

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION
OF
BICYCLING ORGANIZATIONS
P.O. BOX 2684
DUBLIN, CA 94568

BICYCLE TOURING IN CALIFORNIA

ELEANOR LIPPMAN

*BASED ON AN EARLIER EDITION BY
RICHARD KREBS JAMES*



HAPPY AND SAFE CYCLING!

CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF BICYCLING ORGANIZATIONS

P.O. Box 2684
DUBLIN, CALIFORNIA 94568

MAILING
ADDRESS
GOES
HERE

An introductory guide to Bicycle Touring in California

Background

History

Geography

Climate

General Information

- 📖 Entering California
 - 📖 Bicycle Traffic Law
 - 📖 Banks and Shops
 - 📖 Post Offices
 - 📖 Bicycle Rental
 - 📖 Transporting Bicycles
 - 📖 Bicycle Security
 - 📖 Accommodations
 - 📖 Local Information

Tour Planning

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 📖 Northern Coast Ranges | 📖 Big Sur |
| 📖 Redwood Empire | 📖 Central Valley |
| 📖 Cascades | 📖 Southern Coast Ranges |
| 📖 Modoc Plateau | 📖 Transverse Ranges |
| 📖 Sierra Nevada | 📖 Deserts |
| 📖 Mother Lode | 📖 Santa Ana / San Diego Mountains |
| 📖 Wine Country | 📖 Urbanized Areas |
| 📖 Sacramento River Delta | |

- | | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Maps and Guidebooks | Appendix |
| Road / Traffic Conditions | Holidays |
| Mountain Biking | Useful Addresses, Phone
Numbers and email addresses |
| Organized Tours | |

***CABO, the voice of California's cyclists, aims to
serve the entire bicycling community.***

For more information:
PO Box 2684 Dublin CA 94568
Northern California (510) 828-5299
LA area (310) 639-9348
Inland Empire (909) 684-3513

CABO MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Name_____

e-mail address_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip_____

Individual or Business (\$10) No vote _____

Sustaining (\$15) No vote _____

Subscription only Master Calendar (\$5) _____

Club/Organization (see below) _____

Additional donation _____

Total \$_____

Club membership: When establishing your club's membership, simply count the number of applications, whether they be a family or individual, to determine your CABO dues.

Club or Organization Membership rates				
1-50	members	\$10	=	1 vote
51-100	members	\$18	=	2 votes
101-150	members	\$26	=	3 votes
151-200	members	\$34	=	4 votes
210-250	members	\$42	=	5 votes
251-300	members	\$50	=	5 votes
301-350	members	\$58	=	5 votes
351-400	members	\$66	=	5 votes
401-450	members	\$74	=	5 votes
451 +	members	\$82	=	5 votes

More about CABO

CABO members sit on Boards, Advisory Committees, and Commissions throughout the state where decisions are made affecting bicyclists and bicycling. CABO participates in writing bicycle related legislation and provides a quarterly analysis of legislative issues pertaining to bicycling. CABO publishes CommuniCABO a quarterly newsletter, provides a Master Calendar of Bicycle Events, has information on bicycle touring in the state, a listing of local and regional bicycle maps and a listing of the transit agencies (bus, light rail, ferries) with capacity to transport bicyclists and their bicycles. CABO hosts CABOForum, a dynamic discussion and information service on the Internet*.

To join CABOForum, send a message to

CABOForum-subscribe@topica.com.

Check out our web site:

<http://www.CABOBike.org>

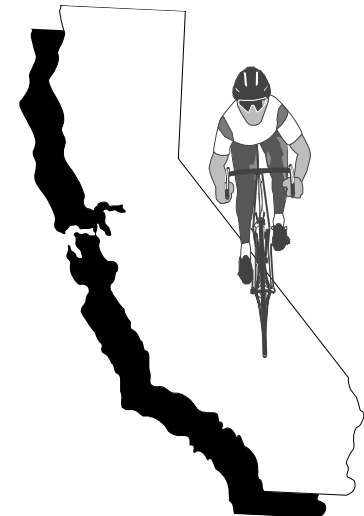
An introductory guide to Bicycle Touring in California

Welcome!

California is one of the most beautiful and diverse places in the world. It encompasses towering forests, parched deserts, cosmopolitan cities and quaint towns, rich farmland and spectacular mountains and seacoast. We're glad you'd like to explore our State by bicycle. We hope the information in this booklet will be useful in planning your travels, and helpful in making your stay in California a rewarding and enjoyable one.

Happy and safe cycling!

**FOR MORE
INFORMATION
ABOUT THE
CALIFORNIA
ASSOCIATION
OF
BICYCLING
ORGANIZATIONS,
SEE PAGES
22 AND 23.**



A few cautionary notes: some of this information such as telephone area codes and prices are subject to change. If you find information in need of updating, contact CABO so we can update our booklet.

