Briones Regional Park

Location | Lafayette
---|---
GPS | 37.92468,-122.15694
Phone | (888-327-2757), option 3, extension 4508
Miles | 6-Mile Round Trip
Elevation Gain | 1,007 ft.
Trails | Old Briones Road/Valley Trail/Briones Crest/Mott Peak/Black Oak
Hours/Curfew | Dawn to Sunset; varies seasonally
Fees | $3 vehicle; $2 dog
Website | ebparks.org/parks/briones

**Park Features:** From Briones Peak, the highest point in the park, there are panoramic views in all directions: of Mount Diablo and the Diablo Valley to the east, Sacramento River and Delta to the north, East Bay hills and Mt. Tamalpais to the west, and Las Trampas Regional Wilderness to the south.

**Trail Highlights:** This route will lead you from Briones’ deep valleys to its highest ridges and back. Along the way watch for black-tailed deer, coyotes, squirrels, red-tailed hawks, and turkey vultures. There are gorgeous wildflower displays in season.

**Trail Directions:** From the Bear Creek Staging Area, park in the far lot. At the Info Panel, go through the gate and head east along Old Briones Road. At the first intersection, stay left at trail post #5. Do not go to the Archery Range. Go through gate and continue along Old Briones Road .9 miles. After passing the corral you will reach the intersection with Valley Trail. At trail post #21, continue onto Valley Trail, for .95 miles. Past the intersection for Yerba Buena Trail, you will begin an incline until you reach the juncture with Briones Crest Trail. At this ‘T’ intersection, turn left to continue uphill for .35 miles. At the rise, turn left again to continue along Briones Crest Trail. After a short hill, Briones Peak will be off to your right on a single-track use trail. Feel free to ‘bag the peak’. Continue along Briones Crest Trail .78 miles downhill to the intersection with the Old Briones Road Trail. At the signpost, turn right and go .1 mile between trail posts #22 and #23 along Briones Crest/Old Briones Road Trails. At trail post #23, turn left to continue along the Briones Crest Trail. Go .56 miles past Lagoon Trail, and uphill to the intersection with Mott Peak Trail. At the rise, take a left onto Mott Peak Trail and follow it .36 miles until you reach trail post #7. There you will veer left to join Black Oak Trail. Follow its undulations and the steep downhill for .97 miles. At the next intersection, trail post #6, take a right to rejoin Old Briones Road. Follow it .54 miles back to the paved road that will lead you to the staging area.

**Driving Directions:** To reach the Bear Creek Staging Area on Bear Creek Road, exit Highway 24 at the Orinda/Camino Pablo exit and head toward Richmond. Turn right on Bear Creek Road and travel 5 miles to the staging area on the right.

**Health Tip**
Walking prevents or manages type 2 diabetes. Walking helps insulin work better, lowering blood sugar.
**Park Features:** This parkland provides a pleasant getaway with active wildlife on the ground and in the sky. Brushy Peak is a 1,702-foot landmark at the junction of the San Francisco Bay Area, the California Delta, and the Central Valley. Many animals live in these hills and oak groves, including meadowlarks, coyotes, rabbits, and several species of hawks and reptiles.

**Trail Highlights:** This challenge takes you near the very top of Brushy Peak with some fairly steep sections to enjoy along the way. The trail starts with a grassy and relatively smooth incline. It then passes through outcroppings of sandstone that add texture to the landscape and possible tripping hazards. At the top of the climb, enjoy views of rolling hills and ranchlands that surround the park. As temperatures heat up in the summer, this trail is best when the grasses are green during or just after the wet season.

**Trails Directions:** From Laughlin Ranch Staging Area, go past the restrooms and information panel, then slightly right to reach the Laughlin Ranch Loop Trailhead. After passing through the first gate, turn left to follow Laughlin Ranch Loop Trail, which merges left into the Tamcan Trail. Go 1.11 miles, where you reach the junction with Brushy Peak Loop Trail. Turn right onto the trail and continue for another 2.3 miles. Turn left on West Side Loop Trail, and continue for .93 miles, to complete the loop. Make sure to keep right around the cattle pond, as there are many branching, small trails. Safely cross Laughlin Road to re-enter Laughlin Ranch Staging Area to finish your hike.

**Driving Directions:** From I-580 W in Livermore, take the N. Greenville Road/Laughlin Road exit (Exit 57). Turn left onto Altamont Pass Road, then right onto Laughlin Road and drive about 2 miles into the park. From I-580 E, take the Vasco Road/Brentwood exit (Exit 55) and turn left at the exit onto Vasco Road (follow the signs for Vasco Road northbound), then right onto Northfront Road. Take Northfront a short distance to Laughlin Road and follow it to the park.

