

DESTINATIONS > UNITED STATES > CALIFORNIA

Walk Across The World's Longest Stress Ribbon Bridge In California For Picturesque Views

By Kelley Dukat ~ Nov. 10, 2024 3:00 pm EST



Autumnskyphotography/Getty Images

California is home to many tourist attractions, including nearly 26,000 bridges. Some are historic, and others highlight the beautiful scenery of The Golden State. Perhaps the most iconic bridge in California is the Golden Gate Bridge, often considered

among the top [five tourist destinations along the California Coast](#). But **one of the lesser-known bridge attractions is The Lake Hodges Pedestrian Bridge, offering a unique opportunity to walk across a suspension bridge that is 990 feet long.** It is open only to pedestrians and bicyclists, offering stellar views and wildlife viewing. It is located in Escondido, about 20 miles north of San Diego, inside the San Dieguito River Park.

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Safdie Rabines Architects designed the 990-foot stress ribbon bridge, the longest of its kind in the world, in conjunction with the San Dieguito River Park Joint Powers Authority in 2009. By definition, a stress ribbon bridge means that the bearing cables embedded in the bridge's deck hold the weight of the suspension bridge. Architects selected this design because it needed only two concrete piers, it was thin, and it provided a unique look. During rainier seasons with higher water levels, the bridge appears to be floating, while during drier seasons, it is flush with the landscape.

Walk this pedestrian bridge for scenic views and wildlife viewing



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The bridge is part of the 1.6-mile roundtrip [Lake Hodges Pedestrian Bridge Trail](#), which is considered easy, kid-friendly, and leashed dog-friendly. It's also open for those on mountain bikes and connects to a trail system that spans a total of 22 miles. **A trek across the bridge provides great viewing for some of the [best bird watching in the United States](#), along with other wildlife as part of a protected habitat.** It also features signage that explains the history of the area and the bridge and other interesting facts so you can learn along the way.

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Tripadvisor reviewers note the ease and well-maintained trails and wildlife viewing as reasons to visit. Others mention that the lake's water level depends on the season and conditions, which can cause a dry bed underneath the bridge, but is worthy of a visit during any season. During the summer, heat and lack of shade is a factor, so reviewers recommended going early in the day. That way, you can also beat the crowds.

Winter is often the rainiest time of year in Southern California when the water level is at its peak. A trek across the bridge during the fall season would allow for a stop in nearby Rancho Bernardo at a [gorgeous California farm to pick your own sunflowers](#) as

a fun addition to your day. Don't miss out on the experience of putting two feet forward or the pedal to the medal on this one-of-a-kind bridge.

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