Between Los Angeles And San Diego Is California's Lovely Nature Preserve For Mountain Views And Trails

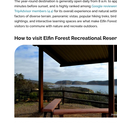
By Melissa Sarah | May 31 2021 1:00 pm ET/CT

Southern California is full of scenic terrain and tourist-hotspots to explore, and the inland stretch between Los Angeles and San Diego is no exception. Among the cultivated orchards and farmlands, the Ellis Forest Recreational Reserve is a lovely nature preserve for hiking and trail-exploring. Located just south of the Santa Ana Mountains, the reserve is adjacent to the twin towns of Lake Elsinore and Wildomar, and within San Diego County and nature preserve and other protected lands. This includes North County's Ellis Forest Recreational Reserve, a delightful nature preserve known for trails and majestic mountain views.

Ellis Forest Recreational Reserve (EFRR) is located 35 miles from San Diego and only 15 miles from Temecula. Its 1,000 acres are managed by the Elsinore Multispecies Reserve (EMR) and the Southern Riverside Habitat Conservation Agency (SRHCA). San Diego County Water Authority, and the Bureau of Land Management. Its primary purpose is to provide a home for the area's endangered and threatened species. The EMR reserve is adjacent to the twin towns of Lake Elsinore and Wildomar, and within San Diego County and the Las Calizo Preserve, featuring varied habitat conservation, including Southern California's rare and endangered species. The reserve is also within proximity with the vast Elsinore Reserve and Dam, and serves as a wonderland for Escondido Creek, which runs through the main parking area with the nonprofit Escondido Creek Conservancy assisting with some operations of EFRR.

The year-round destination is generally open daily from 8 a.m. to approximately 30 minutes before sunset, and is highly valued among hikers, mountain bikers, equestrians, and birdwatchers, photographers and general writing. The architectural factors of diverse terrain, panoramic vistas, popular hiking trailes, bird and other wildlife sightings, and interactive learning spaces are what make Ellis Forest a great place for visitors to commune with nature and recreate outdoors.

How to visit Ellis Forest Recreational Reserve



An ideal first stop will be the Ellis Forest Interpretive Center Honoring Susan L Nelly, which is open from a.m. to 5 p.m. every day, and staffed by volunteer docents. The building was designed by architect James Hubbell, with art installations from a variety of artists and a lovely patio. Visitors can learn about the area, ask about daily programs and other information, and obtain maps, which are also downloadable online. You can pre-arrive of the complimentary guided nature walks on the first and third Saturday mornings of the month, which include a tour of the reserve and entrance of the area. Other certain activities include a free solo commentary walk on the nearby Tuesday or Noon quarterly travel presentations and a junior ranger program for kids.

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With more than 150 species of birds within the reserve, Ellis Forest and neighboring Lake Hodges are considered one of the best U.S. bird watching destinations. Lake Hodges Bird Watching Trail is a self-guided tour that connects the two each avoe type, the chance of seeing them, and a specific ideal location to spot them.

The reserve is easily reachable from Escondido, an old-school California city and charming wine paradise, approximately 6 miles away. It's also only 10 miles away from California's picture-perfect town with sprawling estates and luxury hotels, Rancho Santa Fe.

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Hike and enjoy panoramic vistas at Ellis Forest Recreational Reserve

Hiking one of the 10 miles of multi-use pathways is one of the primary ways to explore. There's a comprehensive trail map, which details the routes, lengths, and where they intersect. These lead to six distinct overlooks, with five featuring picnic areas. A moderately challenging trail is the Ridge Trail, which is a 2.5-mile loop that is considered moderately taxing, not for the young children, and ideal for those in the hiker. You'll want to check online for the specific schedule and distances.

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Ellis Forest offers scenic views of the surrounding mountains, including Cardinal's Cap, which is accessible via the Ridge Trail, and Cardinal's Cap Trail, which is a 2-mile loop, sits at 1,79 feet. The summit of Mount Israel is accessed directly through the preserve along the The Way Up Trail, a 2.2 mile loop route which leads to the Harmony Grove Overlook, with panoramic views of Harmony and Ivan Lake. Bird watchers can also enjoy the Lake Hodges Trail, which is a 2.5 mile loop that is considered moderate, and leading area. For an interactive experience, take the Botanical Trail, a 1 mile loop from the parking lot, which features an educational signs highlighting some of the over 150 plant species along the route, with a downloadable brochure. A little up with the Way Up Trail, or return downhill to the visitor location.

Equestrians on horseback frequent the five-mile long Equestrian Hollow Loop Trail, which is a 5 mile loop that is considered moderate, and includes a stretch along the neighboring Las Calizo Preserve. Another popular route for trekkers is the Lake Hodges Overlook Trail with stunning views of mountain peaks, the Del Dios Highlands, and the lake itself, while passing through three overtone viewpoints.

