



## Skyline-to-the-Sea Backpack (Adventurous Beginner / Intermediate)

April 28-30, 2017 32 mostly downhill miles

The Skyline-to-the-Sea is a hiking trail that descends from the ridge of the Santa Cruz Mountains to the Pacific Ocean. It is one of the best backpacking routes in the Bay Area, and shows off eye-popping landscape in the South Bay woods, from towering old-growth redwoods to banana slugs creeping along the forest floor. We will start at Castle Rock State Park and stay at backpacker trail camps along the way. Our three days offers us the best opportunity to have easy-ish days of hiking at a moderate pace with plenty of time for enjoying the scenic environment featuring exotic sandstone formations, dense hardwoods, and Jurassic Park-like fern grottos. *The walking is flat or downhill for almost the whole trip. Net elevation loss is 2600 feet.*

We'll hike through Big Basin Redwoods State Park, an 18,000 acre redwood forest, and also CA's oldest state park. Big Basin contains beautiful waterfalls and some of the largest, tallest, and oldest redwoods in existence.

On the last day, we will hike a side-trail to Berry Creek Waterfall, a drop-dead-beautiful 70-foot freefall, set in a canyon amid towering conifers. If we want to take the cut-off trail up the canyon, then in little more than a mile, we will arrive at Silver Falls, a Yosemite-like freefall in miniature, about a 60-footer. Back on the main trail, we will hike along Waddell Creek. We will enjoy a wide array of wildflowers, often 15 or 20 species over the course of two miles. We'll eventually reach the ocean at Waddell Beach, a wide, sandy cove popular with wind and kite surfers. Our shuttle cars will be parked here.

This trip OFFICIALLY starts on Friday, April 29 at 9:00am sharp at the Castle Rock State Park Main Entrance. You must be there and ready to go by 9:00am. I will arrive the previous day and camp at Castle Rock Trail Camp, which is located 2.5 miles from the parking lot, and you are welcome to join me if this makes your schedule easier. Otherwise, I will be up at the main entrance parking lot before 9am on Friday, to gather all hikers.

**Thursday, April 27:** Optional Start Day. Park at Castle Rock S.P. main entrance. Hike to Castle Rock Trail Camp 2.5mi from parking lot.

**Friday, April 28:** Official Start Day. Hike 9 miles to Waterman Gap Trail Camp, or if you're already camped at Castle Rock Trail Camp, then it's only 5.5 miles to Waterman.

**Saturday, April 29:** Hike 9 miles to Big Basin Redwoods State Park (Jay Trail Camp).

**Sunday, April 30:** Hike 10 miles to Waddell Beach. Add 2-3 miles for side trip to Berry Creek Falls (can leave backpack on main trail and just bring lunch to the falls). Shuttle friends back to cars at Castle Rock S.P. The shuttle trip is 45 miles and takes 1 hour.

**Parking:** We will need to have cars at both ends of the trail to use as shuttles, so please be open to the idea of using your vehicle to shuttle. Trailhead parking will be at Castle Rock main entrance. Beach parking is at Rancho del Oso Ranger Station, a half mile up the trail from Waddell Beach. Parking is \$10 per vehicle.

Shuttle time is 1 hour, and we will have to work out the shuttle situation before the trip.

**Cost:** \$25 per person for GO members. \$50 for non-members (incl. 1-yr membership in GO chapter of your choice). Cancel before April 15 to receive a refund.

**Weather:** Expect warm days and chilly evenings and mornings. Dressing in layers is the best way to manage the possible range of temperatures. Precipitation is always a possibility, so rain gear is mandatory.

**Other considerations:** As with any backcountry experience, this one is "Leave no Trace" - our trash comes out with us. Active animal area so either bear cans or hung bags are recommended. No fires allowed. No pets allowed.

**Directions** will be given upon registration.

**Trip Leader:** Please contact Chris F.  
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