Layout and design by E. Lippman 2001

Background

History

California's original inhabitants are believed to have migrated to the region in approximately 10,000 BC. There were an estimated 100,000 to 200,000 native people representing dozens of local tribes when the first Spanish settlers arrived. The native population was decimated by the destruction of their traditional culture and the introduction of European diseases.

The first European to sight California was Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, a Portuguese navigator sailing for Spain, who anchored in San Diego Bay in 1542. Sir Francis Drake was the next to visit the coast, landing north of San Francisco in 1579, and claiming "Nova Albion" for England. The Spanish called the area "California" after a mythical island in the 16th century novel, *Las Sergas de Esplandian* by Ordonez de Montalvo. Spain's Sebastian Vizcaino made extensive explorations of the coast in 1602.

Colonization of the distant province did not begin until 1769, when Portola led a land expedition up the coast, and became the first European to set eyes on San Francisco Bay. The first Spanish settlement was founded at San Diego the following year, and a second at Monterey the year after that. By 1823 a chain of 21 missions reached as far north as Sonoma. The Russians also staked a claim, building a fur trading post on the northern coast in 1812. The venture proved unprofitable and was abandoned in 1841.

Mexico won independence from Spain in 1822, and California came under Mexican rule. The missions were secularized between 1834 and 1837 with many large land grants given to '*Californios*'. Life revolved around cattle ranching and hide and tallow trade. By the late 1830's foreign immigration had begun. Settlers braved a long and dangerous journey... either overland by covered wagon or around Cape Horn by sailing ship.

In 1846, a small group of Americans instigated the Bear Flag Revolt in Sonoma, declaring California an independent republic. It lasted only 23 days, until, upon news of war between the United States and Mexico, the American flag was raised in Monterey. The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo gave California to the United States on February 2, 1848. Just nine days earlier, James Marshall had discovered gold in John Sutter's saw mill east of Sacramento. In the next four years, 200,000 fortune-seekers poured into California's gold fields.

California became the 31st State in 1850. The transcontinental railroad was completed in 1869, linking California with the rest of the country. Promotion by the railroad companies attracted thousands of people seeking wealth and happiness under California's sunny skies.

CALIFORNIA

Additional Internet information

CABO is part of a cycling network now hosted on Topica (located at topical.com) that contains bicycle related lists from around the globe. Our list is called CABOforum.

To join CABOForum, send a message to:

caboforum-subscribe@topica.com.

Other bicycle touring archives on the web can be found at:

<http://search.bikelist.org>.

A bicycle touring forum where members discuss routes, equipment and gear, trip reports, and bicycle mechanics related to touring is located at :

<http://www.phred.org/mailman/options/touring/>.

To subscribe, to change your membership status or configuration, including unsubscribing, setting digest-style delivery or disabling delivery altogether (e.g., for a vacation), and so on, go to

<http://www.phred.org/mailman/listinfo/touring>.

Indexed archives are found at:

<http://catfood.phred.org/querytouring.asp>.

Also check: <http://catfood.phred.org/query.asp>

Warm Showers:

A list of Internet cyclists who have offered their hospitality towards touring cyclists — ranging from a spot to pitch a tent to a meal, hot shower and a bed. Check out:

http://www.rogergravel.com/wsl/vh_for_a.html.



Menlo Park, CA 94025
(415) 329-4390

Weather Report

Los Angeles
(213) 554-1212
San Diego
(619) 289-1212
San Francisco
(415) 936-1212

National Park Service

Web site: <http://www.nps.gov/>

Death Valley National Monument

PO Box 579
Death Valley, CA 92328
(619) 786-2331

Golden Gate National Recreation Area

Bldg 201, Fort Mason
San Francisco, CA 94123
(415) 556-0560

Joshua Tree National Monument

74485 National Monument Dr.
Twentynine Palms, CA 92277-3597
(619) 367-7511

Lassen Volcanic National Park

PO Box 100
Mineral, CA 96063-0100
(916) 595-4444

Point Reyes National Seashore

Point Reyes, CA 94956
(415) 663-1092

del Norte Coast Redwoods National Park

111 Second St.
Crescent City, CA 95531
(707) 464-6101

Sequoia and King's Canyon National Parks

Three Rivers, CA 93271
(209) 565-3134

Yosemite National Park

PO Box 577
Yosemite, CA 95389
(209) 372-0200

Redwood Empire Association

2801 Leavenworth
San Francisco, CA 94133
(415) 543-8334

Regional Bicycle Coalitions

Orange County Bicycle Coalition
630 S. Glassell St Suite 100
Orange CA 92667
(714) 288-9130

Regional Bicycle Advisory Committee of the San Francisco Bay Area (REBAC)
PO Box 10205
Oakland, CA 94610
(415) 452-1221