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How To Pack Just One Carry-On For A Week-Long Vacation

By Melissa Sarah | Last Update: 05 Jul 2021 1:00 pm ET

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Heading off on an island vacation? Lucky you! Here's one piece of advice to stave off your high-tier Pack only a carry-on bag. You'll save on checked bag fees, aren't waste precious vacation time waiting at the luggage carousel, and never have to worry about your luggage getting lost! Plus if you need to fly remotely or your flight gets cancelled, you'll be able to hop on the next available flight.

What's that you say? You're going away for a week? No problem! Here's a step-by-step guide to packing everything you need into a carry-on bag, all without having to shell out for expensive packing accessories. Let's go!

Plan before you pack

The key to packing light is getting organized before you place even one flip-flop in your roll-on.

First, consult the weather forecast for your destination. Only sunshine during your trip? Great! Rain is in the forecast? Bring a poncho. Packing light is to only bring what you need, without adding "what if" to the bag.

Next, check with your accommodations to see what in-room amenities and toiletries your hotel offers. Hairdryers and irons are standard at most properties, so no need to pack them. If they don't have irons, leave items that need to be ironed at home.

Remember this is a trip for one, so luggage now is equal bag with liquids no more than 3.4 ounces. Avoid yourself of your luggage's toiletries when you can (many luxe hotels provide complimentary toiletries). In instance, throw in some individual laundry packs or a small container of detergent so you can wash clothes on the go.

Consider what you'll wear on the plane and what carry-on you'll bring

Now, before you put anything in a bag, make a list. Overpacking happens when you start grabbing drawers full of shirts and dropping them into your open bag like a packing check list. see below! Write down every item you're going to bring on vacation.

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Skirt is a solid scheme. A neutral background — think black, white, tan — with a few colorful accessories, such as a scarf or a sweater, will help limit what you're packing.

Wear your heaviest items on the plane. For example, if you're planning on hiking, wear your hiking boots on the way to your destination. For casual trips, wear sneakers and a lightweight jacket. Accessories and jewelry are lightweight, so feel free to wear such as a pocket or necklace. Basically, anything bulky that will take up a great deal of suitcase space should be worn leaves the candles and shorts back in your bag!

Pro tip: When making your list, you should figure out what kind of bag suits you best. If you're not checking luggage, that means one in the overhead compartment and one below the seat. Look for a good durable duffel bag or expandable roller that goes up top and a small backpack that stays with you. Don't be sure to perfect for your laptop or camera and headphones.

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Fold, roll, and bag your clothes

Okay, you have your list and you know what you're wearing on the plane. Now it's time to pack your bag. Consult your list and lay out everything where you can see it. Do not pack anything yet. Now, take a deep breath and ask yourself, do I need everything? Now consider the most space-efficient way to pack each item.

T-shirts and shorts should be rolled to both save space and cut down on wrinkling. Start with a short face down on a flat surface. Fold the arms back so you have a perfect square. Fold in half vertically. Now roll up from the bottom to the top — voila, a perfect cylinder.

Heavier materials, like khakis and sweaters, should be folded into squares.

For lingerie and delicate items such as bathing suits, use mesh lingerie bags (you can find these at most drug stores or on Amazon). which will allow security to see your items, without actually touching them and keep small items organized.

Dress up. For dresses, skirts, blouses or dress shirts, place each item on a hanger and place it in a garment bag. These bags clothes wrinkle free the plastic reduces friction and organized.

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Pack your clothes strategically

Now you're ready to pack your bag. Stack square shapes first, then rolled items. Remember, the goal is to fill up every inch of space and minimize wrinkles. Items don't need to travel in each other. Socks can be placed into shoes or tote empty spaces. Place your bulkiest bag on top of your perfectly folded clothes so you can lay and lock it into place. Place your toiletries in your plastic -wrapped dress clothes on top and lock it into its little bag. Zip up and you're ready!

Pro tip: Even with just a carry-on bag, you should consider purchasing and using a set of packing cubes. By putting your clothing and accessories in these, packing is easier than playing Tetris.

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What clothes to pack in your carry-on

- 5 shirts
- 3 shorts or skirts
- 2 dressy options mix and match with accessories and outerwear
- 1 outerwear – sweater or jacket

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- 1 pair sneakers
- 1 pair dressy shoes
- 1 pair flip-flops
- 1 hat
- 2 bathing suits
- 1 cover-up
- 1 athletic outfit
- Pajamas
- Socks
- Underwear
- Accessories (scarves, jewelry)

Remember:

1. Write everything down before you start packing
2. Lay out everything where you can see it.
3. Do NOT add anything new to your suitcase once you have it packed

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