

Angel Island

State Park



Our Mission

The mission of the California Department of Parks and Recreation is to provide for the health, inspiration and education of the people of California by helping to preserve the state's extraordinary biological diversity, protecting its most valued natural and cultural resources, and creating opportunities for high-quality outdoor recreation.

GRAY DAVIS
Governor

MARY D. NICHOLS
Secretary for Resources

RUTH COLEMAN
Acting Director, California State Parks



California State Parks does not discriminate against individuals with disabilities. Prior to arrival, visitors with disabilities who need assistance should contact the park at the phone number below. To receive this publication in an alternate format, write to the Communications Office at the following address.

CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS For information call:
(800) 777-0369
P. O. Box 942896 (916) 653-6995, outside the U.S.
Sacramento, CA 711, TTY relay service
94296-0001

www.parks.ca.gov

Angel Island State Park
P.O. Box 318
Tiburon, CA 94920
(415) 435-1915

Angel Island played a major role in the settlement of the West and as an immigration station. Today, trails and roads crisscross the land, providing easy access to many historic sites and breathtaking views of San Francisco, Marin County and the Golden Gate Bridge.

Angel Island is a grass- and woodland-covered mountain island with spectacular views of Marin County, San Francisco and the Golden Gate. Coast Miwok once inhabited the island, and for nearly 100 years—from the Civil War to the Cold War—the federal government used its strategic location for military bases, a quarantine station and an immigration station. Today, trails and roads provide access to the many historic sites, facilities and breathtaking views.

CULTURAL HISTORY

Early Inhabitants

Coast Miwok began visiting the island about two thousand years ago. The Miwok established camps and primarily used the island as a fishing and hunting site.

In 1775 Lt. Juan Manuel de Ayala, a Spanish navigator, sailed the *San Carlos* into San Francisco Bay and anchored in what is now Ayala Cove. With his pilot, José de Cañizares, he developed one of the first maps of San Francisco Bay. They christened the island *Isla de Los Angeles*.

The Army on Angel Island

In 1863 during the Civil War, the U. S. Army established Camp Reynolds on Angel Island to protect San Francisco Bay. The island later became a garrison for infantry companies, as well as infantry serving in campaigns against the Apache, Sioux, Modoc and other Native Americans in the West.

The Army designated the entire island “Fort McDowell,” and renamed Camp Reynolds the West Garrison in 1900. New facilities at Quarry Point, called East Garrison, evolved from a



School children watching a living history demonstration

detention camp for soldiers returning from the Spanish-American war to a discharge depot. By 1905 some 87,000 men had passed through the fort.

During World War I, East Garrison served as a recruitment and replacement depot and a discharge point for troops returning from the war. Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, the fort processed the transfer of about 40,000 men per year.

Angel Island was an embarkation site for replacement troops headed toward the Pacific war zone during World War II and a processing facility for prisoners of war. When troops returned from the war, a 60-foot sign with the illuminated words “Welcome Home, Well Done” greeted them from the island. In July 1946 the Army abandoned the island, declaring it surplus property.

The Army returned during the Cold War to build a Nike missile battery. By 1962 the system had become obsolete, and the Army decommissioned the base and left the island.

The Immigration Station

New immigration facilities opened on Angel Island in 1910 to replace old, cramped quarters on a San Francisco pier. Most Immigration Station detainees were from China. Chinese were specifically targeted for exclusion from immigration to the United States by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

From 1910 to 1940, this was the entry point for approximately 175,000 Chinese immigrants who came to the United States. Most were detained on Angel Island from two weeks to six months, until their applications were approved. Many were denied entry. By contrast, European immigrants and first class passengers usually faced only an inspection on board the ship and were never detained on Angel Island.

Some Chinese detainees expressed their anxiety and despair in poetry carved on the wooden walls of the detention center. Many of these poems are still legible today. A fire in 1940 destroyed the administration building and hastened the station’s abandonment. The Chinese Exclusion Act and subsequent laws were repealed in 1943.

