

San Gabriel Peak/Mt. Disappointment Trail Guide

by Hike-LosAngeles.com

DISTANCE: 2.5 Miles Roundtrip

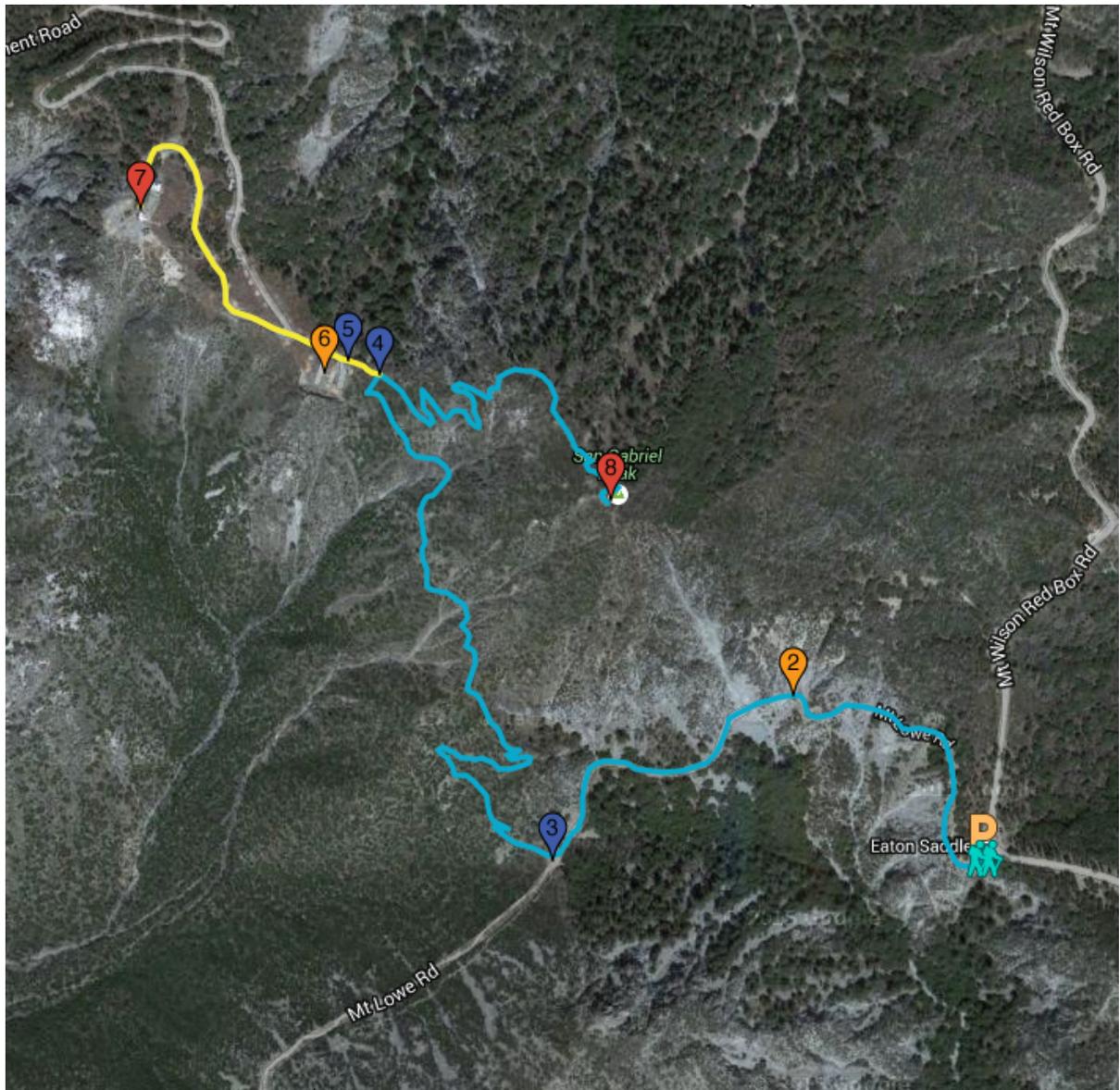
ELEVATION: 750' – 800'

