

## OTP &amp; OTHERS

Crystal Cove State Park - Hike or Bike on the Ocean side of PCH - July 29, 2009

Trip data:

Distance: Hike: 7 miles, round trip; Bike: 18 miles, round trip  
 Elevation gain: 0-200 feet loss and gain for hikers, depending on route taken; 0 - 400 feet for bikers  
 Effort: Easy to Moderate

From the 405 south or the 55 south (from the 5 south), turn onto the 73 south. Exit the 73 at the Macarthur Blvd exit heading south. Take Macarthur (for just about 3 miles) until it ends at the Pacific Coast Highway (Route 1). Turn left (south) and proceed for about 3.7 miles until the street sign that says Reef Point. You'll pass Poppy Street (our Reef Point entrance to Crystal Cove State Park is about 2 miles past this point), Newport Coast Drive, and various Crystal Cove signs along the way. (There are many other Crystal Cove State Park sites on this drive). Shortly past the end of the shopping area on the left side of PCH, there's a street sign that says Reef Point or Reef Point Drive. Make a right turn into the Reef Point entrance to Crystal Cove State Park. After the kiosk, head to the left (the south side of the parking area). This is close to picnic tables and to the very end of the hiking trail where we'll be going initially.

The hike begins at the southern end of the trail at the beach just past Reef Point. We go north to the opposite end of the park, parallel to the beach, on the hiker's choice of various mixes of beach walking or trail walking on the bluffs. Much of the basic hiking trail is a paved bicycle trail with wide dirt shoulders for those who wish to avoid hiking on hard surfaces. One can switch from the beach to the bluffs at many points along the way often with occasional short walks down/up stairs, and there are many spots to either stop or return for those wishing a shorter hike. We will pass the Historic District with older cabins, and plan to take the beach north to catch one of the trail loops to the boardwalk which begins at a bluff nearby. We'll follow the boardwalk and go northwest on the basic bike trail. We will take a loop trail here from the bluffs to near the beach, which has a few formal nice viewpoints. We then continue along the trail past the Pelican Point parking area until a viewpoint above Little Treasure Cove. We end the outward leg by going down to the beach from the viewpoint on the trail to Little Treasure Cove. Coming back, I recommend going south on the beach for a short bit and then up to the bluffs back to the trail we had been on. One can then return either the same way one came or choose a different mix of bluff trail, loop trail, and beach walks.

The bikers will ride northwest on the bike path through Crystal Cove State Park. At the northwest end of the park we will ride 3/4 of a mile or so on a sidewalk adjacent to PCH. Next we ride on Corona Del Mar neighborhood streets to Marine Ave/Jamboree Rd. and cross over the bridge to Balboa Island. We ride up through Balboa and take the ferry over to Balboa Peninsula (fare: \$1.25). Next, we will ride up the beach bike path to the Newport Pier. Lunch will be at the picnic tables by the pier. You can bring lunch or buy it. You can buy food at either of two hot dog/burger places, Charlie's Chili, The Crab Cooker and various other food vendors. On the return ride, depending on available time, we can walk the pier, ride to Balboa Peninsula Point and/or Little Treasure Cove. You will need \$2.50 for the ferry (both ways) and money for lunch if you decide to buy it. It would be a good idea to bring a cell phone and water.

Crystal Cove State Park parking fees are \$10/vehicle so car-pooling would save funds. This is a State Park fee so if you have an annual State Park pass, that would allow you to avoid the fee (at least it did the last time). Restroom facilities are available at the parking area and along the hike. Refreshments will likely be at the picnic tables near the Reef Point parking area.

We will start the hike at 9:30 AM.

Recommended Maps: Good Crystal Cove State Park maps can be obtained at the entry kiosk and will be provided to OTP hikers.