

## ***Jewish in LA***

The Jewish community in Los Angeles comprises over half the Jewish population in California and over 8% nationwide. Since the late 1980's, Los Angeles has been home to the world's second largest Jewish population. Only New York can boast a larger one.

In the popular mind, perceptions of the Jewish community as ubiquitous figures in Hollywood and the entertainment industry prevail. While it is indeed true that the number of Jewish people in that business far exceed their proportion of the population at large, such a view is simplistic and clouds the fact that they make invaluable contributions across the board, playing a key role in the political, cultural, social and economic life of Los Angeles. The depth and complexity of the Jewish experience in Los Angeles deserves more attention, but it is unquestionable that their involvement in strengthening the economy of the region is substantial.

## ***Koreans in LA***

In the last 30 years, the Korean community in Los Angeles has exploded. In 1970, US Census figures counted 9,000 Korean immigrants, the 2000 US Census counted 1,100,000. Korean immigrants are known for their entrepreneurship and community revitalization.

One of the key aspects of the Korean expansion in Los Angeles has been the successful purchase and restoration/reorganization of formerly dilapidated real estate. Koreatown, located on Wilshire and Olympic between Normandie and Hoover is larger than Chinatown or Little Tokyo. The economic power of the Korean community was clear in 1988 when the Los Angeles Times released a supplement titled "The Koreatown News" encouraging advertisers to connect with the large (and prosperous) Korean population. The exceptional entrepreneurship of the Korean community has allowed them to create an involved presence throughout Los Angeles.

## ***Russians in LA***

The Russian-speaking community in Los Angeles, numbering 600,000, is one of the five largest in the U.S. and the largest on the West Coast.

Although members of this community love their language and are proud of their culture and traditions, they have unquestionably adjusted well to life in Los Angeles, whether as professionals, small business owners or performers. Not surprisingly, actors of Russian-American origin, like their counterparts in other ethnic groups, flock to Los Angeles in search of stardom. At last count, from the ranks of the thousands of starving want-to-be's from this group; at least seven have emerged to star in major Hollywood productions.

## ***Thai in LA***

With 120,000 Thai-Americans in Los Angeles, the Thai community is a very new but nonetheless prominent cultural force in Los Angeles. Most Thai people moved here in the early 1970's, seeking not refuge but rather to benefit from the economic and educational opportunities America provides. In Los Angeles, Thai Town has emerged in Hollywood near the Los Feliz district.

English instruction is introduced very early in the Thai educational system. Thus the Thai community has moved easily into the hospitality industry, with Thai restaurants becoming as ubiquitous as coffee shops. A community known for its adaptability, the Thai New Year (Songkran) is celebrated in mid-April with a big parade and street fair in Thai Town.