

Carpinteria State Beach



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.



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Carpinteria State Beach

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Carpinteria, California 93013

(805) 684-2811

*The expansive, gentle
slope of the beach,
composed of fine-grained
sand, is ideal for
sunbathing, picnicking,
walking on the beach,
fishing and other
activities.*

Just 12 miles south of the popular coastal town of Santa Barbara, the long expanse of white sand at Carpinteria State Beach invites visitors to relax and enjoy a glorious sunset or surf the rolling waves.

Sheltered inland by the Santa Ynez Mountains and from the sea by the Channel

Islands, Carpinteria enjoys a moderate year-round climate with daytime averages between 60 and 80 degrees. Ocean temperatures range from 58 degrees in the winter to 72 degrees during the summer and fall.

CULTURAL HISTORY

For thousands of years, the Chumash Indians were the sole inhabitants of this beautiful seaside valley. They called the area *Mishopshnow*, meaning “correspondence,” because it was a center of trade. Soapstone, used for carving effigies, bowls and beads, and wooden vessels, shells and asphaltum (usually referred to as tar) were supplied to nearby tribes in exchange for other goods. The Chumash used the naturally occurring surface tar to attach shell inlays to stone objects, seal water baskets, fasten arrow and spear points to shafts, and caulk their plank canoes (*tomols*), which were seaworthy enough to reach the Santa Barbara Channel Islands and Santa Catalina Island.

Juan Rodriguez Cabrillo, the first European to have contact with the Chumash people, sighted the village of *Mishopshnow* in 1542.

Photo courtesy of Kenneth & Gabrielle Adelman, California Coastal Records Project



Beachfront camping

the village *La Carpinteria*—the carpentry shop. As the Chumash were driven into the Spanish missions, the rapid spread of diseases, harsh treatment by some of the settlers, and the loss of traditional food sources had devastating effects on the Chumash people. Today the Chumash traditions are being rediscovered by many of their descendants.

Asphalt Mining

Natural tar deposits seep to the surface on the coastal bluffs and on the sand at the southeast end of the beach, forming bulging, black mounds. Plant and animal fossils excavated from these tar pits in the late 1920s rival the remains found in Los Angeles’ well-known La Brea Tar Pits. Over time, area residents have utilized the oozing black tar for a variety of purposes, including the first paved roads in Santa Barbara County. Remaining evidence of

When explorer Gaspar de Portolá visited the region in 1769, and came upon a group of Chumash splitting driftwood and shaping the planks to form canoes, his expedition named

asphalt mining can be seen near Tar Pits Beach and the San Miguel Campground loop.

PARK HISTORY

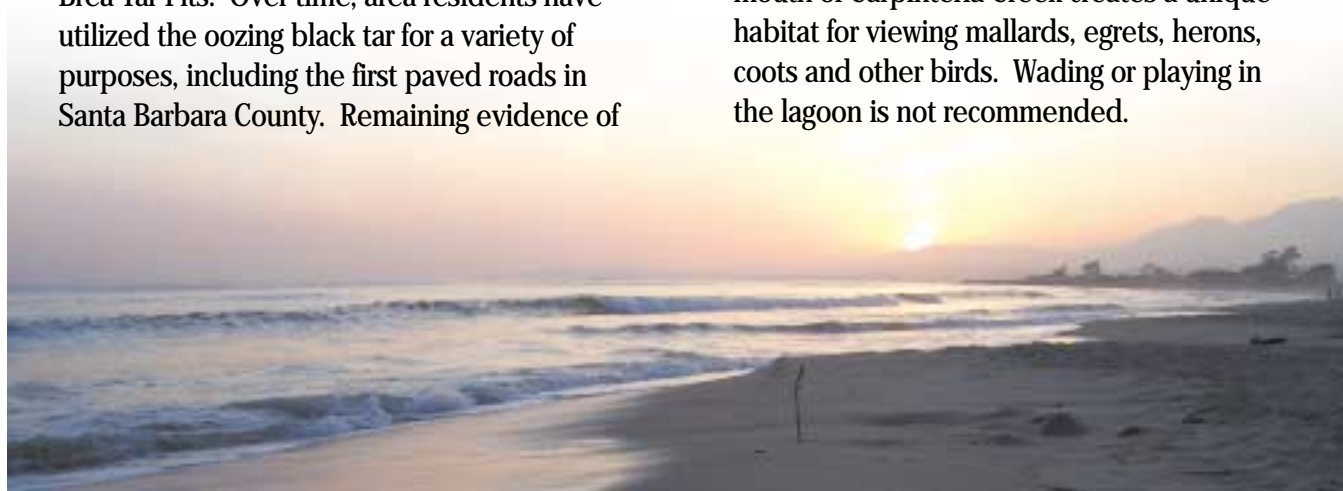
The white, sandy expanse of the Carpinteria shoreline was designated a state beach in 1933. It formally opened to the public on July 4, 1941, following the construction of campgrounds, picnic areas and parking lots by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