ELEVATION GAIN: Approximately 50'

TYPE: Loop

HIKING TIME: 2 Hours

RATING: Mostly easy, but with a several mildly moderate hills



Directions to Trailhead

Eaton Saddle
Mt. Wilson Red Box Road
Angeles National Forest
Los Angeles, CA

Take CA-2 East for 13.9 miles from the 210 north of Pasadena. You will pass the Clear Creek Information Center and the Switzer Campground. Turn right on to Mt. Wilson Red Box Road and continue for another 2.3 miles to Eaton Saddle. Park on either side of the road. The trailhead is located at the gate on the western side of the road. There is also a great view of the interior San Gabriel Mountains on the eastern side of the road to kick your hike off with.

Trail Guide Locators



Parking

Park on either side of Mt. Wilson Red Box Road. There is a great view point for photos of the San Gabriel's on the east side of the road.



Trailhead

The trailhead is located on the bottom corner of the parking area on west side of Mt. Wilson Red Box Road. Pass around the gate and proceed approximately .25 mile on the Mt. Lowe Road fire road to the Mueller Tunnel. The first half mile of this trail to Trail Junction 1 is relatively easy with a nice view down Eaton Canyon to the San Gabriel Valley.



Mueller Tunnel (.27 miles)

Constructed in 1942 the Mueller Tunnel passes through a short portion of the southern flank of San Gabriel Peak. Pass through the tunnel for approximately 66 yards and continue on the Mount Lowe Road for another .25 to Trail Junction 1.



Trail Junction 1 (.52 miles)

Passing a perforated pipe you will reach a small plateau with several trail options. For this hike, turn right on to the San Gabriel Peak/Mt. Disappointment Trail, which is marked with a sign. As you make the turn, you should notice an old water tank on the hill above you to your right. From here the trail becomes a rocky, narrow single-track and is moderately steeper. Continue for .65 mile to Trail Junction 2.



Trail Junction 2 (1.17 miles)

At Trail Junction 2 turn left toward Mt. Disappointment and continue for 52 yards to Trail Junction 3. If you are bypassing Mt. Disappointment and the Nike Missile Base, turn right and continue .4 mile to the summit of San Gabriel Peak.



Trail Junction 3 (1.2 miles)

The single-track trail ends at an asphalt road and the ruins of the barracks and mess hall of the former Nike Missile Base. Continue .33 mile on the asphalt road up to the summit of Mt. Disappointment. The road up to the summit of Mt. Disappointment is fairly steep, but the pavement makes the climb a little easier.



Ruins of the Nike Missile Base

These concrete slabs mark the remains of the Nike Missile Base Barracks and Mess Hall.



Mt. Disappointment, 5,963' (1.53 miles)

The 18th highest peak in the San Gabriel Mountains, Mt. Disappointment was also home to a US Army Nike Missile Air Defense Base. The launch pads and missile silos are gone now, but the summit houses military telecommunications antennae and equipment.

After taking in the views, proceed back down the road to Trail Junction 3 and take the single-track trail back to Trail Junction 2. Pass through Trail Junction 2 and continue uphill on the San Gabriel Peak Trail. If you chose to conclude your hike without a visit to San Gabriel Peak, you may turn right at Trail Junction 2 and continue back to the parking area.



San Gabriel Peak, 6,161' (2.39 miles)

Climb .4 mile from Trail Junction 2 to the summit of San Gabriel Peak for incredible 360° panoramic views of the San Gabriel Mountains, the San Gabriel and San Fernando Valleys, Downtown Los Angeles and the Pacific Ocean. This section of the trail is narrow, twisting, rocky and quite steep, rating it a strenuous. Views from the summit are especially nice at sunset with the lights of Greater Los Angeles flickering on, but flashlights are required for the return trip.