



Anacapa Island,
California

Acadia National
Park, Maine

Vancouver Island,
British Columbia

California's Cool for Snorkeling

The marine reserve at Anacapa Island
makes spotting fish a breeze.

The Chumash Indians considered the rugged terrain of Anacapa Island "ever changing" and named it "Eneepah," meaning mirage. Later explorers must have thought the name quite fitting because Anacapa (which is a corruption of Eneepah) is the only one of California's eight Channel Islands with a Chumash-inspired name. The others are named for Spanish saints.

The second smallest island in Channel Islands National Park, Anacapa is particularly enticing to divers and snorkelers because part of the island is a reserve where the taking of fish and marine life is forbidden. Bass swim undisturbed through swaying fronds of kelp and sea urchins grow the size of baseballs. Large lobster and abalone, rare elsewhere in the park, are more common here.

Landing Cove at East Anacapa has calm water and good visibility, making it ideal for snorkeling. The 200-yard-long cove is surrounded by high, jagged cliffs, and a dock provides the only land access to the islet. After disembarking there, snorkelers can don their gear, climb down one of several ladders, and plunge into the blue-green water.

At 30 feet, on the cove bottom, a colorful garden of coralline algae conceals sea hares, crabs, and fist-size wavy turban snails. The large olive green opaleyes are usually the first fish snorkelers encounter. Brightly colored gobies and señoritas dart about in

small schools. A good place to look for kelp bass is directly behind the pilings and ladders of the landing. At times, large schools of bait fish move into the cove in waves that number in the tens of thousands.

The western wall of the cove, just seaward of the dock, is a tapestry of pink, green, and purple algae shelter-

There is also a small visitors' center, picnic tables, and a campground.

In early summer, Western gulls dominate the island, nesting by the thousands among the ice plants and on the cliffs. The mottled white-and-brown chicks are easily visible from the trail. Pelicans and cormorants are common sights year-round in the island sky.



Ralph Clevenger

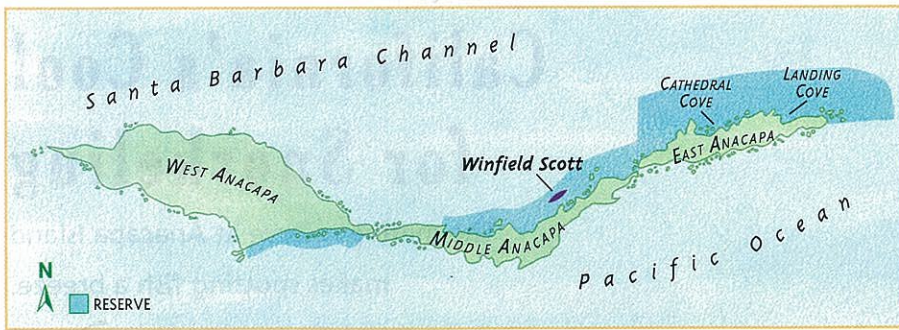
Playful California sea lions cruise a kelp forest.

ing Norris' top snails and periwinkles. This is also a favorite hangout for the most flamboyant fish in the cove, the bright orange garibaldi (California's state marine fish).

Visitors who arrive in the morning can hike atop the island while the fog burns off. Once hikers climb the 154 stairs from the landing to the top of the mesa, the flat mile-and-a-half loop around the island is an easy trek. The trail leads to beautiful vista points that look down on sea lion rookeries and across the channel to the mainland.

Anacapa is riddled with sea caves, accessible only by kayak or skiff. Cathedral Cove has a large sea cave to explore and also offers the opportunity to snorkel with harmless leopard sharks. There are several excellent dive sites around the island, including the wreck of the *Winfield Scott*, a steam paddle wheeler that sunk in 1853.

Snorkeling and diving are best between July and October, when the water temperature ranges from 65 to 72 degrees. (A three-millimeter wet suit is recommended for summer.) Visibility in



Landing Cove averages about 30 feet. Island Packers provides transportation to Anacapa from Channel Islands

and Ventura Harbors, about 60 to 70 miles north of Los Angeles. Dolphins often approach the boat during the

hour-long crossing. Day trips to Anacapa cost \$37 for adults and \$20 for children 12 and younger. Half-day trips, kayaking tours, and camper transportation are also available.