San Diego Bicycle Coalition
P.O. Box 8653
San Diego, CA 92101-0653

California Bicycle Coalition

Other local coalitions:

Bicycle Commuter Coalition of the Inland Empire

California Cycleways

Concerned Off-Road Bicyclists Association (CORBA)

Santa Monica Mountains

Critical Mass Los Angeles and Unofficial Page of Los Angeles Critical Mass and Un-Official Page of Los Angeles Critical Mass

Foothill Bicycle Initiative

Los Angeles County Bicycle Coalition

Long Beach Cyclists

Ojai Bicycle Coalition

Ventura County Bicycle Coalition

CALIFORNIA

The motion picture industry established itself in Hollywood in 1911, further enhancing California's allure. Now the most populous State, with more than 32,300,000 residents, California is a world leader in agriculture, aerospace, electronics, petroleum, tourism and many other industries.

Geography

The State of California covers an area of 158,694 square miles (411,015 sq. km.). The terrain is characterized by numerous mountain ranges, most of which run parallel to the Pacific coast. The Central Valley is a vast agricultural area. The southeastern corner of the State is desert. The northern coastline is rocky with many coves; the southern coast is mostly sandy beaches.



Elevations range from 282 feet below sea level (-86 m.) in Death Valley to 14,494 feet (4,418 m.) a short distance away at Mt. Whitney. The most famous of California's many earthquake faults, the San Andreas, runs from east of Los Angeles to San Francisco, then north off the coast. The fault zone marks the boundary between the North American and Pacific Plates, the movement of which is responsible for the formation of most of California's mountains. The mountains in the northeast are volcanic; Mt. Lassen last erupted in 1914. The principal desert areas are the Mojave, a high elevation desert with many small ridges and dry lake beds; Death Valley, a non-draining basin; and the low elevation Colorado Desert near Mexico.

Climate

California's climate is generally warm and dry in the summer (approximately May to October) and cold and wet in the winter. Rainfall is heaviest along the north coast and very light in the south. In the desert and high mountains, summer thundershowers are common. Snow falls in the mountains in the winter and some of the highest peaks are covered year 'round. Most of California's weather forms over the Pacific Ocean. The mountains serve to catch the rain,

resulting in a dry rain-shadow to the eastern sides. Temperatures are fairly even along the coast; inland there is greater fluctuation between high and low temperatures. Temperatures decrease significantly with increased elevation.

General Information

Entering California

Foreign citizens should inquire at the Passport Office in their own country concerning entry into the United States. There are inspection stations at most border crossings into California. Fruits and vegetables are quarantined by the State Department of Food and Agriculture to ensure against introduction of insect pests.

Bicycle Traffic Law

A bicyclist has the same rights and duties as the driver of a motor vehicle. A bicyclist must ride as far to the right as practicable or in a bike lane if there is one, but may move to the left to avoid hazards, to pass, to make a left turn or when approaching a place where a right only turn is authorized. On one-way streets bicyclists may ride to either side. A bicyclist may use an entire lane if it is too narrow to share, but should allow faster moving traffic to pass when safe. Bicycles may be ridden on the shoulder of a road. The use of a separate bike path is optional. Bicycles are permitted on freeways unless prohibited by a sign. Signs occur when alternative routes exist.

The bicycle must have a headlight and reflectors if it is ridden during hours of darkness. A bicyclist may not wear headphones, ride while intoxicated, or ride against traffic. Existing law requires a person under 18 years of age to wear a properly fitted and fastened bicycle helmet when operating or riding as a passenger on a bicycle.

Banks and Shops

Banks are usually open Monday to Friday, from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, although many now have extended weekday and Saturday hours. ATM machines (Automatic Teller Machines) are generally associated with banks as well as many commercial businesses. Many small towns do not have a bank. Some banks may be unable to exchange foreign currency. Most small towns have a grocery store and/or cafe. Most grocery stores are open seven days a week, often until 6:00 or 8:00 pm. Supermarkets are usually open longer hours, many 24 hours a day. Restaurants usually serve until about 9:00 pm, but some cafes close after lunch. Bicycle shops are found in most large towns and open 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. Some close on Sunday or Monday. Hardware stores sometimes carry a few bicycle parts such as tires.

