

Through Six Parks: Downtown Berkeley to Oakland and Back on the Bus

Length: 14.8 miles

Time: A short day--at least six hours of walking, allow seven, and an additional hour if you plan to take the bus back

Difficulty: 5

Elevation Gain: +3200 feet, -2900 feet

Starting Point:
Shattuck Ave.
and Virginia St,
Berkeley

Ending Point:
Park Blvd. just
below Monterey
Blvd, Oakland

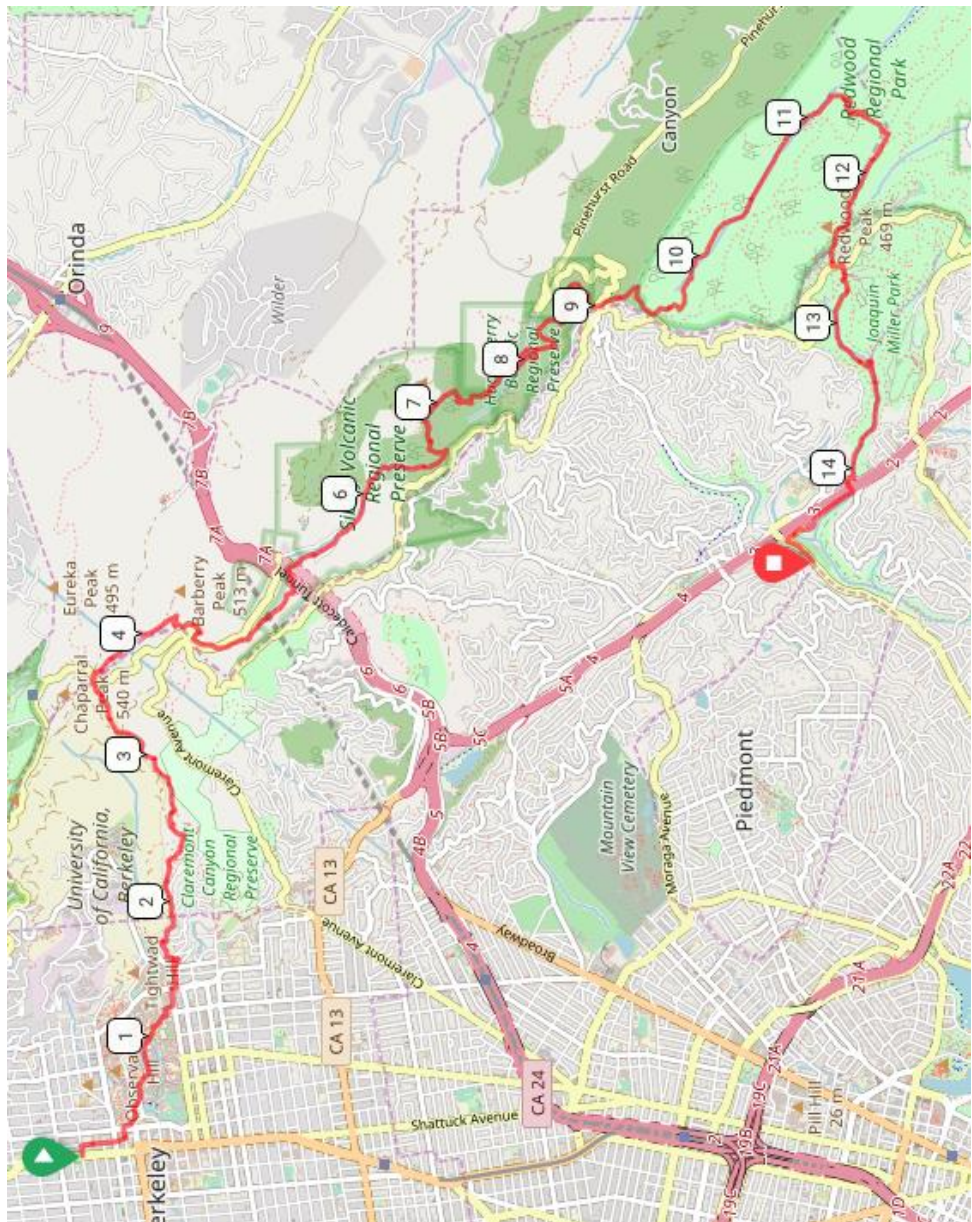
Transportation:

AC Transit bus 18 for returning to the start, others available at either end. Parking is available on Virginia or Walnut, one block above Shattuck.

