

# June 16, 2010 #997 -- Backbone Trail Below the Castro Crest -- Ron Obert

Battle of Bunker Hill (Actually Breed's Hill). 1775

OTP Hike #997

*nice hiking weather*

From the top of Corral Canyon, most maps show a nice loop west consisting of the Backbone Trail and the Castro Peak Motorway. However, the rise of the Castro Peak Ogre, complete with his gates, barbed wire, cameras, and legal team has killed that option. We will avoid this problem by staying south of his domain. Our hike is primarily along the Backbone Trail, and includes 5.2, 5.7, and 8.0 mile options. The 8.0 mile option includes a loop at its western end.

**Trailhead:** Continue 2.3 miles west of Malibu Canyon Road on Pacific Coast Highway, to the intersection with Corral Canyon Road. Proceed north on Corral Canyon Road for 5.4 miles, to the dirt trailhead parking. No restrooms are available at the trailhead.

**Hike:** Proceed west on the Backbone Trail. **The 5.2 mile option** is in and out to the saddle below Castro Peak, identified as elevation 2250 on the map. (You will receive a map on hike day.) This is the same saddle that was the turnaround for many hikers about a year ago, when we hiked the Backbone Trail east from Kanan Dume road.

From the saddle **the 5.7 mile option** continues south on the Newton Motorway, up past a gate, and around a rather sharp turn. Shortly after the turn, a use trail to the right leads up to a small peak and good viewpoint. The viewpoint is at the location of the "Y" of "Newton Motorway", on the map. A return from here will result in 5.7 miles.

*(@people 7.9 miles 1460 feet 2hr 45min.)*  
**The 8.0 mile option** continues down the Newton Motorway to Latigo Canyon Road. About .4 miles upward along the road, gets you to a dirt turnout and the point at which the Backbone Trail crosses Latigo Canyon Road. Complete the hike by following the Backbone east, back to our trailhead.

Elevation gains for this hike are modest. The trailhead is at 2000 feet, and other data points on the map, in order, are: 1910, 2250, 2075, 2030, and 2125. As always there's up and down, but my estimate is that the full hike will result in less than a thousand feet.

If tigers want a little more, upon returning to the small barren saddle at 1910 feet, they may get to the trailhead via an overgrown dirt road that leads up to the Castro Peak Motorway. For the purpose of locating this small option; note that the high voltage power lines are exactly along the NPS / State Park boundary. *(Mike, Alice - did caves)*