

## The Oak St. Path Loop

**Length:** Two miles plus optional ½ mile extension

**Time:** 45 minutes to an hour, a bit more with the extension

**Difficulty:** 2, 3+ with extension

**Elevation Gain:** 375 feet, 600 with extension

**Starting Point:** The Marin Circle

### **Transportation:**

AC Transit bus lines 7 and H stop at the circle. Line 18 also stops one block away at Sutter and Hopkins. Limited parking available on Los Angeles Ave.

### **Overview:**

Climb several paths, including Oak St. Path for which the walk is named, to Euclid (optional extension to Keeler), then head across Euclid and descend the much smaller Keith, completing the loop on Los Angeles. This walk is easy to get to and gives a good overview of the paths, which will hopefully entice you to venture further into the hills soon

### **Directions and pictures:**

From the Marin Circle, walk down Fountain Walk, which is located near the mailbox between Del Norte St. and Marin Ave. on the southern side of the circle. At the bottom of the path, cross Del Norte St. and make a left up Terrace Walk. Terrace Walk goes two blocks up to Shattuck Ave. Cross and go straight up Walnut St. After a short block, turn left up The Oxford School Path, formerly named Short Cut. The path really is a short



cut, at least if your goal is to make it to the top, but the school next to it really is called The Oxford School, so the new name is equally legitimate, if less evocative. Make a right at the top of the path, then your first left on Eunice St. Two blocks up, go left on Arch St, then right on Oak St. Where Oak ends, continue straight onto Oak St. Path which ascends via wood and concrete steps through plum trees and over padded ground to where Oak restarts.



*Left: Oak St. Path*

Go straight on the street, then continue down the second block of Oak St. Path, this one a series of concrete staircases with handrails. At the bottom, make a left on Euclid Ave, noting the brightly colored mural and plaque on the lower side as you climb the hill.

Here, you can opt to take an optional half-mile-extra detour up two very nice but also very steep paths farther into the hills and rejoin the route

when it descends. If you wish to skip this detour, skip this paragraph. To take the scenic detour, cross Euclid (there is no very good spot so just go whenever no cars are coming) and continue North. Soon you will read Redwood Terrace, one of the steepest paths in Berkeley. Make a right up it, continuing to the top under redwoods and up concrete stairs made nearly-vertical by their roots. If, by this point, you have had enough of scenic detours, go left on Keith to Euclid and skip to the next paragraph. But the best is still to come! Assuming you don't want to bail out, turn right on Keith, then left on the second path you reach, Covert Path. Covert Path is one of our favorite of all one hundred and three paths in Berkeley. It switchbacks up a hill on wooden stairs, then down and over a creek which flows in winter, then up again through trees and over soft ground to a final set of concrete steps and the end of the first block. Cross the street and continue up the wooden steps of the second block—appreciating the Berkeley Path Wanderers' recently installed handrail and looking down from the top at the view. Once you have enjoyed the view and/or caught your breath, turn left on Keeler. After about a quarter mile, turn left down

the concrete steps of Sterling Path, then make a left and an immediate right on Bret Harte Rd. After one block, turn right on Keith Ave. which will take you back down to Euclid. At this point, you have finished the detour and upped the walk's difficulty rating to a 3+.

If you chose to skip the detour, continue up Euclid one very long block to Keith. Here, the routes rejoin. Head down Keith (a left if you just came up Euclid) a surprisingly long block to Spruce. Turn left and walk two blocks to Los Angeles Ave. Cross here and turn right down Los Angeles. Four blocks will return you to The Marin Circle, the end of the walk. We hope you are now inspired to turn the page and continue further into the fabulous hills of North Berkeley.