

Angel Island

State Park



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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Discover the many states of California.™

Angel Island State Park

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(415) 435-1915

Angel Island played a major role in the settlement of the West and as an immigration station. Trails and roads crisscross the island, providing easy access to 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 2,000 years ago. The Miwok established camps and used the island primarily 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, including infantry serving in campaigns against American Indians in the West.

The Army designated the entire island “Fort McDowell,” and renamed Camp



U.S. Immigration Station

Reynolds the West Garrison in 1900. New facilities at Quarry Point, called East Garrison, evolved from a detention camp for soldiers returning from the Spanish-American war to a discharge depot. During World War I, East Garrison served as a recruitment and replacement depot and a discharge point for troops returning from the war. Angel Island was an embarkation site for

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. Most of the island was turned over to California State Parks in 1963.

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. As better medical examinations at the ports of embarkation and improved medical practices made lengthy quarantines unnecessary, the U.S. Public Health Service abandoned the Quarantine Station and moved to San Francisco.

The U. S. Immigration Station

From 1910 to 1940, the United States Immigration Station (USIS), nicknamed “the Guardian of the Western Gate,” processed nearly a million immigrants from more than 80 countries. Immigration staff ensured that new arrivals were healthy and self-sufficient. Chinese persons were specifically excluded from immigrating to the U. S. by the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882. Most of the 175,000 Chinese arriving at Angel Island were detained for three to ninety days—a few for almost two years—while their applications were considered. Due to appeals, most immigrants were eventually granted entry to America. European immigrants and first-class passengers faced only an inspection aboard ship and were detained less frequently.

Many detainees expressed their anxiety and despair by writing and carving on the wooden walls. Some Chinese wrote emotional poems, still legible today. A 1940 fire destroyed the administration building, closing the USIS. The first restoration phase of this National Historic Landmark has been completed as a tribute to immigrants from around the world.

NATURAL HISTORY

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 the oak woodland and coastal brush habitat covering Angel 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 cover the island in spring.

Animal Life

Deer and raccoons, both excellent swimmers, are the only large land mammals on the island. Harbor seals and California sea lions often sun on the rocks. Birds include scrub jays, hummingbirds, flickers, hawks and owls. Near the coves, visitors may find egrets, grebes, blue herons and brown pelicans.



Flicker

GETTING TO THE ISLAND

Angel Island is reachable year-round by public ferries. For information, visit www.parks.ca.gov/angelisland.

ACTIVITIES AND SERVICES

The island's scenic picnic areas have tables, running water and barbecues. Reserve group picnic areas at www.parks.ca.gov or call (800) 444-7275.

Camping

The park's four environmental camping areas have water and pit toilets nearby. The East Bay Sites are generally protected from wind. The more exposed Ridge Sites offer views of the Golden Gate

Bridge and San Francisco. The Sunrise Sites can be reserved individually or combined as a group camp for up to 24 people. The Kayak Camp on the west side—near a small beach—also accommodates groups up to 20. Kayak campers must secure their boats from high tides. Campers must carry their equipment up to two miles and bring camp stoves or charcoal, as no wood fires are allowed on the island. For year-round camping reservations, call (800) 444-7275 or visit www.parks.ca.gov.

Boating

Boat slips are available first-come, first-served from 8 a.m. until sunset. Overnight mooring buoys are available first-come, first-served. A fee is charged for both day use and overnight mooring, with a seven-night limit. Boaters must tie fore and aft due to swift currents.

Tours

Tours of historic buildings and sites are available. Docent-led nature hikes can be scheduled upon request, and tram tours are available seasonally. Call (415) 435-3522 for information and scheduling.



Civil War reenactment at Camp Reynolds

Hiking and Bicycling

Hikers have 13 miles of trails and roadways while cyclists have access to nine paved miles. 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. Watch for vehicles on roadways. Bicycles can be rented in season from the Cove Café.

For more activity information, visit www.angelisland.com or call (415) 897-0715.

ACCESSIBLE FEATURES &

A number of facilities, several restrooms, one campsite and the tram tour are accessible. Because of the hilly terrain and ongoing improvements, visitors are encouraged to call in advance for more information about accessible features, or visit <http://access.parks.ca.gov>.

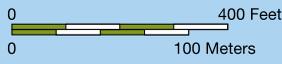
PLEASE REMEMBER

- State law protects all natural and cultural resources—wildlife, rocks, plants and structures.
- Only service or assistance animals are allowed on the island.
- Stay on designated trails to avoid ticks and poison oak.
- Do not feed raccoons or other wildlife.
- Roller skates, roller blades, scooters and skateboards are not allowed anywhere on the island.
- Wood fires are not permitted.

Angel Island State Park



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Map by Eureka Cartography, Berkeley, CA



Legend

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|-----------------------------------|---|-----------------------|-------------|
| Park Land | Accessible Feature | Environmental Camping | Park Office |
| Park Land (No Entry After Sunset) | Boat Docks 8:00 am to sunset; mooring buoys | Group Picnic Area | Picnic Area |
| US Coast Guard (off limits) | Drinking Water | Park Building | Restrooms |
| Paved road | | | |
| Unpaved road | | | |
| Trail (No Bicycles) | | | |

