

714

Hike June 16, 2004  
Sandstone Peak Loop  
Mishe Mokwa - Backbone Trails  
Hiking Distance: 6-mile loop  
Elevation gain: 1,100 feet

Directions to Trail Head:

From the valley, you can take Mulholland Drive to Little Sycamore Canyon Road meeting up with Yerba Buena Road. Go to the Backbone Trailhead parking lot on the right. It would be past the VC7.0 sign. Coming up PCH go up Yerba Buena Rd. approximately 1 mile past Circle X Ranch & turn left into the Backbone Trailhead parking lot. You could also take the Ventura FWY to Las Posas Rd. & go south to Yerba Buena.

The only bathroom available is at Circle X Ranch.

Hiking Directions: Take the Backbone Trail (a fire road) uphill to the north. At 0.3 miles, leave the road & take the signed Mishe Mokwa Connector Trail straight ahead. Continue 0.2 miles to a junction with the Mishe Mokwa Trail & take the left fork. The trail contours along Boney Mountain on the western edge of Carlisle Canyon. A 1.4 miles, Balanced Rock can be seen on the opposite side of the canyon. Descend into the canyon shaded by laurel, oak and sycamore trees to Split Rock and the picnic area. (Might be a good cookie break). Take the trail across the stream, heading out of the canyon to another stream crossing by sculptured volcanic rocks. Parallel the stream (very little water) to a signed junction. Take the left fork -- the Backbone Trail -- curving uphill towards Inspiration Point. A short side path leads up to the overlook. (Might be a good lunch spot. Only place there are rocks to sit down on.) Continue east on the Backbone Trail to another junction. This side trail switchbacks up to the 360-degree views at Sandstone Peak. From the junction, it is 0.8 miles downhill back to the Mishe Mokwa Junction, completing the loop. The only extra hiking I could find would be out to the Tripeaks area & back adding another mile. It's marked on the Backbone Trail. Sandstone Peak is the highest point in the Santa Monica Mountains. It overlooks the Pacific Ocean, the Channel Islands, and the surrounding mountains. (It was foggy when I scouted the hike, so I didn't see much. Made for a nice hiking day, however.)

We'll have refreshments back at the parking lot where there are 2 picnic tables.

I'll have some maps available at hike time, but it's pretty clear where to hike.