Overview:

This incredible--and incredibly hilly--walk leads you from Berkeley to Oakland the scenic way, nearly all on trails through six different major parks. You'll begin by climbing fire trails to the top of Grizzly Peak, then

joins the East Bay National Skyline Trail and follow it through EBMUD land and Sibley Regional Preserve to the amazingly green Huckleberry Regional Preserve. In Redwood Regional Park, Step It Up: An Adventurer's Guide to Forty Walks on the Paths, Trails, and Streets of Berkeley and Beyond© 2020 by Jacob Lehmann Duke and Zeke Gerwein. All rights reserved.



right; any one will do.) Make a left at the end of the connector. The trail climbs steeply, then is flat and downhill for a while, and then climbs steeply again. After 0.6 miles, you will come to a four-way trail intersection. Continue straight, then make an almost immediate right onto a narrow side trail through a sort of tunnel of trees and plants. This trail, sometimes called the Himalayan Trail, or “Side-O,” can be hard to find, but is a nice and very useful shortcut. Continue uphill for a long-feeling third of a mile, at which point you will reach Grizzly Peak Blvd. Cross carefully and turn right onto the East Bay National Skyline Trail, which runs 30 miles from Castro Valley to Richmond. To access the Skyline Trail at this spot, it is necessary to climb over a small gate, which is locked because it is an entrance to EBMUD property. It is completely legal to pass, though, because a permit is not needed to walk the Skyline Trail. At this point, though you have only walked 3.6 miles, you have done nearly half of the climbing for the entire walk!

The narrow trail down from the top of Grizzly Peak gives an incredible view east to Briones Regional Park and Mt. Diablo Beyond



It's a crazy feeling to hear traffic rushing below you. Continue straight at Old Tunnel Rd. up a long and gradual hill to Sibley Staging Area, the main entrance to the park and a good bathroom stop. Here, make a slight left and climb a short hill, still on the Skyline Trail, then make a right briefly onto the Round Top Loop Trail and another slight right off of it to continue on the Skyline Trail towards Huckleberry Botanic Regional Preserve. The trail slopes steeply down, and, suddenly, the scenery changes entirely. The trail goes from Sibley's rocky heights

into the lush, green canyon of Huckleberry. The Skyline Trail continues down into the incredible canyon, past ferns and under trees, on a padded, narrow, dirt trail.

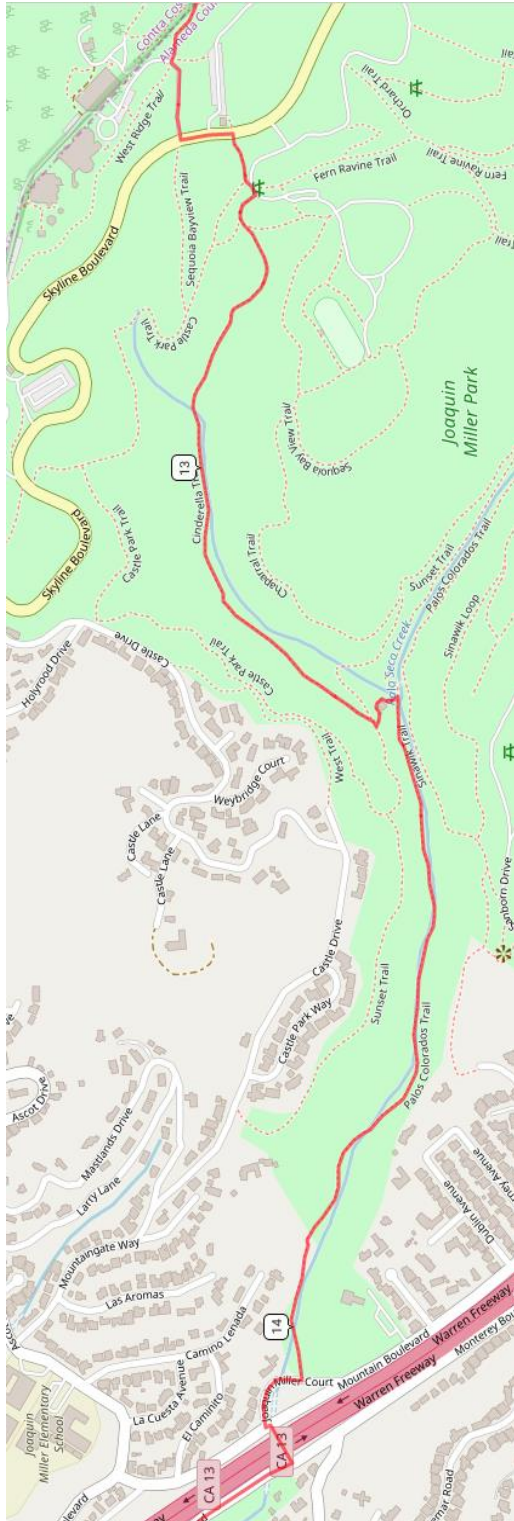


The shaded Stream Trail's gradual descent into Redwood (coming soon)

