

Carpinteria State Beach



Our Mission

The mission of California State Parks 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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CALIFORNIA STATE PARKS

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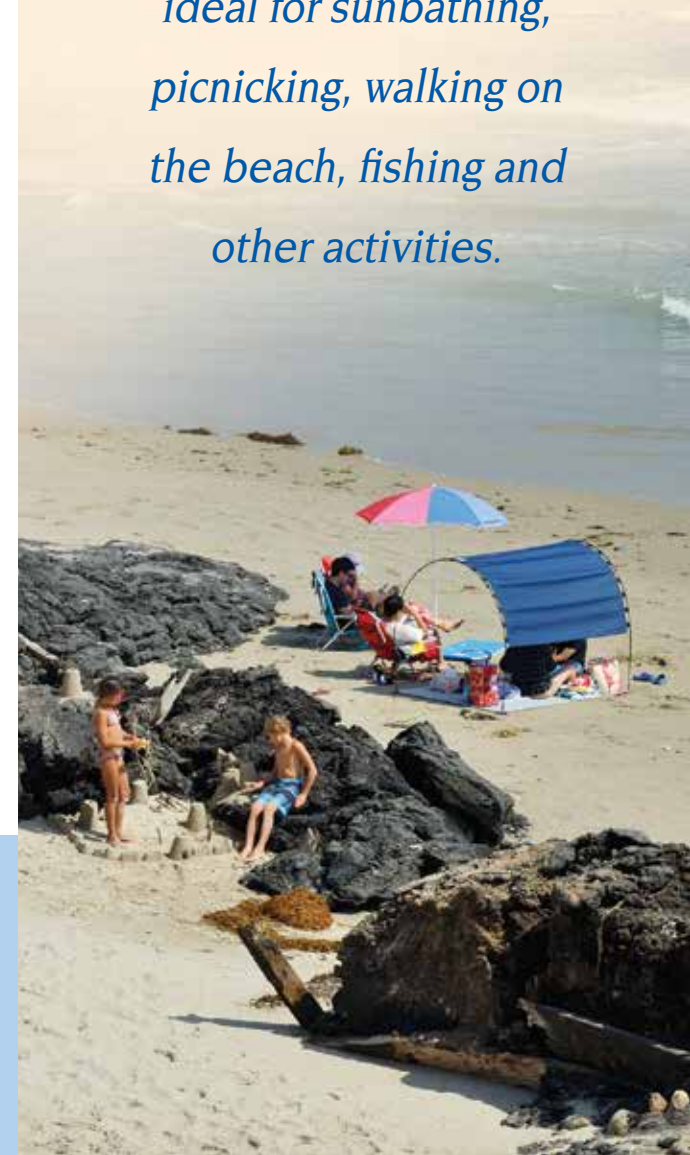
Carpinteria State Beach

5361 Sixth Street

Carpinteria, CA 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 (*tomol*), 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



Campsites along Carpinteria Creek and the Pacific Ocean

coming upon a group of Chumash splitting driftwood and shaping the planks to form canoes, his expedition named the village *La Carpinteria*—the carpentry shop. The Spanish mission era and European settlement of the area led to devastating effects on the Chumash people: the rapid spread of diseases, harsh treatment by many settlers, and the loss of traditional Chumash food sources. Today ancient Chumash traditions are being rediscovered by 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.



Natural tar oozing on beach

people, sighted the village of *Mishopshnow* in 1542. When explorer Gaspar de Portolá visited the region in 1769,

utilized the oozing black tar for a variety of purposes, including the first paved roads in Santa Barbara County. Remaining evidence of 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 acquired by California State Parks in 1932. It formally opened to the public on July 4, 1941, following the construction of campgrounds and picnic areas 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.

Several species of gulls and shorebirds feed along the shoreline while other birds fish in the waters offshore. A seasonal lagoon at the mouth of Carpinteria Creek creates a unique habitat for viewing

The variety of plant and animal fossils excavated from these tar pits in the late 1920s rivals the remains found in Los Angeles’ better-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 asphalt mining can be seen near Tar Pits Beach and the San Miguel Campground loop.

