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La Jolla Canyon Hike

Aug. 4, 2004

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Trail Head: La Jolla Canyon Parking Lot. You have to pay money to park here. I don't remember how much but I think it was about 4 or 5 dollars. It is located on PCH shortly after you enter Ventura County.

Please refer to the map I passed out on Tom's hike on July 14 at San Gabriel Canyon West Fork for the Spot Numbers and trail colors referred to herein. If you missed Tom's hike I have some more maps later on.

Long Hike (Orange Line): 10 miles 1700 ft. elev. gain.

Short Hike (Green Line): 7 miles 1200 ft. elev. gain.

Long Hike (Orange Line). Spot 1 to 2: Take the road by the bathroom. This road will slowly rise till you come pretty close to Spot 2 at which time the trail will start rising earnestly. Spot 2 is a "Y" and those who are on the long hike (orange line) will take the left fork and those on the short hike (green line) will take the right fork. Elevation here is about 600ft.

Spot 2 to 3. The trail will go down a little bit and cross the stream and turn around and will start climbing for about 200 feet and then slowly goes down to Spot 3 which is famous for abandoned inclined water tank hidden among the trees. You make a left turn here.

Spot 3 to 4. You cross a stream and then start climbing in earnest for about 400 feet and go around a bend and go practically horizontally till you come to Spot 4, which is located about 20 or 30 feet below the saddle. You are overlooking the ocean while in this area.

Spot 4 to 5. The trail will gradually go down to Spot 5. You will be seeing the beautiful ocean on your left during this descent. At Spot 5 you see a very steep trail coming up from the ocean on your left. Don't turn and go down.

Spot 5 to 9, via 6, 7, and 8: This part of the trail is a more or less level straight trail. However depending upon the season sometimes there is a growth of grass-like vegetation taller than you, so stay on the trail and do not stray off because you won't be able to see where you are going. Sometimes the grass is dead and all dried up like hay so you have no difficulty seeing where you are going. Shortly after spot 8 there are picnic tables hidden among the trees on your left. At Spot 9 you will see a trail merging from the right, which is the short hike trail (green line).

Spot 9 to 10. You start climbing for about 100 feet and come to a saddle with a crossroad. If you go straight you will come down to Sycamore Canyon so don't go straight but turn right.

Spot 10 to 11. You start climbing for about 200 feet till you come to Spot 11 which is kind of a saddle with elevation of 1120 feet and is the highest point of the hike. The trail around here is mostly on the ridge and is pretty easy walking.

Spot 11 to 12. This is an easy descent. At Spot 12 the main trail turns left and goes down to Sycamore Canyon, so instead you go straight.

Spot 12 to 1. At first the trail gently ascends but pretty soon it will start descending with numerous switchbacks and come down to the parking lot.

Short Hike (green line); Spot 1 to 2. Same as long hike.

Spot 2 to 13. Now the elevation gain becomes pretty gentle and you gain only about 100 feet and you will come to a "Y". The left trail will go by the famous pond but you take the right trail.

Spot 13 to 9. This is again a gentle climb and you will meet the trail the long hikers are taking (orange line).

Spot 9 to 1 via 10,11,12: Same as long hike.