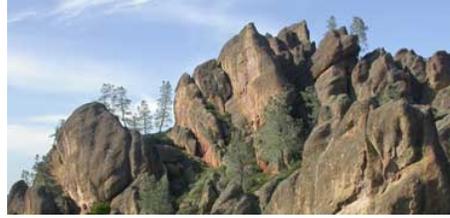


Pinnacles National Monument

March 31st and April 1st 2007



The **East Bay Casual Hiking Group** will be doing two consecutive day-hikes at the *Pinnacles National Monument* in the Spring of 2007.

Pinnacles National Monument is renowned for its monolith beauty and spring wildflowers. Rising out of the chaparral-covered Gabilan Mountains, east of central California's Salinas Valley, are the spectacular remains of an ancient volcano. The Pinnacles are its last remnants, carved by the powerful forces of wind and rain, heat and frost. Massive monoliths, spires, sheer-walled canyons, and talus passages stand as evidence of millions of years of erosion, faulting, and tectonic-plate movement. There are more than 30 miles of trails that access the Pinnacles' geological formations and spectacular vistas. A favorite time of year for many is spring, when a multitude of colorful wildflowers blanket the lush green hills. Pinnacles is predominantly a day-use park, but occasionally offers full-moon hikes and dark sky astronomical observations led by ranger-interpreters.

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Hike Day 1 March 31st - Saturday

Hike : Traverse the Caves (Loop)
Time : 9:30 AM
Rating : Moderate to Strenuous
Length : 10 - 11 miles

Meeting spot : We will meet at the Bear Gulch Visitors Center at the East entrance

Description : We will start from the Bear Gulch Visitors center and take the Moses Spring trail to the Bear Gulch caves and Reservoir. (Those who want to bypass the caves can continue on to the reservoir. We will regroup at the reservoir). From the reservoir we continue on the Rim trail to High peaks trail. Follow High peaks through a host of wild flowers on to scouts peak. And then descend to the Soledad side of the park via Juniper Canyon Trail. We will traverse the balconies trail go through the balconies cave and then return back along the Chalone creek bed along the Old Pinnacles trail. Flashlight/head lamps required in caves. There are two restrooms along the trail. We will stop for lunch near the balconies caves. Give yourself 5 - 7 hours.

Sights along the trail -



Hike Day 2 April 1st - Sunday

Hike : Heart of the Pinnacles (Loop)
Time : 10:00 AM
Rating : Moderate to Strenuous
Length : 5 - 5.5 miles

Meeting Spot : We will meet at the Bear Gulch Visitors Center at the East Entrance

Description : We will start at the Condor Gulch Trail going counter clock-wise and join the High peaks trail. We will walk through the heart of the Pinnacles rock formations, particularly along the Steep and Narrow section of the High Peaks Trail. On the way back we can re-visit the Bear Gulch reservoir and the Bear Gulch caves or head straight back to the Bear Gulch Visitors center. Flashlight/head lamps required in caves.

Sights on this trail -



Caution Notes :

These trails may not be for you if you suffer from any of the following conditions.

Claustrophobia – The Pinnacles caves are not like lava tubes: these are talus caves, places where numerous boulders have tumbled into ancient creek beds. They're not extensive and needn't be daunting. However they are dark and there are sections where you may need to squeeze thru the rocks to pass. A flashlight is a must. If you fear a health risk, there are alternative routes that bypass the caves

Fear of heights – The core section of the High Peaks trail is steep and narrow with chiseled footholds in the rock to descent or ascent the rocks. Most of these have metal railings/bars to hold on to. However if you are afraid of heights you may want to avoid them. There are NO alternative routes that bypass this sections. (We will be doing this section on day 2 - April 1st 2007)

Directions to the Trail Head (East Entrance)

Our hikes will start from the East Entrance Visitors center. The East Side of the monument is open 24 hours a day for hiking. Give yourself about 2 1/2 - 3 hours from the East Bay.

From the East Bay to the East Entrance:

1. Take Hwy 680 South towards San Jose
2. Take the exit for Hwy 101 South (towards LA).
3. Drive through the city of Gilroy take the exist for Hwy 25 south.
4. On Hwy 25, go through the town of Hollister (Note Hwy 25 takes two turns thru the town of Hollister, pay special attention to road signs showing the turns for Hwy 25).
5. After passing thru Hollister, continue on Hwy 25 for about 30 miles to Hwy 146.
6. Turn right on Hwy 146, and follow it to the Pinnacles entrance station. If the entrance station is closed, please continue to the park visitor center to check in.

From San Francisco or South Bay to the East Entrance:

1. Take Hwy 101 South (towards LA).
2. Drive through the city of Gilroy take the exist for Hwy 25 south.
3. On Hwy 25, go through the town of Hollister (Note Hwy 25 takes two turns thru the town of Hollister, pay special attention to road signs showing the turns for Hwy 25).
4. After passing thru Hollister, continue on Hwy 25 for about 30 miles to Hwy 146.
5. Turn right on Hwy 146, and follow it to the Pinnacles entrance station. If the entrance station is closed, please continue to the park visitor center to check in.

Note : If you plan to stay near the West entrance, please keep in mind that **there is no road that connects the east and west entrances of the park.** The shortest route from the east entrance to the west entrance (or from west to east) is through the town of King City on Hwy 101.

