



Family Hike Recommendations

There are some great nearby hiking trails just waiting to be explored! To get your family started on the right foot, REI employees have selected some of their favorites below.

Be sure to bring these necessities along in your daypack:

- Drinking water
- Lunch or snacks
- Extra clothing layers
- Map and compass
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- First-aid kit
- Insect repellent
- Whistle
- Headlamp or flashlight



For a complete day hiking checklist, visit [Expert Advice](#) on REI.com.

Here Are Five of Our Favorite Kid-Friendly Local Hikes

Hike One: **La Mesnager Loop Trail**

Rating: **Easy to moderate**

Distance: **1.5 miles roundtrip, 420' elevation gain.**

Why this hike: This is a fun, easy and relatively short hike for families.

Hike Description: La Mesnager Loop Trail is well-marked and easy to follow; a great place to hike with kids. There are tables and benches in the park – bring a picnic to enjoy after your hike. This easy, leisurely hike features terrific views of the Verdugo Mountains and the foothill communities of La Crescenta and Tujunga. The trail is bordered on the north, south and east sides by the beautiful Angeles National Forest. Be sure to visit the stone barn, built during the property's wine making days, which sits near the trailhead.

Driving Directions: Take 210 east toward Pasadena and exit at Pennsylvania Street toward La Crascenta. Turn left at Pennsylvania Street, left at Brookhill Street and right at New York Street. New York Street turns into Markridge Road. Enter at 3429 Markridge Road. There is a parking lot on the left just after you pass the entrance.

Tips: If you're feeling adventuresome, this park is also used to access Mount Lukens – the highest peak within Los Angeles city limits – via the Rim of the Valley Trail. Parking is free and there are restrooms at the trailhead but not along the trail.

Hike Two: **Icehouse Canyon Trail, Cucamonga Wilderness**

Rating: **Moderate**

Distance: **2 to 7 miles roundtrip, 1,000' to 2,600' elevation gain.**

Why this hike: The terrain is gentle enough for many families, while offering options for challenge. It also includes stunning views of the Inland Empire and the L.A. basin.

Hike Description: Hiking the entire Icehouse Canyon Trail is quite a climb. But you don't have to be a mountain goat to enjoy yourself here. There are several nice turnaround points in the first couple of miles. And you'll still have great scenery and an unforgettable mountain experience. The first two miles of the trail climb gradually, following a spring-fed stream. At that point, the path splits with the Chapman Trail and starts a much steeper ascent through switchbacks. This upper section of the trail has some spectacular views from the saddle of Mt. Baldy. It's best suited for older kids who are in good shape and don't mind some real huffing and puffing. Another alternative for a more leisurely hike is to head downstream from the parking area. This pleasant trek along Icehouse Canyon Creek is about three miles, roundtrip.

Driving Directions: From the I-210 Freeway in Claremont, exit at Mt. Baldy Road and head north into the mountains for several miles. When you get to Baldy Village, go about 1.5 miles more to the marked uphill turn. Park in the lot (if there's room) or on the street. An Adventure Pass (\$5 for day use; \$30 for an annual pass) is required for this area. You can purchase an Adventure Pass at the ranger station (or at a discounted price from participating REI stores).

Tips: Bring water or a filter and some snacks. But nothing too crunchy—this is an amazing trail for birding. You might see everything from hawks, kestrels and owls to songbirds. Check out the Mt. Baldy Ranger District Visitor Center in Mt. Baldy Village. There are helpful maps, cultural artifacts and a fun interpretive trail.

Hike Three: **Peanut Lake (Debs Park)**

Rating: **Easy to moderate**

Distance: **1.75 miles roundtrip, minimal elevation gain.**

Why this hike: This hike offers great views of downtown Los Angeles and the surrounding communities. Hawks and ravens love to play on the hillside area.

Hike Description: From the Audubon Center at Debs Park follow the Scrub Jay Loop Trail. When you reach the junction, head right to the City View Trail. Follow the City View Trail until you reach the paved Summit Ridge Trail, then go right again. Peanut Lake is a few hundred feet from the junction. From here you can return the way you came or take a longer hike through the park. Keep an eye out for the many bird species that call the park home and take in the views of downtown Los Angeles and the San Gabriel Mountains. The park also features a hands-on woodland area where kids can explore and get dirty.

