

673

Hike for August 6, 2003 - The Canals of Venice

Approximate length = 6 miles

Elevation Change = 10 ft.

Trail Head = 28th St. and Dell, Venice, CA. Come down Washington Blvd almost to the end (Venice Pier), turn right on Dell and park near first bridge you come to.

Parking = Street parking is recommended. We saw many open spaces on Friday morning. There are no street sweeping restrictions on Wednesday. Parking at the Venice pier parking lot costs \$6.75. Parking in shopping centers is not recommended because of the possibility of towing.

Venice California originally was to be a copy of Venice, Italy, canals and all. The original 16 miles of canals were dug in 1904 under the direction of Abbot Kinney. Man and mule worked around the clock to dig the canals in time for the grand opening of Venice on July 4, 1905. By the twenties, the automobile had made its mark and was here to stay. The canals were not practical for the horseless carriage. In 1929 the majority of the canals were filled in and converted to roads.

In the sixties the canals were home to beatniks and artists, which soon gave way to the hippies. Rock bands and pot parties were the norm. Jim Morrison of The Doors called the canals home during the 60s. As real estate prices skyrocketed in the late seventies, the houses along the canals were remodeled and homes were built on the numerous vacant lots. Soon the affluent homeowners replaced the artists and Bohemians.

In 1994 after nearly thirty years of talks, Los Angeles refurbished the six remaining canals for \$6,000,000. Some of the most beautiful homes on Los Angeles' West Side line the canals maintaining a unique community atmosphere. The canals today provide a sense of serenity that Venetians and tourists alike greatly appreciate.

Refreshments at the trailhead.

Jim Carlin

TRAILHEAD

