One of the first areas of Los Angeles west of Figueroa Street to see residential development, by the 1920s, Westlake/Pico Union resembled the Upper East Side of Manhattan. Wealthy businessmen commuted to downtown, Wilshire Center, Hollywood, and the Miracle Mile from the district's Spanish Revival and Art Deco mansions. The district's northeastern blocks also became the home of Los Angeles' Filipino community, much of which remains in Westlake and nearby neighborhoods to this day.

In addition to MacArthur Park, Westlake plays host to a number of Los Angeles landmarks. Numerous Los Angeles culinary landmarks also lie within the neighborhood. One of the few reminders of the area's Jewish history is Langer's Deli at Wilshire Boulevard and Alvarado Street, a delicatessen whose hot pastrami sandwiches have been declared the finest in the United States by The New Yorker magazine. The first American location of Mexican restaurant chain El Pollo Loco opened on Alvarado Street, and the first Tommy's hamburger stand still operates at the corner of Beverly and Rampart Boulevards.

Located on Venice Boulevard in the Pico Union area, Loyola High School is one of the oldest continuously run educational institution in Southern California. Loyola was founded in 1865, and became a Jesuit institution in 1911.

Westlake - Los Angeles Times Neighborhood Profile

Pico Union - Los Angeles Times Neighborhood Profile

Macarthur Park