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 ONE HUNDRED HIKES

TRIP: Icehouse Canyon to Icehouse Saddle

96 8 miles round trip; 2600' elevation gain

Classification: Moderate

Season: June-October

Topo maps: *Mt. Baldy, Cucamonga Peak*

FEATURES

Icehouse Canyon is the hikers' gateway to the eastern high country and the Cucamonga Wilderness. Its broad, V-shaped portal leads east from San Antonio Canyon, 1½ miles north of Mt. Baldy Village, and climbs 2600' to Icehouse Saddle, a prominent gap on the great Telegraph-Ontario Ridge. The saddle is a major trail junction, with routes leading in four directions.

For hikers of moderate ability, the trip up canyon to Icehouse Saddle is rewarding. You pass through some of the finest stands of incense cedar in the range, and the ponderosa and sugar pines are healthy and towering. From the saddle, you look into the inviting Cucamonga Wilderness country and down over the Lytle Creek drainage.

Legend has it that the magnificent cedar beams for Mission San Gabriel were cut in the canyon, then laboriously dragged down to the lowland by oxen teams. For years, it was known as Cedar Canyon (now the name for a tributary of Icehouse Canyon). The present name dates from the 1860s, when an ice plant in the lower canyon supplied ice to valley residents.

The lower reaches of the canyon are dotted with private cabins. Once there were many more; the big flood of 1938 wreaked havoc here, as it did in other canyons of the range. Today, the boulder-strewn floor of Icehouse Canyon bears testimony to nature's torrential fury.

DESCRIPTION

Drive to Icehouse Canyon Resort, 1½ miles above Mt.

TRAILS OF THE ANGELES

Baldy Village just off the San Antonio Canyon Road. Park in the parking area immediately below the resort. (deceased)

Walk up the trail that starts just to the right of the resort. In the first 1½ miles you pass many private cabins, climbing gently through a forest of oak, big-cone spruce, and incense cedar. You reach a junction: left, up the slope, is the new trail to Cedar Flats (1 mile) and the "high route" to Icehouse Saddle; right, straight ahead, is the old trail up the canyon. The new "high route" is easier walking, but the old canyon way is shorter — take your choice. The canyon trail passes more cabins, then zigzags several hundred feet up the north slope before dropping back into the canyon and crossing the creek. In 3 miles you reach Columbine Spring, a small water seepage just below the trail. This is the last water enroute. Beyond, the trail switchbacks steeply through tall pines and firs, makes a junction with the new "high route," and reaches Icehouse Saddle, 4 miles from the start. You now stand on the western boundary of the Cucamonga Wilderness, and have several options.

You can take a good look, then return the way you came. You can turn left (north) and follow the trail that climbs around the west slope of Timber Mountain, over Telegraph Peak, and drops to Baldy Notch (see trip 95). You can turn hard right (southwest) and take the lateral trail to Kelly Camp and Ontario Peak (see trip 97). You can go right (southeast) on the trail that contours around the east slopes of Bighorn Peak to Cucamonga Saddle, then climb the north face of Cucamonga Peak (see trip 98). Or you can drop eastward down the Middle Fork Trail to Lytle Creek (see trip 99).

Whichever option you take, you are sure to travel through some of the finest high country in the range.

How about if we go up on the old trail and come back on the upper "Chapman" trail and down Cedar Canyon?

