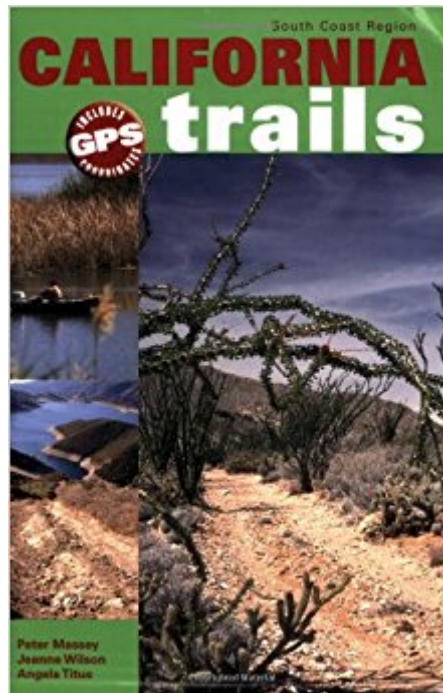




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California Trails South Coast Region



Synopsis

This handy 6 1/2 x 9 1/4 guidebook is a new, full color volume that navigates 893 miles of backcountry trails in southwestern California, near of Los Angeles, San Bernardino, San Diego, Salton Sea, Indio, Borrego Springs, Ocotillo and Palo Verde. See ghost towns, old mines and mill workings, old railroads and stage lines along the 50 off-road trails. Directions include GPS coordinates and all trails are rated for difficulty, mileage, driving time, remoteness and more. Descriptions highlight places to camp, hike, mountain bike, fish, and sightsee. Histories recount the days of the Wild West.

Book Information

Series: Trails

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Customer Reviews

OKK

In good condition.

Easy directions.

A+

Trails in book are mainly dirt roads. Nothing too challenging, and any stock suv can do a majority of the trails. I have taken a stock Honda CRV without a low range on a lot of them without any

troubles. I was expecting some challenges and better descriptions of the trails. Kind of hard to follow. All in all a great beginners book to fourwheeling in Southern California.

More information than I expected. Just what we needed to steer us onto routes that are not too challenging for a Toyota Rav4, and onto new trails for our Dodge 4x4 truck. Better than average guide book.

I own several guides to 4x4 roads in California from various publishers and I find each of them useful in their own way, but the California Trails series is probably my all around favorite due to their balance of detail, presentation and ease of use/navigation. By breaking the state up into several distinct regions, the authors are able to present a larger number of trails for each area than found in broader guides - approximately 50 in each volume. The South Coast Region covers a diverse range of coastal, mountain, high and low desert terrain in Southern California, giving you a wide range of environments to choose your next adventure. As with other entries in the Trails series, the layout is in full color and pretty easy to navigate, beginning with an explanation of the difficulty ratings (using a fairly nuanced 10 point system), remoteness ratings (something I haven't encountered in other guides), basic backcountry/4x4 knowledge for the beginner, discussion of the trail rating system, packing checklists and a map of each trail's general location in relation to one another. Then come the trails. Most trails are rated 5 or below, with a few up to 7 in difficulty, as anything higher is beyond the scope of any but the most experienced driver with a heavily modified vehicle. Each trail has a generous number of pages devoted to it, with info on the trail's stats and special attractions, its history (if any), and a general description of the drive which includes what kind of conditions/obstacles to expect (of course, always check local road conditions at the time you travel), viewpoints, campsites, access to other recreation opportunities and more. Road condition contact information and map references are provided before detailed route directions. This is where I find the Trails series really shines. Essentially every landmark you pass, nearly every track and trail which crosses the route is noted in the mileage log (in many cases the authors even note what kind of trail it is and the difficulty if known, even if the trail isn't covered in the book, in case you want to expand your adventures). And if you plan to drive the trail in reverse, the authors provide reverse directions in blue printed below the main ones, taking out the guesswork. Interspersed throughout the text are large color photos which show both scenery and areas of the trail. There are also text boxes which explain aspects of local history, flora, fauna and geology you may encounter in more detail. The maps are a weak point.

Although they show roads and major trails which cross or connect to the route, and the locations of streams, park boundaries, campsites and ghost towns, there is very little detail, no indications of topography or road difficulty changes, and no waypoints marked. And as other reviewers have mentioned, the maps aren't oriented northward. It looks to me like they tried to place them in whatever direction made best use of the allotted space on the page. This is easy to deal with if you're aware of it however, and anyone who is serious about going into the backcountry should have a good area map anyway. The mileage log is so detailed, you will probably rely on it as your main way of guiding yourself. The only other major flaw in the series is that they aren't very durable. The binding is poor - one even had a chunk of pages fall out within the first 12 hours of ownership (barely having leafed through it). Without a spiral binding like some trail guides have, it makes it more difficult to use the book while navigating. And, they are made like any other paperback, so they are easily damaged. (Although I read a review stating spiral bound copies could be bought off the publisher's website, the site does not appear to be working anymore.) But, for number of trails combined with detailed navigation and a great balance of photos and educational information, the Trails series is my favorite.

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