NATURAL HISTORY

During low tide, at the southeastern end of the park near the San Miguel Campground loop, a rocky formation creates a haven for sea stars, anemones, mussels, crabs and other tide pool creatures. Harbor seals frolic in the waves or bask on the rocks nearby. Between December and mid-May, gray whales migrate to and from their breeding grounds off the coast of Baja California.

Wildlife at Carpinteria consists of small mammals, reptiles, and the hundreds of tree frogs that will serenade you under the stars.

Many species of gulls and shorebirds feed along the shoreline while other birds fish in the waters offshore. A small lagoon at the mouth of Carpinteria Creek creates a unique habitat for viewing mallards, egrets, herons, coots and other birds. Wading or playing in the lagoon is not recommended.





Spectacular view from Carpinteria Creek

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Swimming and surfing are favorite pastimes at Carpinteria State Beach. Its gentle swells and shallow, gently sloping beach make it one of the safer beaches on the west coast, although the situation can change based on conditions. A picnic area with tables, barbecues and ramadas (covered patios) offers a wonderful view of the sand dune restoration area with the picturesque backdrop of the Santa Ynez Mountains. To reserve a ramada, call (805) 684-7487.

The Jellybowl vista point overlooks a tranquil cove and the ocean below. Surf fishermen often catch barred perch, cabezon and corbina from the beach. A California state fishing license is required.

Camping

Carpinteria's four campground loops have 216 family campsites, each with a table and fire ring, and drinking water on site or available nearby. The restrooms in each campground have coin-operated hot showers and accessible toilet facilities. Additionally, seven group campsites are available.

In addition to tents, motor homes and trailers up to 30 feet long can use the sites in the Anacapa and Santa Cruz Campground loops, but there are no hookups. Water, sewer and electrical hookups are available in the Santa Rosa loop. The San Miguel loop offers 70 campsites, half with water and electrical hookups. Site-specific reservations are available and recommended year round.

En route camping is available only when no other suitable campsite is available, and for only one night. A hike or bike campground is also available for one-night stays.

Interpretive Programs

Summer campfire programs feature interpretive presentations. Junior Rangers is a regularly scheduled program for children during the summer months. A pre-Junior Ranger program for children ages four to six is also offered. Learn more about the park through the visitor center's interpretive displays on Chumash history and Carpinteria's natural resources. The visitor center also features an indoor tide pool showcasing live marine animals.

ACCESSIBILITY &

- Some sites in the Anacapa loop. Accessible tables are on paved surfaces, but assistance may be needed to reach water spigots and trash disposal.
- A restroom/shower building in the Anacapa loop, and two more accessible restroom/shower buildings in the Santa Cruz loop.
- A beach wheelchair is available. To reserve call (805) 684-2811.

Accessibility is continually improving. For current accessibility details call the park, or visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

PLEASE REMEMBER

- Campsite check-in time is 2 p.m. Check-out time is noon.
- Each campsite accommodates up to 8 persons and one vehicle; additional vehicles require a fee.
- Dogs must be under control and on a leash no longer than 6 feet at all times. They are not allowed on the beach, may not be left unattended, and must be in a tent or vehicle at night.
- Fires are permitted only in fire rings provided. Wood can be purchased from a camp host. No fires are allowed on the beach.
- There is AMTRAK service to the park.

NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Emma Wood State Beach, west of Ventura via Hwy 101, (805) 899-1400
- El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park, 123 E. Canon Perdido, Santa Barbara, (805) 965-0093



Exploring the beach at low tide

This park is supported in part through a non-profit organization. For information contact:
Friends of Channel Coast State Parks
1072 Casitas Pass Rd., PMB #185
Carpinteria, CA 93014-5003

Carpinteria State Beach

Legend

	Freeway		En route Camping		Restrooms
	Paved road		Group Campground		RV
	Railroad		Hike/Bike Campground		RV Sanitation Station
	Accessible Feature		Parking		Showers
	Campground		Picnic Area		Telephone
	Campfire Center		Ranger Station		Viewpoint

