

Hidden Treasures in Gold Country California State Parks

California State Parks are known for campsites, trails and picnic areas – but they also contain surprises. Visitors can discover hidden treasures – if they know where to look.

AMADOR COUNTY

INDIAN GRINDING ROCK STATE HISTORIC PARK The park is located 11 miles northeast of Jackson, and 1.4 miles from Highway 88 on Pine Grove-Volcano Road. The park features a reconstructed Miwok village with petroglyphs, bedrock mortars, a cultural center, and interpretive talks. For more information, call (209) 296-7488.

CALAVERAS, TUOLUMNE COUNTIES

CALAVERAS BIG TREES STATE PARK The park is located four miles northeast of Arnold on Highway 4. The park's visitor center is open during peak periods with exhibitions on giant sequoia and natural history. The park also features guided hikes, campfire talks, and winter snowshoeing and cross country skiing. For more information call (209) 795-2334.

EL DORADO COUNTY

MARSHALL GOLD DISCOVERY STATE HISTORIC PARK, site of James Marshall's 1848 gold discovery, is located on Highway 49, eight miles north of Placerville, or 19 miles south of Auburn.

Visitors to the park can find the Monroe house, which was owned by members of a very prominent African American family in the area. The matriarch of the family arrived in Coloma as a former slave. She managed to save enough money to free her children. However, the Civil War ended and she used the money to bring them to California. The family went into the farming and

prospered. By the time the state bought the property for the park, the Monroe family owned most of the land in the valley. Plans are being made to use Monroe as a cultural diversity museum.

The park also features exhibits on '49ers, mining, a museum, self-guided gold discovery trail, interpretive programs, a statue of James Wilson Marshall, and a replica of Marshall's sawmill. For more information, call (530) 622-3470.

TUOLUMNE COUNTY

COLUMBIA STATE HISTORIC PARK The park is located four miles north of Sonora via Highway 49 and country road. This restored gold rush town features gold panning, stagecoach rides, exhibits, mine tours, restaurants, a hotel, shops with Gold Rush themes, interpretive slide talks, and scheduled reenactments of historic events. For more information, call (209) 532-0150 or 532-4301.

RAILTOWN 1897 STATE HISTORIC PARK The park is located in Jamestown, on 5th Avenue, three blocks off Highway 108. The park features historic shops, exhibits, the state's oldest short line railroad, and steam train excursions from April through November. For more information, call (209) 984-3953.