**Health Tip:** Researchers at Iowa State University found that just 12 minutes of walking can boost your mood, resulting in an increase in joviality, vigor, attentiveness, and self-confidence.
California Riding and Hiking Trail

Trail Highlights: This trail can be very steep and hilly in sections as it follows property lines rather than contour lines. From the highest points you will be able to see views of Carquinez Strait, Martinez, Concord, and Mt Diablo. During the summer and fall it can be very hot. Bathrooms and water are located only at Hidden Lakes Open Space Park. Bring enough water for very hot. Bathrooms and water are located only at Hidden Lakes Open Space. Park at Hidden Lakes Open Space. Walk up Morello 100 yards to trailhead.

Trail Directions: From Hidden Lakes Open Space walk south on Morello Drive. Turn right at gate marked “California Riding and Hiking Regional Trail.” Hike uphill along the fence line. In a half mile you will head back down and cross Elderwood Drive and continue straight ahead on the trail. In another half mile, cross Macalvey Drive, turn right and follow the trail markers to Costanza Drive. Cross Costanza and pick up the trail again as it leads uphill past a gate. Over the hill and down, you are back on Morello Drive. Turn left on Morello, pass Colton Place, cross Vinehill Way, and turn left. In about 100 yards, the trail bears right off Vinehill Way, goes through a steel mesh gate, and turns right, up the hill. Be sure to go through the gate. The path just before the gate is private property. The trail goes up and down from here between private properties. After 1.34 miles, you will descend through a gate and down a driveway to Pleasant Hill Road East. Turn right. At the first intersection, turn left on Alhambra Way, then, almost immediately, right on Brackman Lane. Brackman ends at Haag Road where you will turn left. You will see a path on the right marked CA Riding and Hiking Trail. It leads between houses out to Alhambra Avenue, across from the Mt Wanda trailhead and parking area. From here retrace your steps back to your car. If you would like to go further, there is a 2-mile loop up to Mt. Wanda and back.

Driving Directions: From I-680 in Concord, exit at Concord Avenue/Chilpancingo Parkway. Drive west on Chilpancingo Parkway to Morello Avenue and Hidden Lakes Open Space. Park at Hidden lakes Open Space. Walk up Morello 100 yards to trailhead.
Trail Highlights: This popular trail opened to pedestrians and bikers in September 2013 and was named in honor of the late East Bay Bicycle Coalition founder and Bay Bridge Trail advocate Alex Zuckermann. The parking area has four accessible parking spaces as well as accessible vault toilets. The path is split into separate lanes for bikers and pedestrians. The trail grade increases from an estimated 1 percent to 12 percent at 2.5 miles into the trail. People using wheelchairs or mobility equipment may need to use the railings or may need assistance with this section. Bring headphones or ear plugs to block out the traffic sounds from the bridge.

Trail Directions: This out-and-back trail starts at the Judge John Sutter Regional Shoreline parking area. Walk toward the paved trail adjacent to the bridge and turn left. Watch for bikers in both directions. As you continue on the paved trail you will see the entrance to the Bay Bridge Trail. Follow the trail across the span of the bridge until you reach Yerba Buena Island. The vista point is your turn-around location. Follow the Bridge Trail back. Stop at the Judge John Sutter observation pier for a snack, a panoramic view, and descriptive interpretive panels on your way back to the parking area. Bring layers as it is often windy!

Driving Directions: From Westbound I-80 — Drive westbound to Emeryville, stay in the 3rd lane from the left through Emeryville, take the I-880 Alameda/San Jose connector, take the West Grand Avenue/7th Street Exit, turn right onto Grand Avenue, left onto Maritime Street, turn right onto Burma Road.

From San Francisco (Eastbound I-80) — Drive westbound on I-80 to Oakland, take the southbound I-880 connector, take the West Grand Avenue/Maritime Street exit, turn right onto Maritime Street, turn right onto Burma Road.

From San Jose — Drive northbound I-880 to Oakland, take the 7th Street/West Grand Avenue exit, proceed straight through the signalized intersection onto the (unnamed) frontage road, turn left onto Grand Avenue, left onto Maritime Street, right onto Burma Road.

From Walnut Creek — Drive westbound SR-24 to Oakland (SR-24 becomes I-880), take the 27th Street/West Grand Avenue exit, proceed straight through the signalized intersection onto Northgate Avenue, turn right onto Grand Avenue (proceed approx. 1.7 miles), turn left onto Maritime Street, right onto Burma Road.

From Castro Valley — Drive westbound I-580 to Oakland, take the I-980 Downtown Oakland exit, take the 27th Street/West Grand Avenue exit (requires a quick lane change), proceed straight through the signalized intersection onto Northgate Avenue, turn right onto Grand Avenue (proceed approximately 1.7 miles), turn left onto Maritime Street, turn right onto Burma Road.
Park Features: The extensive trail system provides access for hikers, bikers, dog owners, and horseback riders to gorgeous canyon views, ridgetop vistas, and for viewing a variety of woodland species.

Trail Highlights: There are many hills to climb during this hike, but the expansive views off the ridge will keep you moving along quickly. Water and accessible restrooms are available at the beginning of the route. Bring a light jacket, as the winds tend to pick-up quickly atop these hills. Watch for downhill mountain bikers and horses on the multi-use single track trails.

