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10-17-90 9:30
HENRY

Cabrillo Beach Trail

Cabrillo Beach to White's Point: 3 miles round trip

All but forgotten, the rocky cove just down-coast from White's Point in San Pedro once flourished as a Roaring '20s health spa and resort. All that remain are some sea-battered cement ruins and lush overgrown gardens.

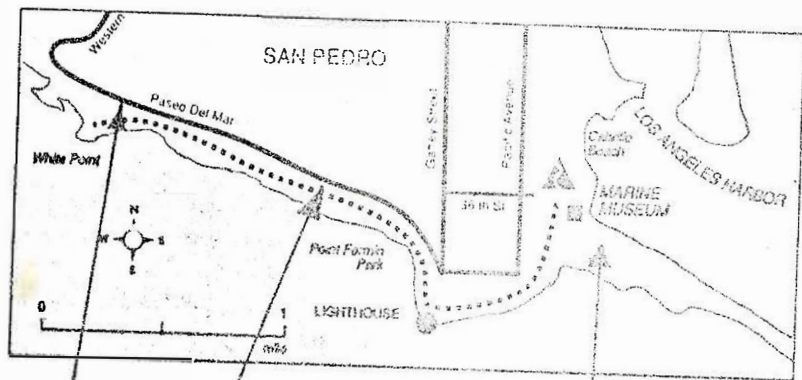
White's Point was originally settled at the turn of the century by immigrant Japanese fishermen who harvested the bountiful abalone from the waters off Palos Verdes Peninsula. Tons of abalone were shipped to the Far East and tons more were consumed locally in Los Angeles' Little Tokyo. In a few years the abalone was depleted, but an even greater resource was discovered at White's Point—sulfur springs.

In 1915, construction of a spa began. Eventually the large Royal Palms Hotel was built at water's edge. Palm gardens and a golf course decorated the cliffs above. The sulfur baths were especially popular with the Japanese population of Southern California.

The spa boomed in the '20s, but the 1933 earthquake closed the springs. The cove became part of Fort McArthur during World War II; the Japanese-American settlers were incarcerated in internment camps, and the resort was soon overwhelmed by crumbling cliffs and the powerful sea.

This walk begins at Cabrillo Beach, the only real sand beach for miles to the north and south, passes Cabrillo Marine Museum, and ends up at historic White's Point. For the most part, this walk stays atop the San Pedro and Palos Verdes Bluffs, but there's ample opportunity on this easy family excursion to descend to the sea. Your hiking and tidepool-viewing pleasure will be increased immeasurably if you walk during low tide.

Cabrillo Marine Museum is well worth a visit. It has marine displays,



46 END 2 START

END 1

ALMOST TO END OF STREET. AT 4 WAY BOULEVARD STOP MAKE A RIGHT TURN AND GO APPROX. 0.6 MILE AND MAKE A U-TURN AND PARK ALONG THE PARK.

aquariums with live fish and good shell collections. One exhibit interprets the history of White's Point. The museum sponsors tidepool walks, grunion watches and is a coordinating point for whale watching cruises.

Directions to trailhead: Take the Harbor Freeway south to San Pedro and exit on Gaffey Street. Follow Gaffey seaward to 22nd and turn left. Turn right on Pacific Avenue and then left on 36th Street. Free parking is available either near the museum or at Cabrillo Beach.

The Walk: Walk up sandy Cabrillo Beach, which has a monopoly on the grunion, since the sand-seeking fish have few other spawning options along Palos Verdes Peninsula. You'll soon pass the San Pedro breakwater and Cabrillo fishing pier. John Olguin, former Cabrillo Marine Museum Director, says that one of his favorite walks is atop the breakwater. "Great on a brisk winter day. Superb view of Los Angeles Harbor, and you might even spot a whale on the horizon."

Just up-coast from Cabrillo Beach is the rocky shoreline of Point Fermin Marine Life Refuge. Limpets, crabs and lobsters are a few of the many creatures found in the bountiful tidepools. After rock-hopping among the tidepools, you must follow a dirt path or the paved road up to the top of the coastal bluffs; it is all but impossible to walk around Point Fermin via the shoreline route. Walk uphill along Bluff Place to a parking lot at the terminus of Pacific Avenue and join a blufftop trail. This path takes you past remains of "Sunken City," a 1930s housing tract built on bluffs that soon collapsed. Palm trees and huge chunks of asphalt are all that remain of the ocean side housing tract.

Soon you'll arrive at Point Fermin Park and its handsome Victorian-style lighthouse, built in 1874 from materials shipped around Cape Horn. Shortly after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, the lighthouse became an observation point.

Two coastal accessways lead down the park's bluffs to the rocky shoreline. As you near White's Point, you'll see a palm garden with fire pits. Royal Palms Hotel was once situated here until overcome by the sea. Storm-twisted palms and overgrown gardens are a reminder of flush times long passed. Royal Palms is a state beach popular with surfers.

Ahead at White's Point are some curious cement remains of the resort. Beyond the point stretch the rugged cliffs and cobblestone shores of Palos Verdes Peninsula. Return the same way or if you have the time, walk on. The difficult terrain will ensure that few follow in your footsteps.

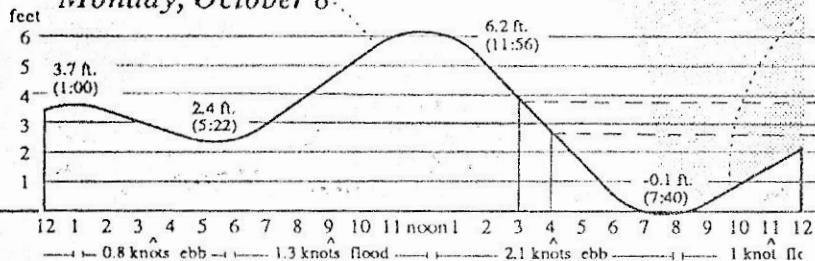
START TO END, SURFACE STREET ROUND TRIP
START TO END w/ SHORE LINE GOING SURFACE STREET RETURN 47

OTP Hike #0045

sunrise 6:52 sunset 6:28

Columbus Day

Monday, October 8



Wednesday, October 17

