

USE AT YOUR OWN RISK

Margarita Peak

3,189'

Location: Santa Ana Mountains
Maps: Cleveland National Forest
Topo: Margarita Peak 7.5, Fallbrook 7.5

Primary Route: 0.8 mile, 700' gain one way

Driving Instruction: High clearance vehicle required, AWD recommended!

- From I-15 (past Lake Elsinore) take the Clinton Keith Road exit and drive 1 mile to Grand Ave. (Coming from Ortega Highway, turn right on Grand Avenue and go east 7.5 mi to Clinton Keith Road. Turn right on Clinton Keith Road.) Start mileage readings from this intersection.
- At 3.0 miles, pass Santa Rosa Plateau Reserve Visitor Center entrance.
- At 4.2 miles, jog right. The road is now called Tenaja Road.
- At 5.9 miles, junction with Volcano Rd going straight. Turn right on Tenaja Road.
- At 11.5 miles, pavement ends at a junction. Continue straight.
- At 11.7 miles, road fork; take the 90 degree left road, which is Forest Road 8S01, winding generally SSW. Continue driving on 8S01, taking the main dirt road at all intersections.
- At 16.1 miles, junction. An old road with an "Area Closed" sign turns left, just before the main road turns to the right. Park here. Ample parking.

Hiking Instructions:

- From the parking area, follow the old road going SSE for about 1000 feet to an overgrown firebreak on the right (heading west).
- Scramble up this steep firebreak, which shows traces of a use trail, for about 600 vertical feet.
- Towards the end of the firebreak you get to another washed and overgrown dirt road with views to Camp Pendleton. Follow this road to the right (North) to a ridge, then downhill for about 200 ft to a clipped (hopefully) use trail on the right, marked by a duck.
- Follow this use trail to the summit, on which there are rocks and a metal tripod. Good views all around!

Notes:

Adventure Pass required. No water, no shade. Peak overlooks Camp Pendleton. There used to be a lookout on an adjacent peak, but the ridge is now too overgrown to get there. The area is very brushy.

Write up: Jack Adsit, revised 2004 and Feb 2009