

*Crystal Cove State Park
Frequently Asked Questions*

FAQ's for GETTING HERE

What time does the park open/close?

The park opens at 6am and closes at sunset with the exception of the Historic District which closes at 10pm. Sunset is defined as the time the sun drops below the horizon, not when it becomes completely dark.

Are the trails closed if it's raining?

Yes, trails close for public safety reasons before, during, and after rainfall. Trail conditions and closures are posted online and updated frequently at: 949-494-3539.

How much does it cost to enter the park? Are there other types of park passes available?

Day use is \$15/vehicle. For annual, seasonal, veteran discounts and other pass descriptions [see http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1049](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1049)

Is there an hourly parking rate? Is there any place to park for free?

Yes, from October 1 to March 31 Monday-Thursday only. Parking machines are available at all entrances except Los Trancos. There is free parking available in the neighboring Cities of Laguna Beach or Corona del Mar, but nowhere within the state park.

Where is handicapped parking/beach access?

There are 5 ADA parking spaces available in the Historic District that are first come first served. All other parking lots have ADA spaces. The shuttle which accesses the HD has a wheelchair lift. The Historic District and Lower Moro have handicap beach access. There are beach wheelchairs available at both Moro beach and the Historic District beach on a first come first served basis and are free of charge.

Where is the closest parking to the beach?

Lower Moro lot – just park and walk through the tunnel to have your toes in the sand!

Where are restroom facilities?

Restrooms are available adjacent to all parking lots.

Where are rinse-off showers available?

Cold water rinse-off showers are located at Lower Moro parking lot near the tunnel, and adjacent to many of the restroom buildings including: Reef Point, Los Trancos, and Pelican Point lots. Showers in the Moro Campground are reserved for registered campers only.

Where can I picnic in the park?

There are picnic tables near most parking lots, on the beach in the Historic District, as well as Moro beach near the lifeguard headquarters building.

Where is the restaurant (AKA the Beachcomber Café)?

The Beachcomber Café is located in the Historic District. Parking is in the Los Trancos lot. The Shake Shack is accessible from the HD by stairs or from the south bound lane of PCH (parking at the Shake Shack is limited.)

FAQ's for the HISTORIC DISTRICT

Where do I park in the Historic District?

All parking for the Historic District, the Park Store, the Beachcomber Café and the Cottages is across Pacific Coast Highway in the Los Trancos lot.

How do I get to the Historic District?

Take the shuttle from the Los Trancos lot or walk the 1/2 mile path located at the southeast corner of the lot through the tunnel. The shuttle costs \$1 per person each way. Kids under 12 are free.

How does parking work at the Los Trancos lot & for the Beachcomber Cafe?

Los Trancos is a pay as you exit lot. If you eat at the Beachcomber Café & spend over \$15 you will receive a validation for one vehicle. Validations are for one vehicle only. Receipts from the Shake Shack do not qualify for parking validation.

Where is the tunnel?

The tunnel which connects the parking lot to the Historic District is located under Pacific Coast Highway. You can get to the tunnel by following the footpath from the Los Trancos parking lot by heading to the southernmost corner of the lot. It takes approximately 10 minutes to walk from the parking lot to the restaurant.

What are the Beachcomber hours?

7am until 9:30pm. Reservations can be made at www.opentable.com

How do I make reservations for the cottages?

<http://www.reserveamerica.com/> and look under Crystal Cove Beach Cottages - these are very popular so please try to plan well in advance!

FAQ's for Park Rules and Regulations

Can I collect?/ What can I collect?

You ARE allowed to collect: sea glass, driftwood (up to 50lbs.), You ARE NOT allowed to collect shells, sand, rocks, any living creatures, or anything out of the tide pools.

Can I do research/collect samples in the park?

Yes, with a permit. Follow this link for detail
<http://www.crystalcovestatepark.com/research-in-the-park.html>

Are dogs/pets allowed in the park?