Post Offices

California Association of Bicycling Organizations

CALIFORNIA

Green Tortoise Bus

(800) 867-8647
Los Angeles
(213) 392-1990
San Francisco
(415) 821-0803
Web site: <http://www.greentortoise.com>

International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA)

PO Box 7578
Boulder CO 80306
(303) 545-9011
Web site: <http://www.imba.com>

League of American Bicyclists (LAB)

(Formerly League of American Wheelmen)
1612 K Street NW, Suite 401
Washington, DC 20006-2802
(202) 822-1333
E-Mail: bikeleague@bikeleague.org
Web site: www.bikeleague.org

Los Angeles Convention & Visitors Bureau

685 S. Figueroa St.
Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 689-8822
Web site: www.lacvb.com

Redwood Empire Association

1925 13th Avenue, #103
Oakland CA 94606-3161
(510) 536-8808
Web site: www.redwoodempire.com

Road Conditions

(800) 427-7623

San Diego Convention and Visitors Bureau

11 Horton Plaza
San Diego CA 92101
(619) 236-1212
E-Mail: sdinfo@sandiego.org
Web site: www.sandiego.org

San Diego North Convention and Visitors Bureau

360 North Escondido Blvd.

Escondido CA 92025

(800) 848-3336

Web site: www.sandiegonoorth.com

San Francisco Visitor Information Center

900 Market Street
San Francisco CA 94102
(415) 391-2000

Tandem Club of America

2220 Vaness Dr.
Birmingham AL 35242
(205) 991-7766
Web site: www.tandemclub.org

U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM)

California State Office
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1834
Sacramento, CA 95825-1886
Telephone: (916) 978-4600
FAX (916) 978-4699
Web site: www.ca.blm.gov

USDA Forest Service

Pacific Southwest Region
1323 Club Drive
Vallejo, CA 94592
707.562.8737
Web site: <http://www.r5.fs.fed.us/>

U.S. Geological Survey

Mail Orders
Box 25286, Federal Center
Denver, CO 80225
Web site: http://edcwww.cr.usgs.gov/Webglis/glisbin/finder_main.pl?dataset_name=MAPS_LARGE
And
<http://mapping.usgs.gov/mac/isb/pubs/booklets/usgsmaps/usgsmaps.html>

Public Inquiry Offices

7638 Federal Bldg.
300 N. Los Angeles St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012
(213) 894-2850

345 Middlefield Rd

Appendix

Holidays

New Year's Day - Jan 1
 M. L. King Jr.'s. Birthday - 3rd Mon of Jan
 Lincoln's Birthday - 2nd Mon of Feb
 President's Day - 3rd Mon of Feb
 Easter Sunday
 Memorial Day - Last Mon of May
 Independence Day - July 4
 Labor Day - 1st Mon of Sept
 Admission Day - Sept 9
 Columbus Day - 2nd Mon of Oct
 Veterans' Day - Nov 11
 Thanksgiving Day - 4th Thurs of Nov
 Christmas Day Dec 25

Useful Addresses and Phone Numbers

Adventure Cycling
 P.O. Box 8308-W
 Missoula, MT 59807
 (800)755-2453 (voice)
 (406)721-1776 (voice)
 (406)721-8754 (fax)
 E-Mail: info@adventurecycling.org

American Youth Hostels (AYH)
 Web site: www.hiayh.org

Central California Council
 P.O. Box 2538
 Monterey, CA 93942
 (831) 899-1252
 E-Mail: hiayhhccc@aol.com

Golden Gate Council
 425 Divisadero St #307
 San Francisco, CA 94117
 (415) 863-1444
 E-Mail: hiayh@norcalhostels.org
 Web site: www.norcalhostels.cor

Los Angeles Council
 1434 Second Street
 Santa Monica CA 90401
 (310) 393-1769
 E-Mail: hiayhla@aol.com

San Diego Council
 437 J Street, Suite #301
 San Diego, CA 92101
 (619) 338-9981
 E-Mail: hiayhsd1@aol.com

Amtrak
 (800) 872-7245
 24 hours, toll-free
 Web site: www.amtrak.com/

Automobile Clubs
Southern California
Automobile Club of Southern California
 2601 S. Figueroa
 Los Angeles, CA 90007
 (213) 741-4264
 Web site: www.aaa-calif.com

Northern California
California State Automobile Association
 100 Van Ness Ave.
 San Francisco, CA 94102
 1-800-228-6339
 Web site: www.csaa.com

CABO
California Association of Bicycling Organizations
 PO Box 2684
 Dublin, CA 94568
 (415) 828-5299
 Web site: www.CABObike.org

California State Park System
 801 K St., Suite 1600
 Sacramento, CA 94294
 (916) 653-6995
 Web site: http://www.cal-parks.ca.gov/

California Division of Tourism
 PO Box 1499
 Sacramento, CA 95812-1499
 (800) 862-2543
 Web site: http://gocalif.ca.gov

Caltrans Bicycle Office
 1120 N Street, MS1
 Sacramento CA 95814
 (916) 653-0036

CALIFORNIA

Post offices are found in most small towns. Most open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm. Some are open later or on Saturday. Sometimes post offices are located within stores. Mail for travelers should be addressed to the receiver c/o General Delivery and include the name of the city or post office, and zip code. "Poste restante" is not used. Current postal rates are: domestic and Mexico: post cards 20 cents, letters 34 cents for the first ounce and 21 cents for each additional ounce.

