

Inspiration Point

John and Angel at Inspiration Point, job well done!



Castle Canyon Trail, going down.

— Above Echo Mountain, Altadena, Calif.



Hello again, everyone! Thanks for your good comments about my story about last month's journey, Yosemite. Wow, that was great!

This month, we went hiking in Altadena. Last year we covered the hike up to Echo Mountain, and this time we took it a bit higher, about 2 miles higher, to be more specific. Inspiration Point, here we come!

I was ready for the challenge. Once you get to Echo Mountain, I suggest taking a short break at the picnic tables at Echo Mountain location, then continue up Castle Canyon Trail to inspiration Point. Happy trails!

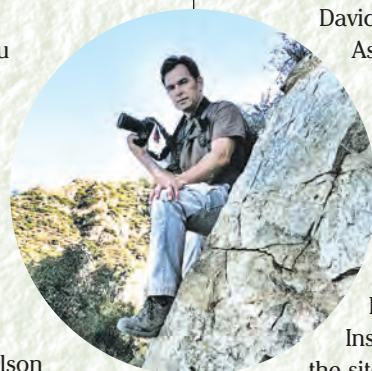
The History

This Inspiration Point is just below Mt. Lowe, above Echo Mountain, in the Mt. Wilson area of the San Gabriel Mountains.

Inspiration Point (4,714 feet in elevation) is one of five officially named Inspiration Points in Los Angeles County alone. The Pacific Electric Railway built an open-air shelter there in 1924-25, with locating tubes showing the location of points of interest ranging

from nearby sites to Catalina Island. The locating tubes are pieces of pipe that are oriented so that the view through the pipe is centered on the point of interest.

Pacific Electric was the owner of the Mt. Lowe Railway when Inspiration Point became famous. The Mt. Lowe Railway was the creation of Thaddeus S.C. Lowe and David J. Macpherson, who built it from 1892-95.



Meet my photographer, Club CEO John Hawkins.

As is often the unhappy case, the dreamers responsible for the railway lost control of it due to bankruptcy in 1896, and the railway was operated by Henry Huntington through his Pacific Electric Railway Company (of the Red Car fame) from 1902 to 1936. The Mt. Lowe Railway ended at Ye Alpine Tavern, later the Mt. Lowe Tavern, a half-mile north of Inspiration Point. The tavern burned in 1936; the site is now the Mt. Lowe Trail Camp.

The original shelter long ago disappeared, but the volunteers of the Scenic Mt. Lowe Historical Committee rebuilt the shelter, dedicated on Nov. 16, 1996. Some of the original tubes at Inspiration Point remain today, with missing ones replaced by the committee. There are several picnic tables under

the roof of the shelter.

The official Inspiration Point is the northwest end of a fairly flat ridge that descends to the actual Inspiration Point and continues for one mile to a knoll. The Ridge is easily seen from the Pasadena area.

The Hike

A year or two ago, we traveled up to Echo Mountain, took some photos and then came back down the mountain. This time we were going to take the opportunity to go up another two miles. I love a challenge!

We must have been the first people going up that day because I was getting spider webs (on my face) the entire time we were hiking up the Castle Canyon Trail. Let me warn you, it's a steep climb. There were switchbacks most of the way. This trail is a natural stair climber and leg-burner. Just stay motivated and you will get to the top, I promise.

You can't really see the Inspiration Point pavilion until you're almost there. So when you've just about lost your motivation, you get it all back again in one nice visual. If you just keep moving, even if they are smaller steps, you will reach your ultimate goal, Inspiration Point. You need to do this, it is truly inspirational! Got for it!



Mount Lowe Railway and Inspiration Point sign.



Inspiration Point to Los Angeles, look closely.

Inspiration Point

Lake Avenue and E. Loma Alta Drive, Altadena

The Inspiration Point is just below Mt. Lowe, above Echo Mountain, in the Mt. Wilson area of the San Gabriel Mountains.

TRAIL HIGHLIGHTS

SEASON: Anytime of the year, but early spring is the best.

DISTANCE: About 10 miles roundtrip, 1,380 feet net elevation gain.

HIKE TIME TO ECHO MOUNTAIN: 2.7 miles

HIKE TIME TO INSPIRATION POINT (VIA CASTLE CANYON TRAIL): An additional 2 miles and 2 hours up at an easy pace.

DIRECTIONS



From the 210, take the Lake Avenue exit north until you cannot go any farther. Lake Avenue will end at Loma Alta Drive. You do not need an Adventure Pass to park on the street here.