Qualifications for the Trip

The adventures of East Bay Casual Hiking group are designed for flexible, energetic people who like to be active, love nature and have a spirit of adventure. You must have your own health insurance. Our best hikes are those where everyone is equipped with a spirit of adventure, the ability to recognize the needs of the group, a positive attitude—and a sense of humor!

Conditioning for the Trip

The best aerobic and strength conditioning for hiking is hiking! If possible, hike with your daypack on steep, rocky trails. Spend time running and hiking on inclined trails with your daypack. If you can't get to a trail, Stairmasters, Nordic trainers, and treadmills are good alternatives for your aerobic capacity and weights are good for your strength. Focus on strengthening your quadriceps, your back, and upper body. How many months ahead of your trip you start conditioning depends on your general level of fitness. If you are a regular East Bay Casual Hiker these hikes should be fairly easy. Someone without much hiking experience or a good level of fitness should begin conditioning at least 8 - 10 weeks before this trip.

Park Information

Official Website: <http://www.nps.gov/pinn/>

Entrance Fee

Check in at the entrance station, visitor center, or ranger station to get a receipt for the windshield of your vehicle. **\$5 per car** - This fee covers entrance by vehicle to both districts of the monument for seven days, and is valid for everyone in the vehicle. Passholders are required to check in at the Visitor Center.

Some Don'ts in the Park

- Backpacking is not permitted.
- Pets are not permitted on trails in the Park as dogs can leave behind scents that disrupt the natural patterns of local animals.

Stores in the Park

Bottled water and flashlights are available at the Bear Gulch Visitor Center and Chaparral Ranger Station. On the east side of the park, the campground store offers snacks and drinks during short business hours each weekday afternoon and weekend.

Not Included in this Trip

1. Transportation
2. Lodging
3. Entrance fee to the National Park
4. Dinner, Lunches and snacks
5. Personal gear (see Recommended Equipment checklist below)

Weather at Pinnacles

The average temperatures at Pinnacles around this time is between 60 – 70 degrees Fahrenheit during the day and 27 - 40 degrees Fahrenheit at night. We should most likely have a sunny clear day. Spring, fall, and winter are the most popular times to visit Pinnacles National Monument. Summers are hot and dry, but hikers need to be prepared for extreme temperatures as there is always the chance of experiencing dramatically changing mountain weather. It is important to be prepared for all kinds of weather, including sun, wind, rain and even lightening. You should be aware that in the event of a storm or lightning it is advisable not to hike. Please be cautious and don't take chances.

Equipment Checklist

Bring everything you need for your visit.

1. Flash light/head lamp
2. Lots of water.
3. Rain/wind/cold weather wear
4. Bug repellent
5. First-Aid items (Band-Aids, elastic bandages, etc)
6. Camera
7. Dress in layers
8. Food and beverage
9. Whistle
10. Hiking poles
11. Sun screen, lip balm
12. Hat
13. Extra socks
14. Clothing change
15. Map of Pinnacles and of the trails
16. 2-way radio (optional)

Lodging options

Camping

For the earthy adventurous souls, camping is available at the Pinnacles Campground that is located on the east side of the park. Fees and facilities details can be found at <http://www.pinncamp.com/>



Directions to Pinnacles Campground:

From the North take Hwy 101 south to the Hollister Hwy 25 exit just south of Gilroy. Follow the signs through Hollister towards Pinnacles National Monument. We are near the monument's East entrance. (Note: there is no through road connecting the East and West entrances). Stay on Hwy 25 for approximately 30 miles south of Hollister. Turn right on Hwy 146 (the road goes only one way and there will be a sign for Pinnacles National Monument). You'll see the campground on your left after two miles.



Hotels in the vicinity

Hollister – Hotels are on route to the East Entrance

Best Western San Benito Inn - 660 San Felipe Road, Hollister, CA 95023

King City – Hotels listed below are within approx 20 miles of the park

Best Western - 1190 Broadway Road, King City, CA 93930 US

Courtesy Inn - 4 Broadway Circle, King City, CA 93930 US

Days Inn - 1130 Broadway, King City, CA 93930 US

Keefer's Inn - 615 Canal Street, King City, CA 93930 US

Soledad - Hotels listed below are within approx 10 miles of the park

Best Western Valley Harvest Inn - 1155 Front Street, Soledad, CA 93960

Hotels in Carmel, Salinas or Monterey will be approx 30 or 40 miles from the Park.

Contact Information and Emergency forms

The Hike leader will be collecting [emergency forms](#) from all hikers the day of the hike. Completion of the form is optional, however, the form will be used in the event of any emergency that a hiker may get involved in.

Additional contact information

John's Cell	925-457-7717
Prachi's Cell	848-702-2662
Park Visitor Information	831-389-4485

Cell Phones & 2-way Radios

Cell phones will not work within Pinnacles or the Pinnacles Campground areas. Use of a 2-way walkie talkie is advised. Prachi and I will be carrying Motorola TalkAbout FRS/GMRS type 2-way radios (model SX800R). You are not required to purchase or use such a radio, however, if you already have one or wish to have an easy way to reach us while at Pinnacles, the radio frequency information for the channel we will be monitoring is listed below.

Channel/Frequency:	1	(462.5625 MHz)
Privacy Code (PL/CTCSS):	11	(97.4 Hz)



Please note: Other 2-way radio brands and models should be compatible with the SX800R we will be carrying, however, do not trust that the channel number or privacy codes to be exactly the same. Your radio may require a slightly different configuration from ours. **Always check your user manual ahead of time for the proper settings.**