Dogs are required to be on a leash not exceeding six feet in length and can be walked **on paved areas only**. Dogs are not allowed on the beach, in the backcountry, at the Beachcomber Café nor may dogs be left unattended.

Where can I take my dog/pet?

See <http://www.crystalcovestatepark.com> and look under Dog Rules and Regulations.

Can I have an open fire or charcoal pit on the beach or in the backcountry?

No, this is an extreme fire severity zone.

What type of fire is allowed?

Open flames are not allowed anywhere in the park, but gas canister type BBQ's are permitted, but must be 18" off the ground. Gas canister powered campfires are allowed in the campground and on the beach, provided they are not sitting directly on the sand.

Can I be on the beach at sunset?

The park closes at sunset with the exception of the Historic District which closes at 10pm.

Can I smoke in the park?

Smoking is allowed in the park, but not in the backcountry or within 25 feet of any building.

FAQ's for RECREATION

Are the trails closed if it is raining?

Yes, trails close for public safety reasons before, during, and after rainfall. Trail conditions and closures are posted online and updated frequently at: 949-494-3539.

What kind of wildlife might I see in the park? Are there mountain lions?

Some of the more frequently seen animals include: squirrels, rabbits, bobcats, deer, roadrunner, snakes, birds and dolphins. Always use caution - this is a natural environment, there is always a possibility of encountering wildlife in the park and although there have been no confirmed sightings of a mountain lion for many years, the park is within their habitat range.

Camping

What is the difference in backcountry camping and Moro Campground?

The backcountry is primitive camping with only pit toilets and picnic tables. Moro Campground has 57 coastal terrace sites for both tents and RV's with bathrooms and token showers. See the following link for more details

<http://www.crystalcovestatepark.com/crystalcovefinalcampground0.pdf> and visit www.reserveamerica.com for reservations.

Do I need a permit for backcountry camping? How do I make reservations for the backcountry?

A permit is required. Please check in at the Moro Campground kiosk to receive camping

tags and to pay fees. You may also make a reservation at www.reserveamerica.com under Crystal Cove SP Primitive Tent Camping.

How do I make reservations for the campground?

<http://www.reserveamerica.com/> and look under Crystal Cove SP Moro Campground

Are campfires allowed while camping?

Open flames are not allowed anywhere in the park, but gas canister type BBQ's are allowed. Gas powered fire rings are permitted in the developed Moro Campground ONLY (no fires of any kind, other than a small cookstove are permitted in the backcountry) but must be raised off the ground.

Beach

Can I fish from beach? Do I need a license to fish in the park? Are their fish I CAN'T keep?

Yes to all. Fishing is allowed with a valid fishing license. Check www.dfg.ca.gov for information on licensing, species, size, and take limits. Please also visit www.ocmarineprotection.org for additional information regarding fishing within the Crystal Cove State Marine Conservation Area.

Can I use mussels for bait?

Mussels and other types of bait may be used however; you must provide your own. Collecting and using bait found in the park is strictly prohibited.

Where is the best place to go swimming?

Moro beach or Muddy Creek have nice sandy beaches, as well as the beach located directly in front of the Beachcomber Café in the Historic District. Beware of weather and ocean conditions at all times.

When is high tide? What is the tide schedule?

<http://magicseaweed.com/Newport-Beach-Surf-Report/665/Tide/>

Where are the best places to Dive?

There are many great dives sites in the park, including those only accessible by boat. For beach divers Reef Point, Rocky Bight, or Pelican Point are the most commonly visited. Beware of weather and ocean conditions at all times.

What is the Underwater Park?

The 1,100 acre off-shore underwater park is one of more than a dozen special areas designated by California State Parks for their extraordinary natural or cultural significance. The CCSP underwater park includes a diverse, healthy habitat, sand and reef structure and both an intertidal and subtidal area.

What can I see in the Underwater Park?

