



Hiking Guides/Tours

Big Wheel Tours

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Easy Hiking Trails

Ancient Lake Cahuilla Overlook

Cove Oasis, La Quinta, CA 92253

Total Distance: 2.6 miles

Description:

Greater Palm Springs' reputation as an oasis stretches back thousands of years, and hikers can see remnants of the area's ancient past on this scenic excursion through the Southern Santa Rosa Mountains. The Ancient Lake Cahuilla Overlook is exactly that — a panoramic view of what was once a large freshwater lake teeming with fish and stretching almost 100 miles, from northern Mexico to present-day Indio. Mountain bikers and horses also frequent the trail, which climbs 288 feet and departs from the Cove Oasis Trailhead in La Quinta for a total of 2.6 miles round-trip. Free parking is available at the corner of Avenida Bermudas and Calle Tecate. To access the overlook, follow the Cove Oasis Trailhead as if you were taking the La Quinta Cove to Lake Cahuilla Trail. After approximately 1.3 miles, turn onto the path that cuts off to the left and up, where the overlook, and an incredible look into Greater Palm Springs' past, await.

Randall Henderson Wash Loop

Randall Henderson, Palm Desert, CA 92260

Total Distance 1.1 miles

Description:

The Randall Henderson Wash Loop, the shortest of three hikes that depart from the main Randall Henderson Trailhead off Highway 74, immerses hikers in the breathtaking natural beauty of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, which encompasses more than 280,000 acres across Greater Palm Springs. The easy 1.1-mile loop only gains approximately 200

feet in elevation and is great for family nature walks, with fields of wildflowers blanketing the sandy landscape in winter and spring and native wildlife, such as bighorn sheep and desert tortoises, occasionally making an appearance along the trail. (You can learn more about native wildlife at the monument's visitor center, where free parking, restrooms, and trail maps are available.) At the trailhead, turn left about .45 miles in; continue left around the loop — keeping an eye out for runners, mountain bikers, and equestrians, who also share the trail — to return to your car.

Moderate Hiking Trails

Bump & Grind Loop

Painter's Path, Palm Desert, CA 92260

Total Distance: 3 miles

Description:

Wellness and natural wonder go hand in hand in Greater Palm Springs — so it's no surprise that the Bump & Grind Loop, a moderate 3-mile hike that scales the Northern Santa Rosa Mountains, is one of the destination's most popular outings for those with exercise on the mind. On any given day, you'll see hikers, runners, and even cyclists traversing the steep trail, which climbs approximately 960 feet and intersects several other routes along the way. The workout begins on Painter's Path, located behind the Desert Crossings shopping center in Palm Desert, with parking available on the paved street. Though you can tackle the loop trail in either direction, clockwise offers a steeper climb up (if you prefer a sharper decline, then head counterclockwise and be sure to wear shoes with good traction). You'll first take a left on Hopalong Cassidy then continue to Herb Jeffries, which leads to the ridgeline and will cross an unpaved road — the actual “Bump & Grind” portion of the trail — about 1.25 miles in. At the Mike Schuler Trail, take a hairpin turn to the right and continue for about another mile until you reach the parking area.

The Cross

Homme Adams, Palm Desert, CA 92260

Total Distance: 2.2 miles

Description:
The Cross in Palm Desert has become a local landmark. Hikers, bikers, and their leashed pups make the 2.2-mile trek through the lower reaches of the Santa Rosa Mountains for Instagram-worthy pics with a giant lit-up cross, which can be seen for miles when illuminating the night sky. The 689-foot climb features stunning vistas of palm trees, swimming pools, and golf courses below (sunrise and sunset offer the best lighting but prepare for heavier foot traffic on the trail). Unlike the Cross Loop Trail, which begins at Cahuilla Hills Park and clocks in at a slightly longer 2.7-mile trip, this out-and-back path sets out from nearby Homme-Adams Park, a beautiful 27-acre nature space with picnic seating and a large off-leash area for dogs. Parking is available in the unpaved lot off Thrush Road. From there, follow the Homestead Trail up to Hopalong Cassidy. Turn left, and hike for another 1.1 miles until The Cross appears amid the hilltops.

Randall Henderson Canyon Loop

Randall Henderson, Palm Desert, CA 92260

Total Distance: 2.5 miles

Description:

For the perfect blend of distance, difficulty, and dramatic mountain backdrop, embark on the Randall Henderson Canyon Loop, a moderate 2.5-mile trail that traverses the sandy washes and

canyons of the lower Santa Rosa Mountains. The main Randall Henderson Trailhead, located off Highway 74 near the visitor center for the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, offers a trio of loop hikes; the Canyon Loop, the longest of the three, is open to hikers, runners, mountain bikers, and equestrians of all ages and gradually scales about 500 feet. The wet season (November–April) rewards travelers with a kaleidoscope of colorful wildflowers in full bloom, scattered among the cacti, mesquite trees, and desert scrub. Wildlife sightings are also common along this trail; learn more about some of the local species, such as the bighorn sheep and desert tortoise, at the visitor center, where you'll also find exhibits on the monument's trails and indigenous history, as well as free parking, maps, and restrooms.