

USE AT YOUR OWN RISK

Montecito Peak

3,214'

Location: Near Santa Barbara
Maps: Los Padres National Forest Map
Topo: Santa Barbara 7.5

Primary Route: 3.5 miles o/w, 2,450' gain

Driving Instruction:

In Santa Barbara exit Hwy. 101 on Olive Mill Road and drive north for 1 mile to East Valley Road, Hwy. 192. Turn left (west), the name of the street changes to Sycamore Canyon Road in a right turn and still is Hwy. 192. Drive 1.3 miles to Cold Spring Road and turn right (north). You are passing Westmont College. After driving again 1.2 miles turn right at Mountain Road and after 0.2 miles park just across the Creek Crossing.

Hiking Instructions:

Start at the marked trail on the east side of Cold Creek. There is also access from the west side and the two trails meet later. Cold Spring Trail has been called the most beautiful trail in the area; it is a lovely lush, shady trail along and high above the creek. You pass by pools and small waterfalls. The trail crosses the stream two times and after 1.5 miles the Edison Cat Walk road (dirt) is reached. Here you turn left (west) underneath the power lines for a couple hundred yards on the road but then follow the marked trail to the left (west). Now the trail climbs through Sandstone and open chaparral to a single tree, a good place to rest. Continue on the trail which leads around Montecito Peak on the west side. When you see a small saddle just 50 ft farther up the trail, scramble (at elev. 2,900') to the ridge on your right on a poor use trail, which continues in a steep gully. The trail winds around the east and reaches the summit from the south side. On clear days the views are excellent! Return the way you came.

Alternate Route: 1 mile, 300'gain/500' loss

Driving Instruction:

Exit US 101 at Mission in Santa Barbara. Turn right and go north towards the mountains 0.8 mile. Turn left on Laguna toward Santa Barbara Mission and right on Los Olivos around the Mission (0.2 miles). Turn right on Mountain Drive. Follow Mountain Drive 1.3 miles to a stop sign at the big white covered reservoir. Turn left on Mountain Dr. 0.2 mile and quickly right on Gibraltar Road. Note the big wooden sign at the intersection pointing up Gibraltar. Follow narrow, winding Gibraltar Road steeply uphill 6.3 miles nearly to the crest of the mountains. Turn right on Camino Cielo (5N12; large sign pointing toward the "Divide Peak OHV") and drive 3.5 miles along the crest to a wide parking area with a water tank where Cold Spring Trail crosses Camino Cielo. There is plenty of parking. Turning left (W) at the Gibraltar Road intersection the paved ridge road continues to San Marcos pass, Hwy. 154.

Hiking Instructions:

Descend at the trail sign west down Cold Spring Trail toward the ocean. At the saddle look to your left for an obvious steep use trail to the summit of Montecito Peak.

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Notes:

For a good loop trip (10 m RT, 2800'gain) take the Cold Spring Trail to the peak, return to the main trail and then continue to the crest. Walk right (East) on Camino Cielo for 1/3 mile, then return on the San Ysidro Trail. A car shuttle is required.

References: Raymond Ford, Jr.: Santa Barbara Day Hikes

Write-up: Erik Siering, Gabriele Rau 2001