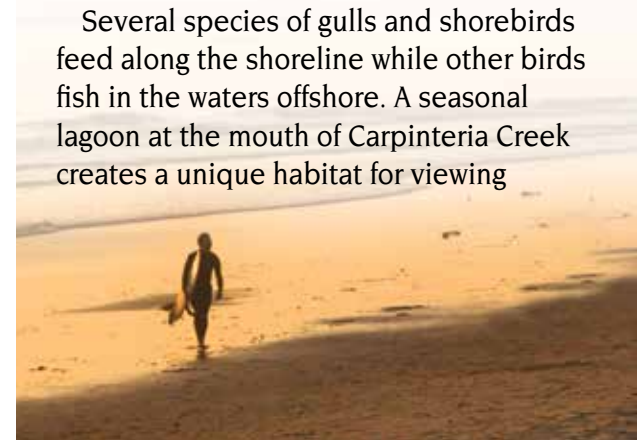
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Tomol Interpretive Play Area

mallards, egrets, herons, coots and other birds. Do not disturb the bird habitat by playing or wading in the creek.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Carpinteria State Beach's normally gentle swells and shallow, gently sloping beach make it one of the safer beaches to swim and surf. A group picnic area with tables, barbecues and covered ramadas offers a wonderful view of the dune area with the picturesque backdrop of the Santa Ynez Mountains. To reserve a group ramada or a wedding venue, call (805) 684-7487 or email carpevents@parks.ca.gov.

The accessible Tomol Interpretive Play Area honors Chumash cultural history and tradition. This imaginative play area features a *tomol* canoe, a rainbow bridge, cave rock art, a cloudburst slide and marine mammals. Young visitors can enjoy multi-sensory play that highlights the park's Chumash past.

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 for anglers 16 and over. See rules at www.wildlife.ca.gov.

Camping

Carpinteria's four campground loops have more than 200 family campsites, each with a table and fire ring; drinking water is available nearby. The campground restrooms have coin-operated hot showers. Seven group campsites are also available.

Tents, motor homes and trailers 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. Half of the San Miguel loop campsites, have water and electrical hookups. Make site-specific reservations (recommended year round) at www.parks.ca.gov or call (800) 444-7275.

If no other suitable campsite is available, en route RV camping is available for one night only. A hike or bike campground is also available for one- or two-night stays.

Interpretive Programs

The visitor center has interpretive displays on Chumash history and Carpinteria's natural resources. The center's indoor tide pool showcases live marine animals.

Summer campfire programs feature interpretive presentations. Junior Ranger programs for children over 6 and pre-Junior Ranger programs for children ages 4 to 6 are offered during the summer months.

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES

Picnic tables, five family sites, and group sites, as well as parking and restrooms, are accessible. Some assistance may be needed. The campfire center has accessible seating. A beach wheelchair may be borrowed. Check at the park entrance station for availability.

Accessibility is continually improving. For updates, visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

PLEASE REMEMBER

- All natural and cultural features are protected by law and must not be disturbed or removed.
- 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 an extra fee.
- Except for service animals, dogs are not allowed on the beach.
- Dogs must be under control, on a leash no longer than six feet at all times, not be left unattended, and be confined in a tent or vehicle at night.
- Fires are permitted only in fire rings provided. Purchase wood from a camp host; please do not bring wood. No fires are allowed on the beach.
- AMTRAK Pacific Surfliner serves the park.

NEARBY STATE PARKS

- Emma Wood State Beach, two miles west of Ventura via Hwy. 101 (805) 585-1850
- El Presidio de Santa Barbara State Historic Park, 123 E. Canon Perdido Santa Barbara (805) 965-0093



Carpinteria State Beach

Legend

- | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|--|----------------------|--|-----------------------|
| | Freeway | | En route Camping | | Campfire Center |
| | Paved Road | | Group Campground | | Restrooms |
| | Railroad | | Hike/Bike Campground | | RV |
| | Hike Only Trail | | Parking | | RV Sanitation Station |
| | Accessible Feature | | Picnic Area | | Showers |
| | Campground | | Ranger Station | | Viewpoint |

