

The Claremont Canyon Climb

Length: 5.9 miles

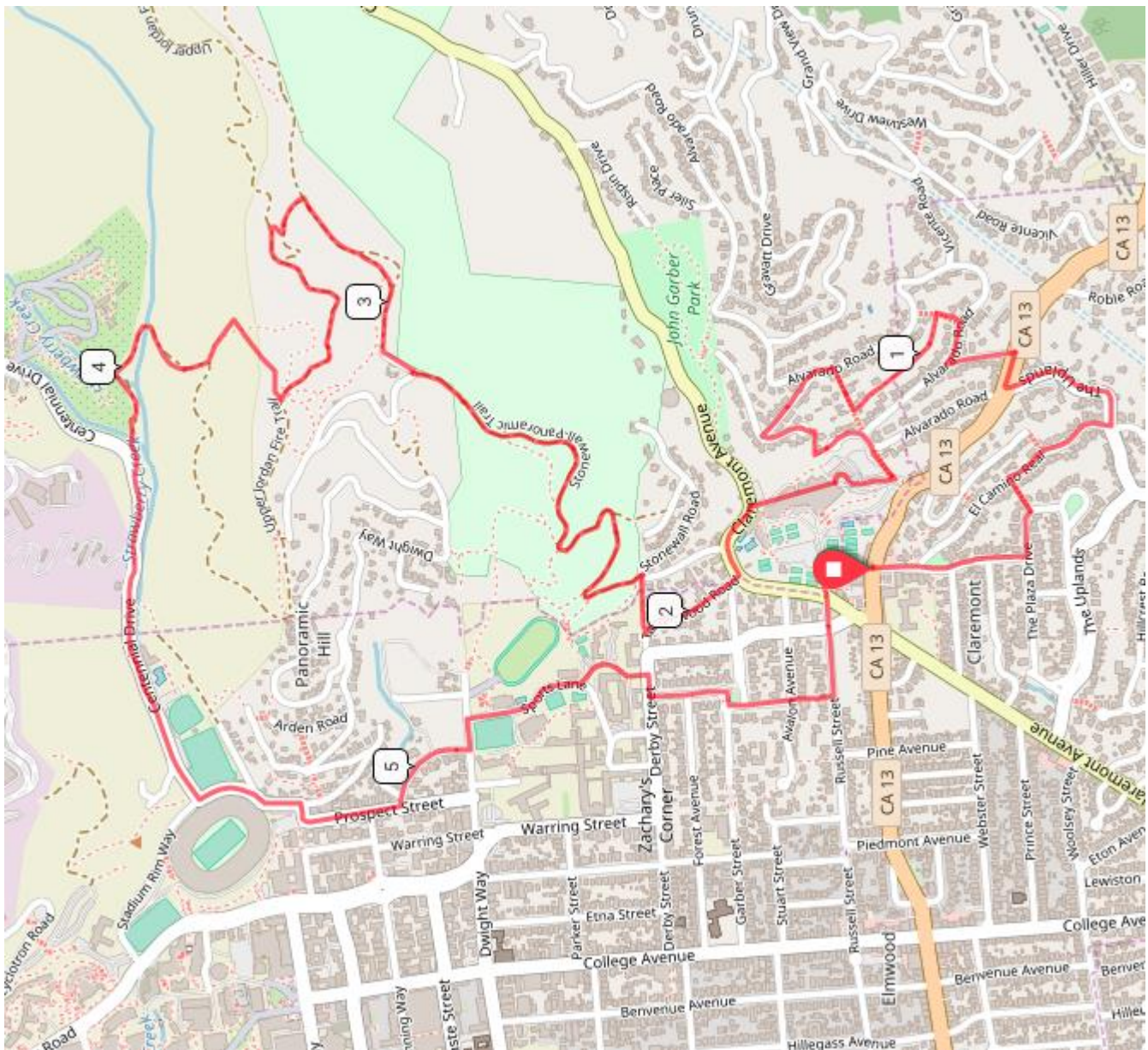
Time: 2 ½ to 3 hours

Difficulty: 5

Elevation Gain: 1150 feet

Starting Point: Ashby Ave./Tunnel Rd. and Domingo Ave.

Transportation: AC transit buses 604 and E. Limited parking available on nearby Russell or Domingo.



Overview:

This walk begins with two miles of scenic paths in the Claremont Area, then heads north to Tanglewood Path and the entrance to Claremont Canyon. Here the famous climb begins: 800 feet in one mile on a winding fire trail with great view of Berkeley and the San Francisco Bay. At the end of the climb, you'll turn left and descend more gradually via a lower fire trail, then head down a narrow shortcut through a huge redwood grove to Centennial Dr. You'll return via the Clark Kerr Campus and a few paths.

