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HUFFPOST LOS ANGELES

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LA Date Night: Sailing In Marina del Rey



City's Best™

The Marina is closer to you -- and a more feasible LA Date Night -- than you'd think. It's a tranquil nook of half-underwater, all-man made land tucked under Venice Beach just four miles away from LAX -- and it's best known for its boats. Why not charter a sailboat for the evening, clock a sunset, and dock off at a live Latin jazz concert in the park? Exactly -- silly question.

Blue Pacific Boating: We "tested" a 46-foot Beneteau sailboat called D Squared (you're welcome). It's rather fantastic. Blue Pacific Boating offers four-hour afternoon and sunset sails, and in addition to a big fancy boat, you get a licensed captain with your ride. He or she will point out targets of interests ("Look! Dolphins!" and "That's the Santa Monica Pier."), and more importantly, make sure you and your lover's heads don't get knocked out by the boom. (Sailing lessons are also available.) And, hey, hipsters, you can finally wear your boat shoes on an actual boat!

Blue Pacific Boating, 13444 Bali Way #100, at Admiralty Way (310-305-7245 or bluepacificboating.com)

Mendocino Farms: There's no buffet on the boat (note: not a cruise ship!). But it's two-snaps easy to build your own buffet with takeaway fare at Mendocino Farms. Its third iteration is inside the Waterside Marina Shopping Center, and as Downtown denizens are well-aware, a Chef Judy sandwich is a revelation in your hands. The Kurobuta Pork Belly Banh Mi is most popular, and you'll absolutely want a carton of Korean potato salad. For an alternative dessert,

get the bacon and housemade peanut butter to share -- the whole wheat sandwich is also stuffed with cranberry chutney, crushed honey-roasted almonds and sliced green apples.
Mendocino Farms, 4724 Admiralty Way, at Fiji Way (310-822-2300 or mendocinofarms.com)

Burton W. Chace Park: The Marina's 10-acre park is one of the few available parks in Los Angeles County surrounded by three sides of water. In the summer months, Burton W. Chace Park hosts outdoor concerts -- certain Thursdays are reserved for classical and certain Saturdays for pop. Pop is a loose term, of course; we're particularly keen on getting a good park patch for July 30th's Latin jazz show featuring Tito Puente, Jr. Bring blankets, low beach chairs and the rest of your picnic here and cozy up to the cool Marina breeze.

Burton W. Chace Park, 13650 Mindanao Way, at Admiralty Way (310-305-9595 or chacepark.com)