

OTP Hike

August 16, 1995 - - - - 9:30 AM

Ron Forbess

For those who don't want to go the whole distance to the Trail Camp, there is a good turn around place about 1.5 miles and 750 feet elevation down the trail, at the first stream crossing.

Chilao to Devils Canyon, San Gabriel Wilderness

7 miles round trip; 1500' elevation loss and gain
Classification: Moderate
Season: November-April
Topo maps: Chilao Flat, Waterman Mountain

FEATURES

Less than 20 air miles from downtown Los Angeles is the San Gabriel Wilderness, 36,000 acres of rugged ridge and canyon country forever protected and preserved in its natural state. No roads here, no resorts, no noisy public campgrounds; only the primeval sounds of earth—the wind rustling leaves of pine and alder, the stream dancing over boulder and cascade, the wren's staccato call, on rare occasions the mountain lion darting through brush. Only three maintained trails enter this wilderness. The one perhaps most delightful leaves the Angeles Crest at Chilao and descends steep slopes of chaparral, spruce, and pine into the shaded bowels of Devils Canyon. Here, under a green canopy of alder and willow, alongside deep pools and miniature waterfalls, the hiker can find solitude on a day's outing or overnight knapsack, and relive a part of the mountains as they once were.

Take care; this is an upside-down trip—downhill all the way in, uphill on the return. Many an out-of-condition rambler has strided gaily down, only to labor painfully every upward step out.

DESCRIPTION

A prominent sign marks the Devils Canyon trailhead on the Angeles Crest Highway, 27 miles from La Canada and about 200 yards *before* you reach the Chilao Visitor Center turnoff. Leave your car in the large parking area on the left (west) side of the road, directly across from the trailhead.

The trail, well-maintained by the Forest Service, is easy to follow. It loses no time in descending the steep hillsides, alternately through stands of big-cone spruce on shady north faces and dense chaparral on sunnier slopes. About halfway down the trail meets a small tributary creek and then follows it to the main canyon. At its end, on a shaded bench alongside the stream, is Devils Canyon Trail Camp.

← AT MILE
PADDLE 50.5