Bicycle Rental

Bicycles may be rented at some bike shops and from bicycle rental companies, most commonly in larger towns and popular vacation areas. The quality of the bicycles available varies. Rates range from \$10 to \$20 per day. Many commercial tour operators rent bicycles to participants.

Transporting Bicycles

All major airlines will transport bicycles. Some require that the bike be boxed; a few provide boxes. The usual charge on domestic flights is \$45 (one way) when the size of the bicycle box exceeds 62 inches in l + w + h. National bicycle organizations (League of American Bicyclists, Adventure Cycling, USCF) have arrangements with specific airlines for free or discount passage of bikes. Shuttle airlines (United Shuttle and Southwest) charge \$25. Major airports serving California are Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego, San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento and Reno (Nevada). Other airports include Burbank, Ontario, San Jose, Bakersfield, Eureka, Fresno, Monterey-Salinas, Redding Santa Barbara and Santa Maria.

Amtrak trains will carry boxed bikes on trains with baggage service between stations with baggage service. These stations are: Anaheim, Davis, Del Mar, Dunsmuir, Fullerton, Glendale, Los



Angeles, Martinez, Oakland, Oceanside, Pasadena, Pomona, Sacramento, Salinas, San Bernardino, San Diego, San Luis Obispo and Santa Barbara, Las Vegas and Reno, NV, and Klamath Falls, OR. The charge is \$5.00. Boxes are usually available, but check ahead when you make your seat reservation. On some routes, "California cars" have facilities for bicyclists to carry their bikes onboard and lock them to the bicycle racks on the lower level of the car.

The San Diego Trolley allows bikes at certain hours (no permit needed). Bikes may be taken on the light rail in Santa Clara County (San Francisco to Gilroy). BART which serves San Francisco and points east (to Richmond, Pittsburg and Fremont) allows bikes at non-commute hours. Visitor permits are available at the stations.

Ferries between San Diego and Coronado carry bicycles. Ferries between San Francisco and Angel Island, Sausalito, Tiburon and Vallejo carry bicycles.

Intercity bus lines will carry boxed bicycles as baggage. Green Tortoise buses will carry bicycles unboxed with a reservation. Most local bus lines in California have buses that are equipped with front mounted bicycle racks. Panniers must be removed from the bike to use bus-mounted racks. A bicycle shuttle service is available across some bridges where bicycles are prohibited.

Rented automobiles can greatly expand transport possibilities. Foreign driver's licenses are valid in California.

Bicycle Security

Bicycle thefts are common occurrences. Park your bike in a highly visible place, and lock it securely to something solid. If possible, have someone watch the bike. In cities, many parking garages have bike parking areas. When camping, lock your bike at night and bring your bags into the tent. Bring your bike into your hotel room. Don't leave bikes unattended inside automobiles. Keep your most valuable items with you.

Accommodations

Campgrounds are run by various public agencies and by private companies. Privately owned sites are often (not always) more expensive and offer more amenities. The State Park system offers campgrounds in many of its units; some offer a special rate for cyclists. If a State Park camp is full, cyclists will be accommodated in an overflow area. In State Parks and National Parks, camping is allowed only in designated sites, or with a permit. Camping is allowed in most areas of National Forests and Bureau of Land Management lands. Ask permission before camping on private land. Camping along the road is not advised. Purify water from lakes and

CALIFORNIA

courteous to rude.

Mountain Biking

There are many thousands of miles of unpaved roads throughout California. Although some are through private property, many are fire and jeep roads through public forest or parkland. In lightly populated areas, many of the county roads are not paved. In some places single-track trails are open to cycling; however, cross-country travel is not recommended.

Conflicts with pedestrians and equestrians have resulted in closure of many trails to cyclists. Check with the appropriate authorities concerning current regulations on mountain biking. Be certain to follow posted trail restrictions and share the trails in a courteous manner. Many parks have isolated campsites which are easily reached by mountain bike. Surfaces on California's unpaved roads can be very smooth or very rutted; inquire locally as to conditions. There are a number of guidebooks available.

Organized Tours

Many organized overnight tours are offered by professional companies and bicycle clubs. Tours vary from easy to difficult and luxurious to "roughing it". Details should be obtained from the tour operator. A list of commercial operators is available from CABO. The CABO Master Calendar lists tours as well as century rides (100 mile or 100 kilometer events). Listings of local club day rides can be found at bike shops.



its entire length. There is much good cycling in the hills surrounding the San Francisco Bay Area.

Maps and Guidebooks

Among the finest maps are those produced by the California State Automobile Association, available to members only. Adventure Cycling (formerly BikeCentennial) also sells bicycle touring maps. There are a number of commercial maps available at book shops, gasoline stations and supermarkets. At the county or regional level, they indicate most rural roads and major urban streets. Some give limited tourist and facility information.