The Park's 1,100 acres (mean high tide to 120' depth contour) of habitat provide a home

for most species you're likely to find in southern California waters and include everything from sharks, eels, and lobster to kelp forests, sandy seafloor, and rocky reefs. The underwater park also includes submerged historical points of interest like two admiralty anchors (one south of Reef Point, and one near Rocky Bight) and a World War II era F4U Corsair aircraft in deep water off Reef Point. For more information see our park map available on our web site at www.crystalcovestatepark.com Please remember that all diving activities require proper training and equipment, and rigorous attention to safety.

Is spear fishing allowed and do I need a permit to spear fish?

Yes to both. See California Department of Fish and Wildlife at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/> Check www.dfg.ca.gov for information on licensing, species, size, and take limits. Please also visit www.ocmarineprotection.org for additional information regarding fishing within the Crystal Cove State Marine Conservation Area.

Can I launch a kayak? Where?

Kayak launching is permitted from Moro Cove to Muddy Creek, and from the south end of the Historic District to the north end of Treasure Cove. The only area where they are not allowed is between Muddy Creek and the south end of the cottages. No vehicles are allowed on the beach or on any of the ramps. All kayaks must be hand carried or transported down on a wheeled device, pushed by hand.

When is the best time for whale watching?

Gray whales migrate between December and April, but other whales are seen throughout the year

What is that orange buoy out in the water?

The orange buoy marks approximately 500 yards offshore. This is not a sanctioned swim route, and the distance is not exact. Use caution when swimming.

Backcountry Hiking

What are the most popular hiking trails?

Please see www.crystalcovestatepark.com/ for hiking trail information and maps.

Is there access to water in the backcountry?

NO, hikers and campers must carry all their own water. Water is available at the restroom buildings in the parking lots.

Why are the trails closed when it rains?

Using the trails when they are wet causes increased erosion and creates serious safety hazard for visitors.

Are horses allowed in the park? Can I ride my horse on the beach?

Horses are allowed on all trails in the backcountry. Horses are NOT allowed on the beach.

Is there any hunting in the park?

No. The Mission of the State Parks is to preserve and protect the abundant and diverse wildlife you may encounter while visiting the park.

What are the wooden posts in the back country?

Markers for the Geology Discovery Trail. See www.crystalcovestatepark.com to download a copy of the self-guided Geology Discovery Trail brochure.

Tidepooling

Where are the best spots to go tidepooling?

Reef Point, Rocky Bight, Pelican Point, north end of Treasure Cove

When is the best time to go tidepooling?

During a low tide, especially a negative low tide. See <http://magicseaweed.com/Newport-Beach-Surf-Report/665/Tide/> always be sure to watch water and weather conditions when tidepooling.

Can I collect in the tidepools?

No collecting of any kind is allowed in the tidepools nor on the beach, except for sea glass and driftwood (50 lbs. maximum.)

What can I see in the tidepools?

Depending how low the tide is, you might see various species of sea anemones, mussels, barnacles, chitons, limpets, hermit crabs, shore crabs, tidepool sculpin, opaleye perch, and ochre seastars. See the tidepool gallery for photos of often seen species at www.crystalcovestatepark.com

FAQ's for SPECIAL EVENTS

Can I get married or have a private party at CCSP?

Yes, Crystal Cove State Park provides a unique opportunity for Special Events in various locations throughout the park. For more information see <http://www.crystalcovestatepark.com/special-events/>

Which pavilions are first come first serve? How do I reserve one?

All pavilions are first come first served unless they are reserved in advance. See <http://www.crystalcovestatepark.com/special-events/> to make a reservation.

Can I take professional photographs/shoots?

Yes, but a permit is required <http://www.crystalcovestatepark.com/special-events/>

How do I get a film permit?

All film and photo opportunities require a permit, and may require a monitor. For more information see <http://www.crystalcovestatepark.com/special-events/>

Can my special event stay after sunset?

Yes, with an approved event permit.