Trail Directions: At the Castleridge trailhead head up the moderately steep and winding Courdet Trail until you reach the top in 1.98 miles. Turn left and walk 100 feet on Ridgeline Trail to find the Ridgeline Trail marker. Take Ridgeline Trail immediately right, a narrow trail with switchbacks that has a steep decline. At the next junction, you will see the Shady Creek Trail marker. Take a left here onto Shady Creek. Follow the trail until you reach Bay Leaf Trail junction. Take Bay Leaf Trail on the left, a narrow single-track trail that winds back up to connect with Schuhart Trail. Take Schuhart on the left when it splits into two trails with the same name. Stay to the left and it will reconnect you with Ridgeline Trail. Take Ridgeline back to Courdet Trail junction on the right and make your way down Courdet Trail back to the staging area.

Driving Directions: From I-680, take the Bernal Ave. exit near Pleasanton. Head west on Bernal Ave., towards the hills. After .3 miles, turn right onto foothill Rd. After .7 miles, turn left onto Old Foothill Rd. and continue a short distance to find on-street parking.
Point Pinole Regional Shoreline

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Park Features: This newer park area is named in honor of the Dotson family, a multi-generational family known for environmental advocacy in the west Contra Costa county area and beyond. Dedicated in 2017, the area has undergone significant habitat restoration to mitigate potential future damage from rising sea levels as well as coast and inland flooding.

Trail Highlights: Offering stunning views of the San Pablo Bay, this trail is suitable for all skill levels as well as for dogs on leash. It is an accessible trail for bikes, strollers, power wheelchair users as well as strong manual wheelchair users. The trail is wide with mixed pavement and hard packed dirt/gravel. Accessible restrooms and benches are available at the beginning, middle, and end of the route.

Trail Directions: From the parking area cross over the cement bridge and follow the Bay Trail until you reach the picnic area where the trail splits. Stay right, on the paved pathway, to stay on the Bay Trail continuing for another mile. You will cross over two boardwalks and reach an incline in the trail.

Follow the paved trail up the mild incline until you meet the paved Point Pinole Trail. Turn left, and follow the paved Point Pinole Trail for nearly a mile until you reach the roundabout shuttle stop. Continue through the roundabout until you reach the pier. At the pier you will turn around. Go through the roundabout again and take the Owl Alley Trail on the left until you reach the Cook’s Point Trail and then turn right. This trail will connect back to the paved Point Pinole Trail, where you turn left. Take the Point Pinole trail until you reach the Bay Trail. Follow the Bay Trail back the way you came through Dotson Marsh back to the parking area.

Driving Directions: From I-580 take the Richmond Parkway for about 3.75 miles. Turn left on to Goodrick Ave. The entrance is at the end of Goodrick Ave., approximately .25 miles.

From I-80 take the Richmond Parkway and go west towards the Bay. Cross San Pablo Ave. and continue on the Richmond Parkway. Turn right onto Goodrick Ave. The entrance is at the end of Goodrick Ave. Mileage from I-80 to the park entrance is about 3.75 miles.
**Sobrante Ridge Regional Preserve**

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<tr>
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**Park Features:** This 277-acre oak/bay parkland preserves the habitat of the extremely rare Alameda manzanita as well as other indigenous plant and animal species. There are no restrooms.

**Trail Highlights:** Wildlife abounds in the preserve’s varied habitats of oak/bay woodland, coyote brush scrub, miniature “forest” of the rare Alameda Manzanita, and open grassland. Coyotes stalk gophers in the tall grass; deer bed down by day in the tall thickets; salamanders sleep all summer buried in the woods; and golden eagles soar high above the ridge, scanning the ground for prey. The loop includes about a mile uphill through residential neighborhoods. There are also benches and picnic tables overlooking the hillsides.

**Trail Directions:** From the parking lot, go up the hill .05 miles, then turn left onto the gravel trail, which becomes the Sobrante Ridge Trail. Continue on Sobrante Ridge Trail past Morningside Trail (.6 miles), Broken Oak Trail (.1 miles) and Manzanita Trail (.35 miles). Continue .15 miles past Manzanita Trail. At the Y junction, go right at the Sobrante Ridge Loop Trail which will turn back into the Sobrante Ridge Trail. Continue straight at the tower. At the green gate turn left onto the single-track trail (Sobrante Ridge Trail) and follow it downhill until you reach the staging area in the residential area. Turn left on Conestoga Way, left on Carriage Dr., and then right on Coach Dr. to complete the loop and return to the staging area.

**Driving Directions:** From the Richmond/Oakland area. Take I-80 to the San Pablo Dam Road exit in Richmond. Turn south on San Pablo Dam Road and proceed through El Sobrante to Castro Ranch Road. Turn left on Castro Ranch Road, left on Conestoga Way, left on Carriage Drive, and right on Coach Drive. The entrance is at the end of Coach Drive.

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**Health Tip**

Walking at least 30 minutes a day, five days a week can reduce your risk for coronary heart disease, such as heart attack and stroke, by about 20 percent.