Krebs Cycle Products produces detailed and concise bicycling guide maps covering much of Northern California. The maps are made just for cycling and are carefully drawn to exacting detail and printed in several colors. The extensive information on traffic, hills, bicycle trails, suggested routes, services and points of interest is not found in any other map or book. See: <http://www2.cruzio.com/~krebsmap/> or write: Krebs Cycle Products, P.O. Box 82, Aptos, California 95001.

United States Geological Survey maps are available at 1:250,000 / 1:100,000 / 1:62,500. Many camping supply stores carry them and they may be ordered from the Geological Survey. They give good topographical information but do not name many roads; they are often out-of-date. DeLorme atlases based on the Geological Survey maps are highly detailed at a scale of 1:150,000, with good topo, road name and tourist information, although unpaved, private or minor roads are sometimes difficult to distinguish. There are special maps available for certain areas, and many books detailing rides in various regions. CABO, the California Association of Bicycling Organizations, has a list of available bike maps and guidebooks. Maps and guidebooks are available for sale at many bicycle shops and camping supply stores and at some bookstores.

There is a bicycle touring forum on the internet where bicycle tourists can seek information from list members and post their ride stories for others to share. See page 21 for details.

Road and Traffic Conditions

General traffic conditions are indicated under each region. Traffic in popular tourist areas is heaviest during summer and on weekends and holidays. Lightest traffic is in the morning. In urban areas, weekday mornings and afternoons have the heaviest traffic. Sunday mornings are usually the quietest.

Road surfaces are usually good, but sometimes very bad. Beware of pot holes, drain grates, broken glass and other hazards. Many roads are narrow with little shoulder space. Drivers run the full gamut from

CALIFORNIA

streams before using it. Be exceptionally careful with fire. Special precautions are necessary where bears are present. Fuel for camp stoves may be scarce in some areas. Campground fees range from free to \$35. Most are from \$12 to \$18 per site.

Hostels can provide simple low cost lodging to IYHF members. The hostel system has expanded in recent years, but in

most areas it is not possible to rely on them exclusively. There are many hostels in California, ranging from private home hostels (reservations required) to superior grade (reservations recommended), and cost \$5 and up per person.

An Internet based list of hospitality homes for bicycle tourists is available on-line (page 21). The Tandem Club of America also has hospitality home listings. Hospitality Homes should be contacted as far in advance as possible to arrange stays.

There are many hotels and motels in California, in most large towns, in vacation areas and along highways. These range from basic lodging to luxury rooms. A restaurant is often nearby. In popular areas reservations are advised. Rates start at about \$35. A typical moderately priced room costs between \$45 to \$85 a night for two people.

"Bed and Breakfasts" (B&B's) usually provide a room or cottage with some meals. In California, B&B's are usually near the upper end of the scale in both luxury and price. There are many to choose from, especially in resort areas, but reservations are advised.

Local Information

Many areas have a tourist office or Chamber of Commerce. The Yellow Pages of the telephone book can be useful. Sometimes local residents know something about the area where they live, but not always!



Tour Planning

The following brief descriptions will give you some familiarity with California's various regions, to help you plan your tour. Detailed information is available from guidebooks and local tourist offices.

Northern Coast Ranges

The Northern Coast Ranges are a series of mountain ranges reaching north from the San Francisco Bay Area to the Oregon border. The often rugged ridges run in a roughly north-south pattern. Elevations range from sea level to 4,000' (1200m). They are covered by grassland, oak woodland, and pine and fir forests. Logging and agriculture are major industries. The population density is low. Although a network of paved roads is not well developed in most areas, there are plenty of dirt roads. Traffic is light to moderate; however, logging trucks are common in many areas. Terrain is hilly to mountainous. The winters are cold and rainy, with snow at higher elevations. Summers are hot and dry. Much of the area is within National Forests. Camping is easy to find; lodging is scarce.

Redwood Empire

Geographically a part of the Coast Ranges, this area is named for the towering redwood forests which thrive in the foggy coastal region. Coast Redwoods (*Sequoia sempervirens*), are the tallest trees on earth, reaching as high as 350' (100m). They grow only in the coastal zone from Big Sur to southern Oregon. Many are over 1,000 years old. Grassland and scrub are also common, on coastal bluffs and hillsides. The shoreline varies from rocky to sandy. Terrain varies from flat to very hilly. The paved road network is not dense, but traffic is light to moderate. Logging is a major industry, along with fishing and agriculture. The weather is damp most of the year; rainy in winter and foggy in summer. The finest weather is in spring and fall. Winds are from the northwest, but the forested areas are sheltered. The redwoods are preserved in many State and National Parks. The area is lightly populated, but there are plenty of campgrounds, food and lodging.