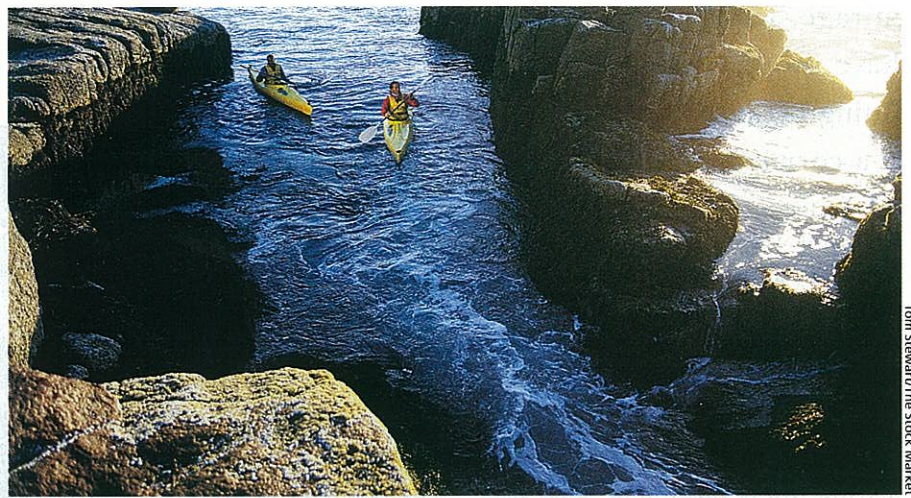
For information on Island Packers, call (805) 642-7688 or visit its Web site at www.islandpackers.com. For diving, contact Truth Aquatics in Santa Barbara – (805) 962-1127 – or Take Me, Too! in Ventura – (800) 494-2836. The national park – (805) 658-5730 – has a visitors’ center at Ventura Harbor.

Claudia Armann

Exploring Maine’s Seacoast

A maze of waterways welcomes kayakers in Acadia National Park.

With the highest mountain on the Atlantic seaboard, a dramatic fjord, deserted offshore islands, and 41 miles of jagged coastline, Maine’s Acadia National Park ranks as one of the most popular recreational destinations in the Northeast. But



Tom Stewart/The Stock Market

Many of the best paddle routes begin at Bar Harbor.

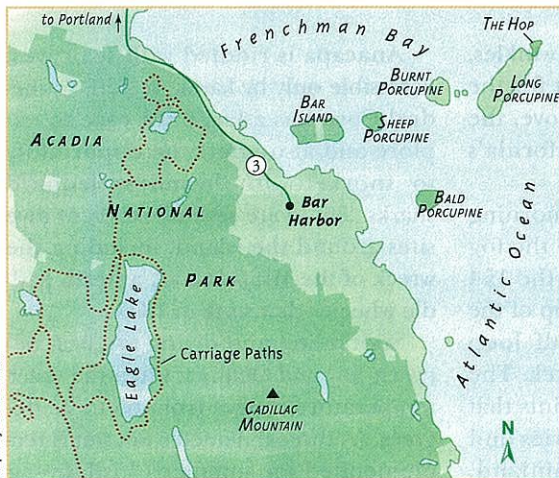
during summer, its roads can be as crowded as the streets of Manhattan. That’s why the best way to see the park in peak season is from the water.

And navigating a sea kayak around the phalanx of small islands that line Frenchman Bay makes a perfect tour. The nearest launch site is at Bar Harbor, where a number of outfitters offer everything necessary for day trips, including guided tours. The guides will teach basic strokes, help first-timers get acclimated to the sea kayaks, and launch adventurers into the wide blue yonder.