The Quarantine Station

In 1891 a Quarantine Station was opened at Ayala Cove (then known as Hospital Cove), where ships from foreign ports could be fumigated and immigrants suspected of carrying diseases could be kept in isolation. The 40 buildings at the station included a 400-bed detention barracks, a disinfecting plant, laboratories and quarters for employees. As better medical examinations at the ports of embarkation and improved medical practices



*View
of Marin
Headlands
from Angel
Island*



Flicker

made lengthy quarantines unnecessary, the U.S. Public Health Service abandoned the Quarantine Station and moved to San Francisco.

NATURAL HISTORY

Formation of the Island

Ten thousand years ago, the island was connected to the mainland. Angel Island was created by the rise of the oceans at the end of the ice age.

Plant Life

In the 1800s cattle grazing and wood harvesting eliminated most of the oak woodland and coastal brush habitat covering the island. The U. S. Army and the Immigration Service planted many non-native trees such as eucalyptus and Monterey pine. Since the creation of the state park in 1963, oak, bay, madrone and other native trees and shrubs are reclaiming their habitats. Wildflowers populate the island in spring.

Animal Life

Deer and racoons, both excellent swimmers, are the only large mammals living on the island. Squirrels, rabbits, foxes, skunks, opossums, coyotes and other mammals never made the crossing. You can often see harbor seals and California sea lions sunning on the rocks. Birds, not limited by the water crossing, include scrub jays, hummingbirds, flickers, hawks and owls.

Gulls, ducks, egrets, grebes, blue herons and brown pelicans are often found around the coves.

GETTING TO THE ISLAND

Angel Island is accessible year round by public ferries. For information call:

- Angel Island–Tiburon Ferry (415)435-2131
www.angelislandferry.com
- Blue and Gold Fleet (415)773-1188
www.blueandgoldfleet.com

ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

Picnic areas have tables, running water and barbecues. Reserve group picnic areas by calling (800)444-7275.

Environmental camping is available in designated sites. Campers must carry their equipment up to two miles to reach the campsites. Each campsite has a table, food locker, running water, pit toilet and barbecue. No wood fires are allowed. For reservations, call (800)444-7275.

Boating

Boat slips are available first-come, first-served from 8:00 a.m. until sunset. Overnight mooring buoys are available first-come, first-served for up to seven nights. There is a fee for day use and overnight mooring.

Tours

Tours of historic buildings and sites are available. Docent-led nature hikes can be scheduled upon request. For information and scheduling, contact the Angel Island Association at (415) 435-3522. Tram tours are available seasonally through the park concessionaire, Angel Island Tram Tours and Catered Events. Call (415) 897-0715 or visit www.angelisland.com for information.

Hiking and Bicycling

There are 12 miles of trails and roadways for hiking and bicycling. Foot trails and Mount Livermore are closed to cyclists. The speed limit is 15 mph, and cyclists age 17 and under are required to wear helmets. Bicycles can be rented in season from the Cove Café. Call (415) 897-0715 for information.

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

A number of facilities, several restrooms, and the tram tour are accessible. Because of the hilly terrain and ongoing improvements, visitors with mobility disabilities are encouraged to call in advance to get to the more far-flung accessible places. See map.

PLEASE REMEMBER

- Stay on designated trails to avoid poison oak and ticks.
- Do not feed the raccoons.
- Dogs, roller skates, roller blades, skateboards and scooters are not allowed anywhere on the island.
- Fires are not permitted.
- State law protects all natural and cultural resources, including wildlife, rocks, plants and structures.

Angel Island State Park



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Map by Eureka Cartography, Berkeley, CA

0 400 Feet
0 100 Meters

- ### Legend
- Paved road
 - Unpaved road
 - Trail (No Bicycles)
 - Accessible Feature
 - Boat Docks 8:00 a.m. to sunset; mooring buoys
 - Drinking Water
 - Environmental Camping
 - Group Picnic Area
 - Park Building
 - Park Office
 - Picnic Area
 - Restrooms
 - Telephone



This park is supported in part through a nonprofit organization. For more information contact: Angel Island Association P. O. Box 866 • Tiburon, CA 94920 www.angelisland.org