Cascades

The Cascades are a range of volcanic peaks extending from north-central California into Oregon. Mt. Shasta is the tallest at 14,161 feet (4,319m). Mt. Lassen was the last to erupt (1914-1921). The terrain includes rolling uplands, river valleys and canyons, rugged ridges and mountains. Most of the land is forested. There are streams, lakes and waterfalls. The climate is dry and warm in summer, cold with rain or snow in winter. The area is sparsely populated with few paved roads. A number of recreational areas provide camping and food. Much of the area is National Forest and logging is common. Cycling

CALIFORNIA

sections of desert. Death Valley contains many interesting features.

Services are very far apart in most areas as is drinking water; carry a large amount of water with you. The intense heat, high winds and sandstorms can make cycling here very difficult. The paved road network is sparse, though

there are many sandy unpaved roads. Traffic is mostly light. There are some campgrounds and in many areas camping is allowed outside of established campsites. Lodging is far apart outside resort areas. The southern parts of the region are irrigated for crops, and dates are grown also.



Santa Ana - San Diego Mountains

The Santa Ana - San Diego Mountains are comprised of a series of rugged ranges starting south of Los Angeles and extending into Mexico. The lower elevations are covered in chaparral brush with oaks and pines on the higher peaks, which reach to 6,000 feet (1,800 m). Apples, avocados, citrus, and other crops are grown in the valleys. Coastal areas are mostly urbanized, with sandy beaches. Terrain is flat to mountainous. Camping and supplies are fairly easy to find. Summers are mild near the coast to hot on the eastern slopes. Winters are mild with some rain and snow on the peaks.

Urbanized Areas

The Los Angeles, San Diego, San Francisco Bay and Sacramento areas are heavily urbanized. They contain many points of interest and cultural attractions. There is some good cycling to be found within them. Urban bike route maps are available for many of the areas. In the Los Angeles area, bicycle trails follow several of the rivers and drainage channels. The beach bike path runs for 22 miles. A 32 mile trail follows the American River through Sacramento. The multipurpose trail along the Santa Ana River in southern California between west Corona and Huntington Beach is 25 miles long. Known as SART, The Santa Ana River Trail, there are no cross streets along

fog likely. Winds are generally from the south in the Sacramento Valley and the northwest in the San Joaquin Valley.

Southern Coast Ranges

The Southern Coast Ranges are comprised of a series of ridges and valleys running generally parallel to the ocean. Elevations are from sea level to 4,000 feet (1,200 m). The grass-covered hillsides are bright green in winter and golden brown in summer. Chaparral brush and oaks are also common. The highest areas are forested. Cattle ranching is a major use of the hillsides, with farming in the valleys. Rocky cliffs alternate with sandy beaches on the coast. Most of the area is lightly populated, with several small cities and many small farming towns. Many of the Spanish missions are in this region.

Facilities are frequent along the coast, unevenly distributed inland. There are many lightly traveled roads. Terrain varies from flat to mountainous. Winters are cool and wet; summers are mild, often foggy on the coast and hot inland. Spring and fall are usually clear and mild. There are strong northwest winds.

Transverse Ranges

These ranges, which include the San Gabriel and San Bernardino Mountains, run in a generally east-west direction, with peaks as high as 10,000 feet (3,000 m). The lower slopes are covered by chaparral brush, with forests of fir, pine and oak higher up. Much of the land is within National Forests. Except for the coastal areas, the region is lightly populated, but a popular weekend and vacation spot. Facilities are unevenly distributed. Summers are hot and dry; winters cool and rainy, with some snow in the highest areas. The best times for cycling are spring and fall, when the weather is pleasant and the crowds are infrequent. Riding is generally strenuous and paved roads are limited. The Santa Ynez Valley offers gentler, pleasant riding.

Deserts

About one quarter of California is covered by deserts, containing a fascinating array of unique plants, animals and geologic features. The lower slopes and valleys consist of broad expanses of sand and sparse vegetation, interspersed with dry washes supporting more numerous and varied life. The mountains are steep, rugged and broken, with many ridges and deep canyons. The slopes end abruptly at the desert floor. Temperatures are very hot from May to October, and mild the rest of the year. Nights may be quite cold, especially at higher elevations. The scarce rain falls in winter storms and in severe summer thunderstorms, which often cause flash flooding in washes. Spectacular wildflower displays may be seen from February to May in certain areas. The Anza-Borrego State Park and Joshua Tree National Monument preserve especially beautiful

CALIFORNIA

is moderate to strenuous.