Right: The top of the climb on the Claremont Canyon Fire Trail

Directions and pictures:

Start at the intersection of Domingo Ave. and Ashby Ave./Tunnel Rd. The walk begins in the farthest south section of Berkeley. Head south on Domingo three blocks to where it ends at The Plaza Dr. Here, make a left, then another left where the road curves, up The Cut Off Path. Climb the concrete steps and ascend the sloping path, then turn right onto El Camino Real. After one block, make a left up The Uplands, which will bring you in one block to Tunnel Rd. Cross Tunnel here. The crossing is difficult since the street is very busy; if necessary, go down Tunnel a long block to the traffic light at the Claremont hotel to cross more easily. Once across, proceed up Tunnel one short block from The Uplands to Bridge Rd. (interesting that a road called Bridge intersects Tunnel), and make a left. After one block, turn right on Alvarado Rd, then almost immediately left up the walkway and stone steps of Berkeley path Willow Walk. Do not take the entire path. Instead, turn left onto Sunset Trail halfway up. Sunset Trail is a long and mostly flat path and is the only path in both Berkeley and Oakland. Because of curving borders, Oakland is, oddly, north of Berkeley here and Sunset Trail ends at Oakland's Eucalyptus Path. Turn right and climb the many, even, concrete steps to the path's top. Make a left, then an immediate slight left down Slater Ln. After one block, turn left onto Evergreen Ln, which dead ends at Evergreen Path. At the dead end,



stay slightly left to descend this Oakland path, then turn left at the fork near a gate to reach Alvarado Place. Continue along this street one block, then make a right onto Alvarado Rd. After about 100 feet, make a right down the unsigned Oakland path Short Cut (just after a telephone pole and before a No Parking sign). Descend this nice path, through the trees and down stone steps to where it ends in the parking lot for the Claremont Hotel. Make a right and walk through the parking lot, staying on the upper path past the beautiful white hotel, and continue straight, keeping the hotel to your left, until you reach the gate onto Claremont Ave.



Left: The steps of Short Cut

Nearly back in Berkeley for good, make a left down Claremont Ave, then your second right onto Tanglewood Ave. After a block Tanglewood curves; here, just before the street turns into Derby, make a sharp right up Tanglewood Path. At the top of this stair path, turn left up the paved trail labeled Claremont Canyon Regional Preserve. The trail quickly turns to packed dirt, and begins to climb. Follow the main trail about $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile to Panoramic Way. This trail winds quite a bit, and there are many side trails. See the map on the next page if it is easier to follow than written directions. Stay right at the first trail intersection, then left at the second to continue uphill. After this, stay right at any offshoot trails to continue climbing. The top of the trail is the steepest (see picture next to walk overview), and after a final ascent you will finish the famous climb at the very top of Panoramic Way, with an incredible view

down. Make a slight right, then another to continue straight onto a second fire trail where the road dead-ends.

Stay on this trail, which climbs gently and even goes downhill a bit, for a third of a mile, at which point you will reach a large tree. Here, you can either make a left down a smaller trail or for some extra elevation climb another steep hill and make any of the subsequent left turns onto smaller trails, all of which descend under a quarter mile to a lower fire trail which winds its way around Strawberry Canyon. Turn left again onto this trail, and follow it gently down to where you see a steep singletrack trail to your right going down into the redwoods below. Turn down this trail. (There is a very steep way down, or a gentler one that doubles back, about 50 feet past the first.) The trail forks many times, and it does not matter which fork you take as long as you stay on an established route of some sort. This cutdown takes you through an incredible redwood

grove and eventually down to rejoin the lower fire trail. Make a right and after a third of a mile you will reach the parking lot for the bottom of the trail at Centennial Dr. Turn left down the small dirt trail next to the road and continue until you reach the intersection with Stadium Rim Way. (If you're already missing the fire trail, you'll have to come back for our Strawberry Canyon and Nearby Paths walk, the second route in section six.)

Make a left on Stadium Rim Way, then your first right down Bancroft Ave, then a left on Prospect. After two blocks, make a left up Hillside Ave. Where it ends, cross Dwight Way and make a left, then an almost immediate right on Sports Ln, a small road through the Clark Kerr Campus. Continue on this road, making a slight left to turn on Eastway Dr. rather than continuing on Sports Ln. as the exit sign suggests. You will soon come out of the campus onto Derby St. Make a right, then a left at the traffic light onto Claremont Blvd. After two blocks, Claremont Blvd. ends at Monkey Island Park. Walk through the park (not much more than a grassy square) and jog right to continue south up Oak Knoll Terr. After one block, cross Avalon Ave. and descend the steeply sloping Oak Knoll Path. Make a left onto Russell St. and take it three blocks, then make a slight right to continue onto Domingo, which hits Ashby, your starting point, after one block. You did it!

Map of the fire trail portion of the walk

