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Four Escape Rooms to Try This Summer

By Joseph Torres

Now that summer's here and 70 percent of adults in California have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, you might be looking for new ways to get out and celebrate with friends and family. Here's a suggestion: Try an escape room. These immersive experiences test your brainpower, intelligence, awareness, teamwork, patience and ability to work under pressure.

We asked Hiroki Yamaguchi, 24, an English major at Cal State Long Beach who's completed nearly 70 escape rooms, for recommendations about which spots to visit this summer. Here are his top four escape rooms in Southern California



Hiroki Yamaguchi, his girlfriend Paulene Le, and their friend Lisa Yee after escaping from 60Out's Hyde Circus. *Photo courtesy Hiroki Yamaguchi*

60Out: Freedom to Pick and Choose

Whether you are a novice or a seasoned veteran of escape rooms, [60Out](#) has a room for you. The 60Out business boasts one of the largest rosters of escape rooms in Southern California, with seven locations around Los Angeles. Their website even offers an exclusively online room and a virtual adaptation of one of their on-site rooms, Miss Jezebel.

With a litany of themes and rooms for beginners, families, big groups, horror fans, challenge-seekers and magic buffs, 60Out is the prime destination for starting a streak or giving the industry your first shot.



Players enter the Pink Pyramid in adventurer's gear in Quest Room's Red Giant. *Photo courtesy Quest Room*

Quest Room: Crown Jewel of LA County

[Quest Room](#) has two locations in Los Angeles and one in Redondo Beach, but the primary room to look out for is [Red Giant](#) at the Santa Monica Boulevard location. In this room, Quest Room added a deep feeling of immersion that few rooms had before. Interactions with sounds, props and moving parts make every discovery more realistic.

“Prior to having done the room, it was reported by a lot of people and blogs saying Red Giant was the number one escape room in all of L.A.,” Yamaguchi says. “After having done it, I could totally see why people would think so.”

In the room, it is your team’s job to find the Red Giant, the most valuable ruby in the world, buried in the Pink Pyramid with treasure potentially worth billions. Players must work quickly as pressure builds in the pyramid and oxygen becomes limited.



Find the door with the green light in Koreatown to start your Stash House experience. *Photo courtesy Tommy Honton*

Stash House: Ready. Set. Go.

[Stash House](#) starts before you realize it. Once you find the mysterious door with the green light in Koreatown, you turn the knob to begin your experience. What might seem like just another anonymous office actually reveals itself to be the apartment of notorious drug kingpin Ray Jones.

“We wanted to write this love letter to Los Angeles that would make a very unique story in a very unique world and a very unique setting,” says Tommy Honton, Stash House’s designer and co-owner. “We didn’t want the cheesiness of someone in a lobby telling you a story and opening a door to a castle with drop ceilings, beat it, walk out and that’s it.”

At Stash House, there is no break in reality. The entire design of the room is such that you could plausibly believe they just happened to step into a real apartment in the middle of Koreatown.



Players are broken up into their own individual rooms based on the role they are playing in the Hex Room. *Photo courtesy Cross Roads Escape Games*

Cross Roads Escape Games: Master of Replayability

[Cross Roads Escape Games](#) in Anaheim hosts [Hex Room](#), which presents the question: Would you survive a horror movie?

“Before your game, every player is required to take our character questionnaire,” says Madison Rhoades, owner and creative director. “It helps us determine what character you will play: nerd, jock, prom queen, virgin, rebel or detective.”

Based on their role, players are given an appropriate costume and sequestered into their own individual room. Each player must play their role in a horror movie and see to it that their character makes it out alive.

Due to the variety of roles, Hex Room is repeatable, and returning guests can inform the game masters which role they have already played.