Modoc Plateau

The Modoc Plateau is a volcanic area of ancient lava flows and formations, in California's northeast corner. Elevations are between 4,000 feet and 6,000 feet (1,200 m and 1,800 m). The area lies on the western edge of the Great Basin and is characteristically covered by sage-brush, juniper and pine forests. The area is fairly dry; snow is possible, however, even in late spring or early fall. There are occasional summer thunder-showers, and winds usually blow from the southwest. Ranching is the predominant land use. Much of the land is within National Forests. Roads, towns and services are far apart. Terrain is rolling to mountainous and traffic light.



Sierra Nevada

A majestic granite mountain range, the Sierra Nevada forms the spine of California. Forests, meadows, lakes and alpine peaks comprise the beautiful, often breathtaking scenery. Peaks rise to over 10,000 feet (3,000 m), with Mt. Whitney the highest at 14,494 feet (4,418 m). In places, such as Yosemite, ice age glaciers have carved dramatic valleys, leaving sheer rock walls and spectacular waterfalls. Giant Sequoias (*Sequoiadendron gigantea*), the most massive trees in the world, and living up to 3,500 years, grow in scattered groves on the western slopes. Meadow wildflowers reach their peak of bloom in July and August. The summer season is short; snow can fall at any time of the year at highest elevations, and is probable anywhere from November through April. A number of highways are closed into May. Summer temperatures are mild; thunderstorms are possible. Tourist areas are quite crowded in summer. The main highways are busy; in some places there are no alternate roads. Cycling is generally strenuous, over mountainous terrain. The road over Tioga Pass (closed in winter) climbs to 9,945 feet (3,023 m). Camping is plentiful and much of the land is in National Forests. Food and lodging are available in many areas but far apart in others.

Mother Lode

California's historic gold country, the Mother Lode is situated in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada. The discovery of gold in 1848 drew 200,000 prospectors from around the world, increasing California's population tenfold. Quaint mining towns and historic sites dating back to this colorful period still remain, and many are well preserved. The region is very hilly with brush and oak, pine and fir trees. Winters are cold and rainy with occasional snow. Summers are hot and dry. The roads are fairly good, but many are steep or unpaved. Traffic is moderate to light; main roads can be busy. Towns and services are reasonably close together; lodging less so.

Wine Country

California's most famous "Wine Country" is in the Napa Valley and the nearby Sonoma and Alexander Valleys. (Fine wines are also produced in many other parts of the State: Mendocino County, Livermore, Gilroy, San Luis Obispo County, the Central Valley and the Sierra Nevada foothills, Riverside County and San Diego County.) These three valleys are relatively small, surrounded by ridges and mountains, which are covered in grassland, chaparral brush and oak woods. The most famous of the wineries are along Highway 29 in the Napa Valley; most cyclists prefer to ride on the Silverado Trail, a quieter road paralleling on the other side of the valley. Sonoma Valley offers additional wineries and many historical sites. Alexander Valley is quiet and scenic. Traffic can be quite heavy in the Napa and Sonoma Valleys. Cycling in the surrounding hills is good if sometimes strenuous. The weather is warm and dry in summer, and cool and wet in winter. Lodging and other services are easy to find; camping is somewhat limited.

Sacramento River Delta

The Delta of the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers is a mosaic of sloughs and islands. Many waterfowl inhabit the area which is also popular with fishermen, boaters and waterskiers. Farming is the predominant occupation. The region retains an old-time atmosphere



CALIFORNIA

and a relaxed way of life. There are many intriguing old towns. Many narrow winding roads follow the levees for miles. Traffic is light off the several busy highways. The area is very flat. Camping and supply opportunities are frequent. The best weather is in the spring and late fall. Summers are hot; winters are cool and rainy, with dense fog common. Strong winds usually blow out of the west.

Big Sur

Big Sur is a dramatically beautiful and rugged section of the coastline from Carmel south to San Simeon. Cliffs drop hundreds of feet into the sea; at several points the road is 800 feet (240m) above the surf. Hearst Castle, the former estate or newspaper magnate William Randolph Hearst, and now a State Park, overlooks the town of San Simeon. (Tours are available; reservations suggested.) Cycling is demanding, and limited for the most part to Highway 1. Traffic can be heavy, especially on summer weekends. The road is winding and narrow. The best weather is in the spring and fall. Winter can be rainy; fog is likely in the summer. Winds blow strong from the northwest. Camping and lodging are fairly plentiful; supplies are limited.



Central Valley

The Central Valley extends nearly half the length of the State. It includes the Sacramento Valley to the north and the San Joaquin Valley to the south, each drained by its namesake river. The valley is mostly flat with a few low hills. It is one of the richest agricultural areas in the world. Principal crops include almonds, apricots, cotton, figs, grapes, olives, peaches, plums and rice. Outside of a number of large cities and towns, it is quiet and rural. Sacramento, the State Capitol, has many historic attractions. The road network is well developed in most parts, offering many choices of lightly traveled routes. Fall and spring see the most pleasant weather. Summers are hot and dry; winters cool and wet with dense ground