Driving Directions: From Pasadena take 110 south to the Avenue 52 exit. Make a left on Avenue 52, which turns into Griffin Avenue. Follow Griffin Avenue to the park.

From downtown Los Angeles take 110 north to the Avenue 43 exit. Make a right on Avenue 43 and turn left onto Griffin Avenue. Follow Griffin Avenue to the park.

This hike is accessible via public transportation. From downtown Los Angeles take the Gold Line and exit at the Southwest Museum Station. Walk through Sycamore Grove Park to Debs Park.

Tips: Visit the Audubon Center at Debs Park to learn about local wildlife and to borrow binoculars, art supplies and storybooks for use in the park. Restrooms are also located at the Audubon Center.

Hike Four: **Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden**

Rating: **Easy**

Distance: **Less than 1 mile, minimal elevation gain.**

Why this hike: Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden is California's native plant garden. This is a peaceful yet dynamic place that you can visit several times a year. Choose different paths for varying experiences.

Hike Description: Once you arrive at the garden's entry, follow any of the pathways to be surrounded by the diversity of plants that grow wild in this natural landscape. All main pathways are handicapped accessible. Butterflies, birds and other wildlife are attracted to the secluded ponds throughout the area and to the abundance of food and shelter. Benches along the paths provide comfortable resting points in the shade of mature trees. Smaller pathways lead to different habitats and plant collections. Local Native American culture is represented by a Tongva village situated among old oak trees. Come mid-March through mid-May to experience the peak of the garden's wildflower season.

Driving Directions: Take I-10 and exit at Indian Hill Boulevard North. Travel approximately one mile to Foothill Boulevard. Turn right onto Foothill Boulevard. Turn left on College Avenue and proceed north to the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden parking lot.

From 210 Freeway, exit Towne Avenue south (approximately one mile). Turn left (approximately 1.2 miles) onto Foothill Boulevard. Turn left on College Avenue and proceed north to the Rancho Santa Ana Botanic Garden parking lot. Parking is free.

Tips: Maps are available in the garden shop and volunteer-staffed discovery carts are out on most weekends for free garden-related information. Wear sunscreen, carry water and dress appropriately for the weather of the day.

Hike Five: **Eagle Rock at Topanga State Park**

Rating: **Moderate**

Distance: **2 to 6.5 miles roundtrip, 800' elevation gain.**

Why this hike: Of all the great hikes in Topanga State Park, the views from Eagle Rock offer the greatest return for a minimal investment of energy.

Hike Description: Topanga Canyon State Park is full of Native American cultural history, diverse geology, open grasslands, oak woodlands and great views. The trailhead for Eagle Rock is at the end of the parking lot in Trippet Ranch. From the lot, follow the trail east where you'll come to a junction. Bear left, going northeast along Eagle Springs Fire Road. Climbing steadily, you'll reach another junction where you'll bear left, with a short side hike up to the top of Eagle Rock. Kids love the sense of accomplishment and the amazing views. You can return the way you came (the shortest route) or, when you get back to the junction near Eagle Rock, turn right on the Musch Trail, which will also return you to Trippet Ranch and the parking lot. Other trails are also available. Be sure to get a map at the ranger station.

Driving Directions: From the Ventura Freeway (Highway 101), exit at Topanga Canyon Boulevard and go south. Proceed over the crest of the mountains, then go about three more miles to Entrada Road. Turn left on Entrada and follow it to the campground parking lot. From Pacific Coast Highway, turn north onto Topanga Canyon Boulevard Drive slowly through town, past the post office. Turn right onto Entrada Road and follow it to the campground parking lot. Parking is \$5.

Tips: Trippet Ranch is the headquarters for the state park. Be sure to check out the nature center. There are restrooms at the trailhead. Post-hike hangouts include the Inn at the Seventh Ray for organic goodies, including desserts. And Froggy's, which has fresh fish tacos. Be sure to get a map at the ranger station.



REI's PEAK program uses a fun presentation filled with hands-on activities and games to teach kids ages 6 through 12 about taking care of the outdoors.

Ask an REI team member about scheduling a free PEAK presentation for your classroom or youth group, or visit www.rei.com/PEAK for more information.



First Saturday in June The American Hiking Society's National Trails Day, sponsored by REI, is a nationwide celebration of trails. Celebrate with your family by taking a hike, or volunteering for a trail clean-up project. Ask an REI team member about how to get involved, or visit www.rei.com for more information.