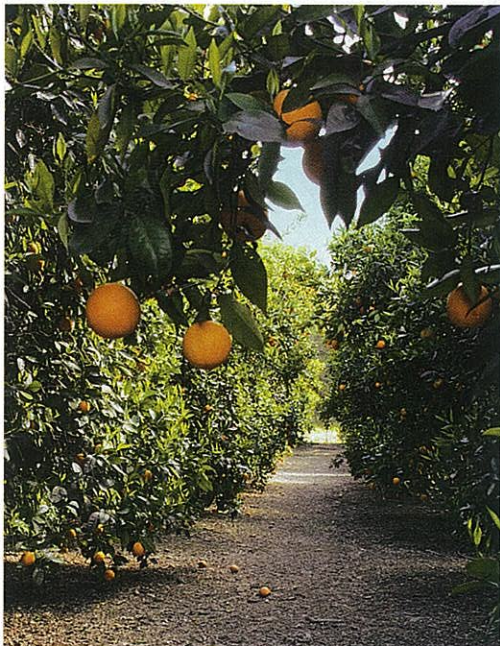
Guides typically lead

groups around the northern shore of Bar Island, where bright pink starfish carpet the rocks, and then on to Sheep Porcupine Island, where porpoises and seals are often seen playing. En route there are exquisite views of 1,530-foot Cadillac Mountain, the highest peak in Acadia. The guides usually stop for a 15-minute break at The Hop, a small island at the northernmost tip of Long Porcupine Island.

On the west side of Long Porcupine the choppy water flattens out at the approach to Burnt Porcupine Island. Black guillemots, which look like miniature penguins, dive-bomb the water, and loons lounge in the sun. From the island the trail crosses the main passage once again before returning to terra firma.

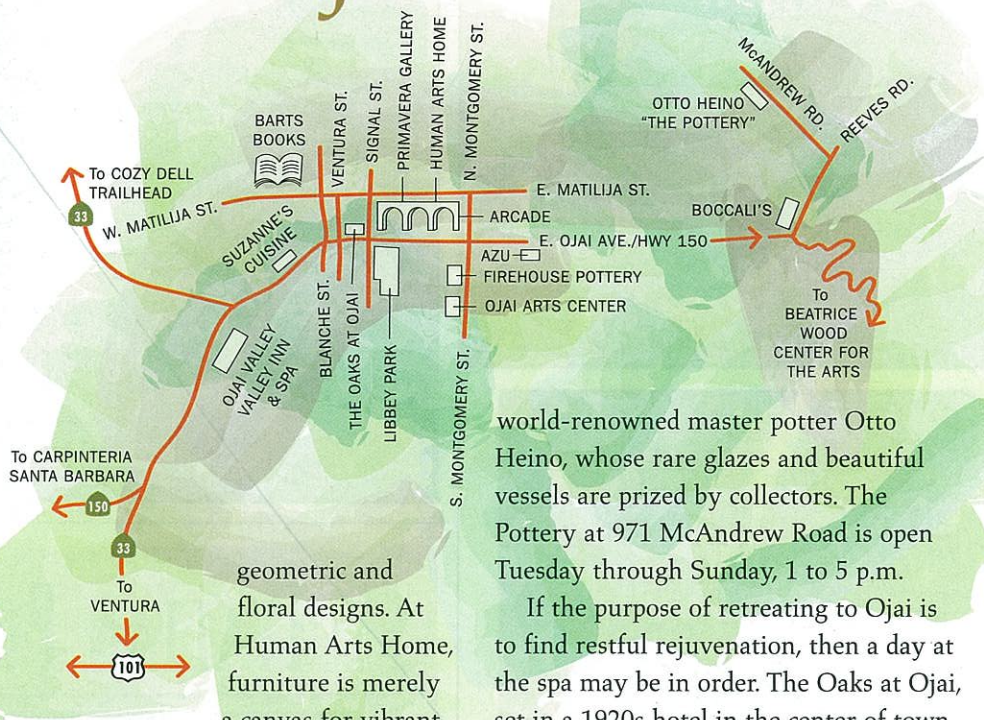


Maps by Colleen Cass



Over the Mountains to Ojai

BY CLAUDIA ARMANN



TUCKED INTO a splendid mountain valley east of Carpinteria, Ojai's natural beauty is complemented by the creativity and enterprise of its residents. The town's allure depends on the visitor's definition of pleasure. Come to be pampered at one of the ultra-indulgent spas, where a river-rock massage or an aromatherapy body wrap will send tension on a holiday. If art and culture bring fulfillment, then Ojai's galleries and summer events alone are worth the trip. For the outdoor enthusiast, a challenging hike on a sage-scented trail rewards with views of the quaint town's magical setting among citrus orchards and its "pink moment," when the setting sun adorns the mountains with a luminous pink glow.

