

M. BUEHNER,



Season: All Year

Crown of the Sea Trail

7/8/92 ,
@ 0930 HRS.

- Corona Del Mar Beach to Arch Rock
2 miles round trip
- Corona Del Mar Beach to Crystal Cove
4 miles round trip
- Corona Del Mar Beach to Abalone Point
7 miles round trip

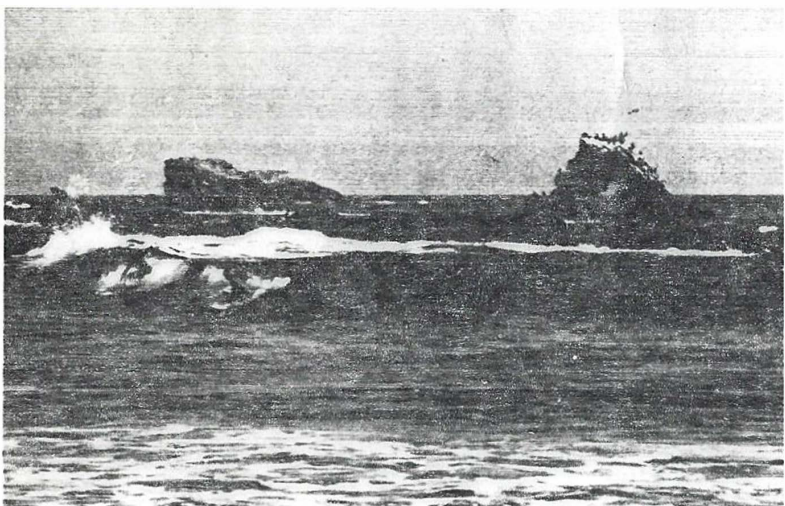
← THIS ONE

In 1904, George Hart purchased 700 acres of land on the cliffs east of the entrance to Newport Bay and laid out a subdivision he called Corona Del Mar—"Crown of the Sea." The only way to reach the townsite was by way of a long muddy road that circled around the head of Upper Newport Bay. Later, a ferry carried tourists and residents from Balboa to Corona Del Mar. Little civic improvement occurred until Highway 101 bridged the bay and the community was annexed to Newport Beach.

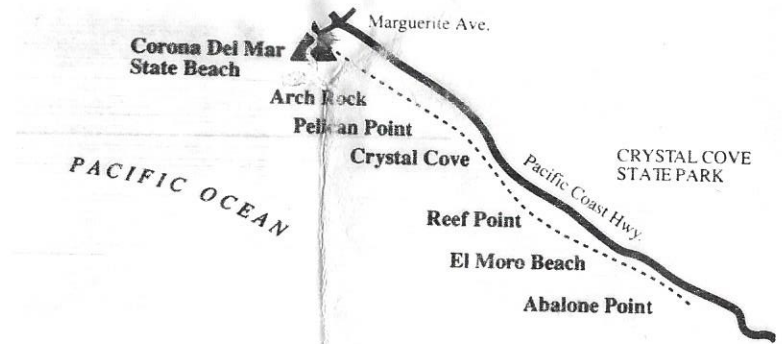
This hike explores the beaches and marine refuges of "Big" and Little Corona Del Mar, and continues to the beaches of Crystal Cove State Park.

Consult a tide table. Best beach-walking is at low tide.

Directions to trailhead: From Pacific Coast Highway in Corona Del Mar, turn oceanward on Marguerite Avenue and travel a few blocks to Corona Del Mar State Beach. There is a fee for parking in the lot.



Surfers enjoy the breaks off Corona Del Mar



The Hike: Begin at the east jetty of Newport Beach, where you'll see sailboats tacking in and out of the harbor. Snorkelers and surfers frequent the waters near the jetty. Proceed down-coast along wide, sandy Corona Del Mar State Beach.

The beach narrows as you approach the cove that encloses Little Corona Del Mar Beach. Snorkeling is good below the cliffs of Big and Little Corona beaches. Both areas are protected from boat traffic by kelp beds and marine refuge status.

A mile from the jetty, you'll pass well-named Arch Rock, which is just offshore and can be reached at low tide. The beach from Arch Rock to Irvine Cove, 2 1/2 miles to the south was purchased by the state from the Irvine Corporation, and is now part of Crystal Cove State Park. Trails lead up the bluffs. From December to about March, the blufftops offer a good vantage point from which to observe the California gray whale migration.

Continuing your stroll down the undeveloped beach and past some tidepools brings you to the tiny resort community of Crystal Cove, site of a few dozen beach cottages. The wood frame cottages have been little altered since their construction in the 1920s and were recently collectively named to the National Register of Historic Places. "Cove" is something of a misnomer because the beach here shows almost no coastal indentation.

Rounding Reef Point, you'll continue your beach walk along El Moro Beach. The sandy beach is sometimes beautifully cusped. El Moro is a misspelling of the Spanish word morro, meaning round, and describes the round dome of Abalone Point which lies dead ahead. The point, a rocky promontory located just outside Laguna Beach city limits, is made of eroded lava and other volcanic material distributed in the San Joaquin Hills. It's capped by a grass-covered dome rising two hundred feet above the water.

Return the same way or ascend one of the coastal accessways to the blufftops of Crystal Cove State Park. You can use blufftop trails for a portion of your return route.