Angel's
Be Alive!

Send your photos to me at agomez@cityemployeesclub.com
I would love to see them!

Angel Gomez,
Club Director of Sales

Castle Canyon Trail and Inspiration Point.



Sam Merrill Trail sign and information.

You should always have these with you: water, safety gear, sunscreen and snacks.



Funny, I don't see anything!

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If I can get there, so can you. Drink plenty of water before, during, and after. The next day you will feel as they say "the burn" on your upper quads and upper rear end. Also, make sure you check yourself for ticks; the trail is a one-person lane with bushes on both sides.

This is a strenuous trail but well worth the struggle. Your reward is accomplishing something that most people will just read about – and you get an amazing view, too. Start off by going up to Echo Mountain, and then next time take the challenge and get to Inspiration Point. It is worth every step.

Don't forget to bring your camera and take plenty of photos and send them to me at agomez@cityemployeesclub.com. Bring water, snacks and maybe some sunscreen.

As always, be safe and Be Alive!, Angel

Special Notes:

Congratulations to Matt and Carmel Tobin on winning the Picture Perfect Contest. The photo you sent in for Picture Perfect was the inspiration for us to visit Inspiration Point, pun intended! I believe that our CEO, John Hawkins, also used this line. Great minds think alike. Thank you, Matt, for sending us this important warning about the plant life you may encounter during your hike up to Inspiration Point. "Watch out for the plant called turricula (a.k.a. poodle-dog bush). See the attached picture. I wasn't even sure about what had caused the bad rash that left me scratching like crazy for



Lookout for this Poodle-Dog Bush!

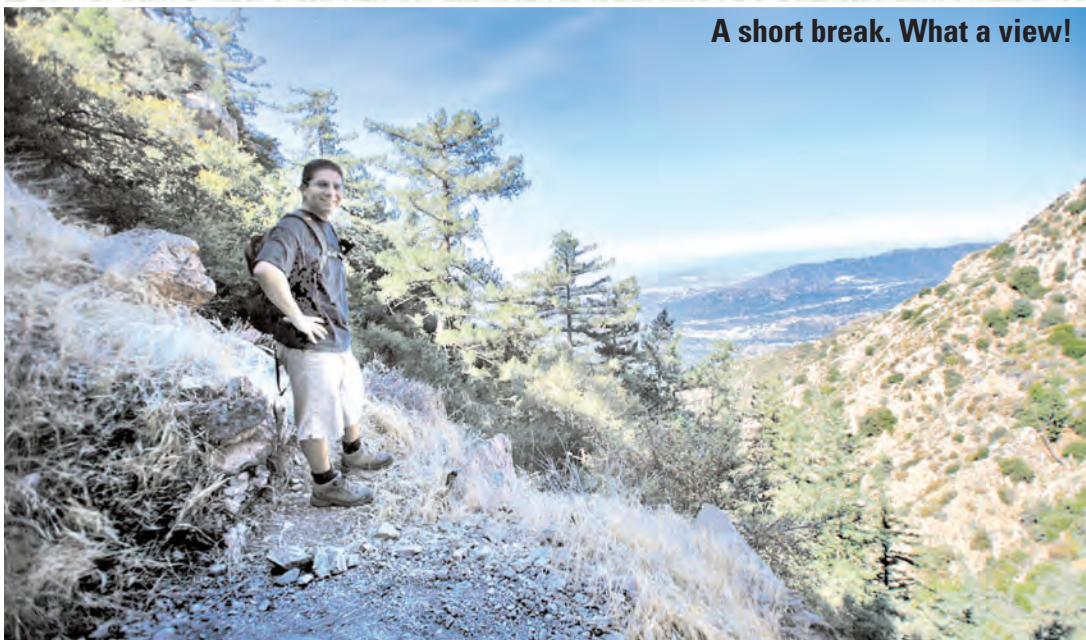
over two weeks." Be well, Matt, and thanks again for all the info.

Secondly, to everyone who shared a few kind words about my Yosemite National Park trip, thank you! It really means a lot to all of us here at the Club when we get your feedback. Please keep your email replies coming.

Finally, I want to send a very special thank you to John Hawkins (our beloved CEO and my photographer) for always being inspirational

to all of our Club Staff and me. Thank you, John; without your leadership and praise, none of this would be possible.

A short break. What a view!



Inspiration Point I see you!