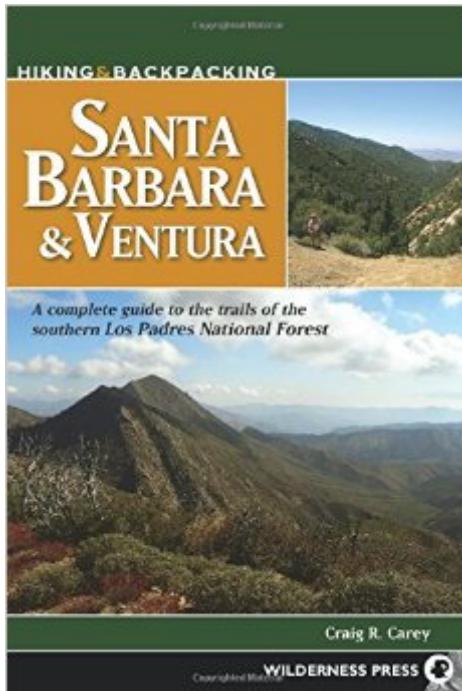


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Hiking And Backpacking Santa Barbara And Ventura



Synopsis

Named for the Spanish padres who established a network of missions along California's southern and central coasts, the Los Padres National Forest is the second-largest National Forest in the state, encompassing approximately 1,950,000 acres; nearly half of which is federally-designated wilderness. Hiking and Backpacking Santa Barbara and Ventura fills a huge gap in coverage of this great hiking and backpacking destination, leading the reader through the varied terrain of the forest's southern districts, from the fern-clad grottoes of the Santa Barbara frontcountry to the sweeping vistas and granite-clad ridges of the Chumash Wilderness. No other guide covers the region in such detail, and not since Dennis Gagnon's near-legendary guides in the 70s and 80s has the Santa Barbara (and Ventura) backcountry been given the guidebook treatment; but this book goes even further. Every official trail (and many use trails) in the Santa Barbara, Ojai, and Mt. Pinos districts are covered here, including those in the southern San Rafael Wilderness, Dick Smith Wilderness, Matilija Wilderness, Sespe Wilderness, Chumash Wilderness, the Santa Ynez Recreation Area, Rose Valley, the Santa Barbara and Montecito frontcountry, the Ojai frontcountry, and the Santa Paula/Fillmore frontcountry.

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Customer Reviews

The Los Padres National Forest stretches along California's Coast Range from just south of Carmel at its northern end to just west of Interstate 5 near Castaic at its southern end. The largest contiguous portion of the forest lies in the northern reaches of Santa Barbara and Ventura Counties. Until now, the only truly thorough hiking guide to this sprawling region was Dennis Gagnon's Hiking

the Santa Barbara Backcountry, last published in 1991 and long out-of-print and out-of-date. Fortunately, Craig Carey has come to the rescue with this brand-new, up-to-date guidebook, which covers just about every trail, trailhead, and trail camp in the Santa Barbara, Ojai, and Mount Piños Ranger Districts of the Los Padres. Ninety-six hikes are included, all with highly detailed information about not only the trails themselves, but also the fascinating geology and history (both natural and human) of the area. As befitting a 21st Century hiking guidebook, each hike includes GPS coordinates for every major point of interest along the route. These coordinates are particularly valuable, as the effects of massive wildfires in recent years and sporadic trail maintenance have made navigation particularly challenging on many of the more remote backcountry trails. While maps are included for all of the hikes, they are generally not suitable for use out on the trail, and are intended as a general overview only. Fortunately, Carey provides information about several commercially-produced maps for the area, including excellent maps by Tom Harrison Maps and Bryan Conant (both available on). Known errors in the most recent USGS topographic maps (mostly involving the location of obscure trail camps) are also pointed out and corrected.

Santa Barbara features some of the most extensive and (outside of the Sierra) some of the most challenging hiking in the state. A south facing coastline and Mediterranean climate make the area suitable for year round exploration and the mountain backdrop of the region is among the most rugged in the state. Although hiking is a more popular form of recreation here as compared to the rest of southern California, you can still find solitude and wilderness in this area. Indeed, the Los Padres National Forest offers so much backcountry recreation that other guides to the region have not even attempted to cover it all. But this new book by Craig Carey does. From the area around Gaviota pass, to the high country of Mt. Pinos, and all the ridges and high plateaus in between, including the wild and scenic Sespe River Wilderness, this guidebook explores trails that you will not find described elsewhere. There are two features of this book that set it apart from other guidebooks to the region, even aside from its comprehensive coverage. Both involve maps. The book contains twelve hiking chapters, each covering a specific geographical region, and each chapter includes an overview map showing not only the location of trailheads, but also other recreation facilities (campgrounds, picnic areas, ranger stations, etc). Individual hikes often feature a detailed topographical map. Even where the detailed topographical map is not available, route descriptions are clear, and insofar as I have hiked these trails, accurate. Carey takes care to describe every trail junction and notes the presence of historical as well as currently maintained trails and backcountry

camps.

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