurs behind its storefronts, and experience food, fashion, wellness, recreation, literature, music, and performance within a few walkable blocks. The vendor marketplace, merchant specials, jewelry-making, plant bingo, live music, and family activities offer several entry points into the neighborhood, while every purchase keeps more spending in the district.

Participating businesses include ALL CHILL Hip Hop Ice Cream Shop, the Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center, Harun Coffee, LA Native, Lion Buttaz, LORE, Nappily Naturals, Neighbors Skate Shop, ORA, The Plant Chica, Queen Aminah’s Clothing, Ride On! Bike Co-op, The World Stage, SIKA by Queen Midas Gold and Sole Folks.

Guests can begin with food and community programming at ORA, visit Harun Coffee and its performance lounge, browse books and programming at LORE, or explore the retail cooperative and creative programs at Sole Folks. Leimert Plaza Park and the Vision Theatre add public space and architectural history to the route.



Queen Aminah’s Clothing will offer live entertainment and outdoor drumming, and SIKA by Queen Midas Gold will host a jewelry class and Shibori Dye Lab. The Barbara Morrison Performing Arts Center hosts Kids & Family Karaoke from noon to 3 p.m. Photo: Bill Masivi



Music, art and live performances will be featured during First Saturday event. The World Stage will present drum, jazz vocal and musicians’ workshops. Free Yoga at the Park led by Black Women’s Yoga Co., and play 25 rounds of Plant Bingo at 4 p.m.

Genelle Brooks-Petty, a fourth-generation Leimert Park resident, vice president of LPVMA and co-owner and head ice cream maker at ALL CHILL Hip Hop Ice Cream Shop, said the Village's future depends on the people who care for it every day. "The merchants and organizations are there every day maintaining the buildings, sweeping the sidewalks and pouring into an economy that is necessary to build an underserved community," Brooks-Petty said. "The guardians of the Village are not only preserving its historic Black culture. They are moving it forward."



The Leimert Park Village Merchants Association consists of entrepreneurs who are the stewards of Black culture, history, and sustainability in the Los Angeles community.

For a car free commute, attendees can take Metro's K Line to Leimert Park Station at Crenshaw Boulevard and Vernon Avenue, then walk a short distance to 43rd Street and Degnan Boulevard. Guests should check the Metro Trip Planner before traveling to confirm routes, transfers, and service information.



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LPVMA invites residents, families, community organizations, and tourists from across Southern California and beyond to attend, meet the merchants, and experience the Village firsthand. Admission is free. Attendees, journalists, and media representatives may contact LPVMA at leimertparkmerchant@gmail.com or 323-366-0213.

About the Leimert Park Village Merchants Association

The Leimert Park Village Merchants Association represents brick-and-mortar businesses, restaurants, cultural venues, and service providers operating in Leimert Park Village. LPVMA strengthens the local economy, supports merchants, preserves the Village's Black cultural legacy, and promotes collaboration among businesses, residents, visitors, event organizers, and

community organizations.

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