An hour's drive from Santa Barbara, the town center is easily explored with a short walk. Start at the arcade of galleries and boutiques across from Libbey Park. Window shopping won't suffice, as the vivid art, furniture and fashions arrayed in the windows draw passersby inside for closer inspection. Primavera Gallery displays an amazing collection of sculpture, jewelry, paintings and blown-glass chandeliers that are hand-painted in dazzling

geometric and floral designs. At Human Arts Home, furniture is merely a canvas for vibrant works of art.

Do venture off the main avenue and check out the side streets. In particular, stroll down S. Montgomery Street, where Firehouse Pottery & Gallery and Ojai Arts Center offer art classes for the creatively inclined. If browsing used bookstores is a favorite pastime, do not miss Bart's Books with a style all its own at 302 W. Matilija Street.

The home of famed ceramist Beatrice Wood is a few miles outside of town, at 8560 Ojai-Santa Paula Road, but worth the visit to see her ceramic art, known for its beautifully lustrous and colorful glazes. Beatrice Wood Center for the Arts is open Friday, Saturday and Sunday, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. In the same neighborhood, you'll find the showplace of work by

world-renowned master potter Otto Heino, whose rare glazes and beautiful vessels are prized by collectors. The Pottery at 971 McAndrew Road is open Tuesday through Sunday, 1 to 5 p.m.

If the purpose of retreating to Ojai is to find restful rejuvenation, then a day at the spa may be in order. The Oaks at Ojai, set in a 1920s hotel in the center of town, is known for its intimacy and focus on fitness. Yoga, hiking and exercise classes are paired with 1000-calories-a-day cuisine for those seeking good health. But pampering is not spared, and everything from a eucalyptus steam room to private massage rooms is available.

At Ojai Valley Inn and Spa, guests in cozy white robes drift blissfully between private massage rooms and the outdoor pool. Signs declaring the spa a "cell-free zone" are prominently posted. And who would waste time chattering when services include facials, mud treatments and body wraps? The more active set can join a tai chi class or learn Japanese bookmaking or wreath making at the adjacent art studio. The day package includes a massage, facial, mud treatment and use of the

PHOTO TRACY SMITH REED. MAP ILLUSTRATION ZACK PAUL

pool and fitness center. With so many possibilities in Ojai, a day may just not be long enough. ✱

Claudia Armann, a freelance writer, was a research editor for Islands and AQUA magazines.

Things to Do

HIKE: More than a dozen trails lead into the national forest and wildlands surrounding Ojai. A favorite destination is **Cozy Dell** where wildflowers, valley views and a cool creek are within two miles of the trailhead. From the Vons shopping center on Ojai Avenue, head north on Highway 33 for about three miles, looking for the parking turnout on the left and the trailhead on the right. Oak woodlands and Ventura River are the draw at the **Ventura River Preserve**, a 1,600-acre property acquired by Ojai Valley Land Conservancy, where you are welcome to bring your pooch along. Hikers, mountain bikers and equestrians can enjoy 12 miles of trails that start at Rice Road, between Lomita and El Roblar avenues.

DINE OUT: The valley's agricultural bounty is featured at several restaurants. For a casual Italian meal, sit under the umbrellas at **Boccali's**, where oranges for fresh juice and tomatoes for pizza are grown at the restaurant's ranch, 3277 East Ojai Avenue, (805) 646-6116. At **Suzanne's Cuisine**, 502 West Ojai Avenue, indulge in fresh-baked bread, seafood and hearty soups and salads while enjoying a view of the walled garden, (805) 640-1961. Local produce is transformed into delicious fare at **Azu**, 457 East Ojai Avenue, where tapas, drinks and fun are offered in equal measure. Located in the heart of town, its European atmosphere adds to the enjoyment, (805) 640-7987.

EVENTS: The outdoor amphitheater at Libbey Park is the setting for the stellar **Ojai Music Festival** scheduled for June 8-11. For festival program, call (805) 646-2094. *Taming of the Shrew* and *A Winter's Tale* are on the lineup for the annual **Shakespeare Festival** scheduled from July 14-August 5. For tickets, call (805) 646-9455.

For more information, visit www.ojaichamber.org.



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