When you reach the intersection with Huckleberry Path, make a sharp right, then your next sharp left to stay on the Skyline Trail as it switchbacks up out of the canyon. Stay left at all trail intersections you come to after this. Under so many trees, the light is dimmer and filters down softly, so it is a shock to suddenly emerge into the harsh light of the top of the canyon. The trail continues through ferns for about another half mile, then hits Pinehurst Rd. at its

intersection with Skyline Blvd. Cross Pinehurst and continue on the Phillips Loop Trail directly opposite into Redwood Regional Park. After a quarter mile, turn right onto the wide, dirt East Ridge Trail, which reaches the Skyline Gate parking lot (another good bathroom stop) after another quarter mile.

Here, your route splits off from that of the Skyline Trail. Make a slight left to descend the Stream Trail in Redwood's amazing canyon. The trail gradually gets smaller and soon enters a phenomenal grove of redwoods. It's amazing to think that you walked here from Berkeley, while many people visit California from other states and even countries to see redwoods like these. Take the Stream Trail 1.7 miles, past Girl's Camp, the Eucalyptus Trail, Tres Sendas, the Prince Trail, and the Mill Trail. Make a slight left at the Mill Trail to continue on the Stream Trail after crossing the bridge, then turn right up the Fern Trail at the next trail junction. The Fern Trail winds its way steeply up out of the canyon, under more towering trees. Turn left at the French Trail, then immediately right to continue up the Fern Trail. A total of half a mile on this trail brings you to the western ridge of Redwood. Here, make a right on the creatively named West Ridge Trail and follow it for ¾ of a mile, at which point you will hit a small road. Be careful not to turn onto the Redwood Peak Trail, Access Rd, or Roberts Ridge Trail on the way. Turn left onto the small road, which runs just below Chabot Space and Science Center, and you will quickly reach Skyline Blvd; turn left, then make a right soon after at a yellow gate onto a trail. Stay left at the first trail intersection you come to, and you will find yourself on a road. All this happens in under a tenth of a mile. Make a right on the road, then an almost immediate right opposite the Fern Ravine Trail onto/toward the Sequoia Bayview Trail. Turn left at the first trail intersection, then stay right at the second onto the Cinderella Trail. This brings you into the heart of Joaquin Miller Park. The trails in this park are incredibly confusing, as you can probably tell from the last few sentences of directions, and we have a history of getting lost here, so we've attached a small map of your route on the left.



Take the rocky, dirt Cinderella Trail steeply down for about half a mile, then make a slight right onto the Sunset Trail. Almost immediately, make a left down a small connector trail, labeled "Sinawik Cabin" on our map. Beware! this trail is very easy to miss. At the bottom, turn right onto the Palos Colorado Trail. At this point, navigating becomes much easier. Follow the trail down through trees next to a creek, and after just under ¾ of a mile you will exit the park onto a small road. Continue to the right down the road and you will quickly reach Mountain Blvd. Turn left and cross the road, then turn right through a conveniently located tunnel under

Take the rocky, dirt Cinderella Trail steeply down for about half a mile, then make a slight right onto the Sunset Trail. Almost immediately, make a left down a small connector trail, labeled "Sinawik Cabin" on our map. Beware! this trail is very easy to miss. At the bottom, turn right onto the Palos Colorado Trail. At this point, navigating becomes much easier. Follow the trail down through trees next to a creek, and after just under ¾ of a mile you will exit the park onto a small road. Continue to the right down the road and you will quickly reach Mountain Blvd. Turn left and cross the road, then turn right through a conveniently located tunnel under

Highway 13. On the other side, turn right onto Monterey Blvd. Cross to walk on the small sidewalk of this rather unpleasant street. After not too long, you will come to the large intersection with Park Blvd. Cross Park and make a left. You will soon reach a bus stop by a church for the AC Transit route 18 bus. Wait here for the bus (they generally run every twenty minutes) and when it comes, make sure it is headed toward San Pablo Ave. and Monroe St, Albany. After about 50 minutes, the bus will stop at Shattuck Ave. and Virginia St, your starting point. Offboard here and you will have made it! This is a difficult but fabulous walk, giving an excellent tour of Claremont Canyon, EBMUD land, Sibley, Huckleberry, Redwood, and Joaquin Miller. Six parks, and only one walk!