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[Home](#) > Get Outdoors and Explore with MTS

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San Diego has excellent weather all year long, and what better way to take advantage of it than by checking out a nature trail in the city? Spending time in nature has quite a few benefits, such as boosting moods, lowering stress and anxiety levels, improving attention spans, and working to improve both physical and mental health.

Several trails around San Diego are accessible by transit to get you into nature. Traveling car-free allows you to not worry about the cost of gas or finding a parking spot. You will support the environment and reduce your carbon footprint. Enjoy the ride and choose transit.

Before you go on a hike, remember to wear comfortable shoes and bring some essentials with you such as water, sunglasses, a hat, and sunscreen. Be sure to notify a friend or family member of where you are going and when you'll be back. Let's hit the trail!

## **North-Central San Diego**



1. San Clemente Canyon Trail  
5491 Genesee Ave, San Diego, CA 92117

This trail is bordered by highway 52 in the Clairemont area, but it feels like you're in a wooded nature area while exploring this trail. Little creeks run through the site, and plenty of nature is to be had in the middle of the city while making you feel like you are a world away. There are about 3 miles of trails to explore here.

**How to get there:**

Route 41 to Genesee Ave & Highway 52 Our [trip planner](#) can give you directions to [San Clemente Canyon](#) from your location.

**For more information:**

<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/california/san-clemente-canyon-trail>



**2. Tecolote Canyon Hiking Area**

4600-4616 Genesee Ave, San Diego, CA 92117

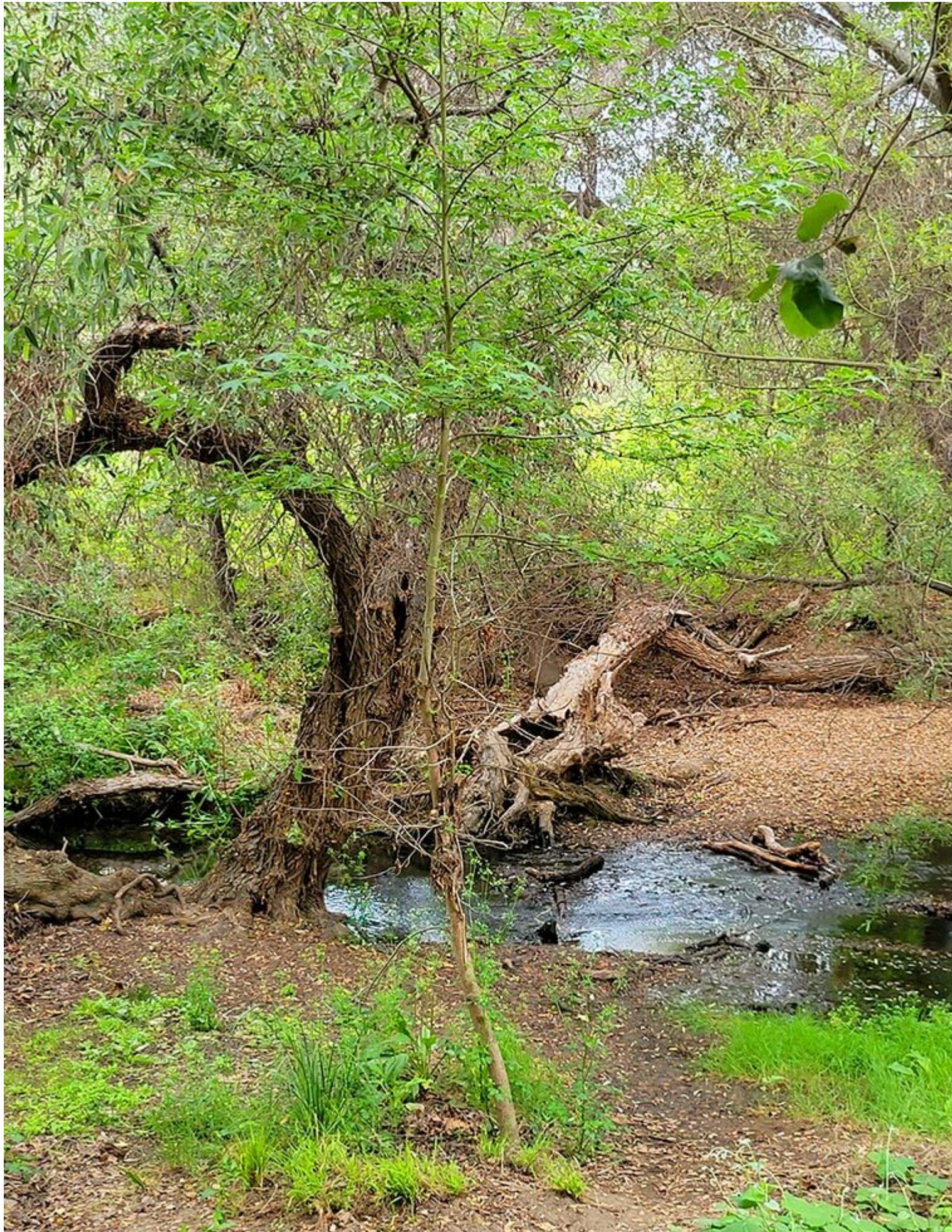
There are a few entrances for Tecolote Canyon. This one is right at a bus stop making it an accessible location for a hike. It was given the name *tecolote*, or owl, for the diminutive raptor that lives in the canyon. There are roughly 6.5 miles of trails to explore.

**How to get there:**

Take Route 41 to Genesee Ave & Chateau Drive and look for this sign on the west side of Genesee Avenue to make your way into the canyon. Use our [trip planner to get to Tecolote Canyon](#).

**For more information:**

<https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/parks/osp/tecolote>



### 3. Rose Canyon Trailhead

7042 Genesee Ave, San Diego, CA 92122

Part of this trail is shady, and there are plenty of trees and vegetation along the path. There are also small creeks as you progress further into the canyon. There are approximately 4.2 miles of trail to check out.

#### **How to get there:**

Route 41 or 105 to Genesee Av & Centurion Sq. The entrance to Rose Canyon is on the west side of the street. Walk south to the sign for the entrance to Rose Canyon. [Click here to plan your trip to Rose Canyon.](#)

#### **For more information:**

<https://www.sandiego.gov/park-and-recreation/parks/osp/rosecan1>

## **Central San Diego**



4. Palm Canyon Trail  
1549 El Prado, San Diego, CA 92101

The Palm Canyon Trail is located in the heart of Balboa Park. Palm Canyon contains over 450 palms in a 2 acre area. The trail starts to the west of the Spreckels Organ Pavilion (and south of the Mingei Museum). There are two paths when you descend into the canyon - one goes to the right toward the Cabrillo Bridge, and the other goes to the left to the Old Cactus Garden. Combine this trail with a walk through Balboa Park or cross the Cabrillo Bridge to get to the Bridle Trail.

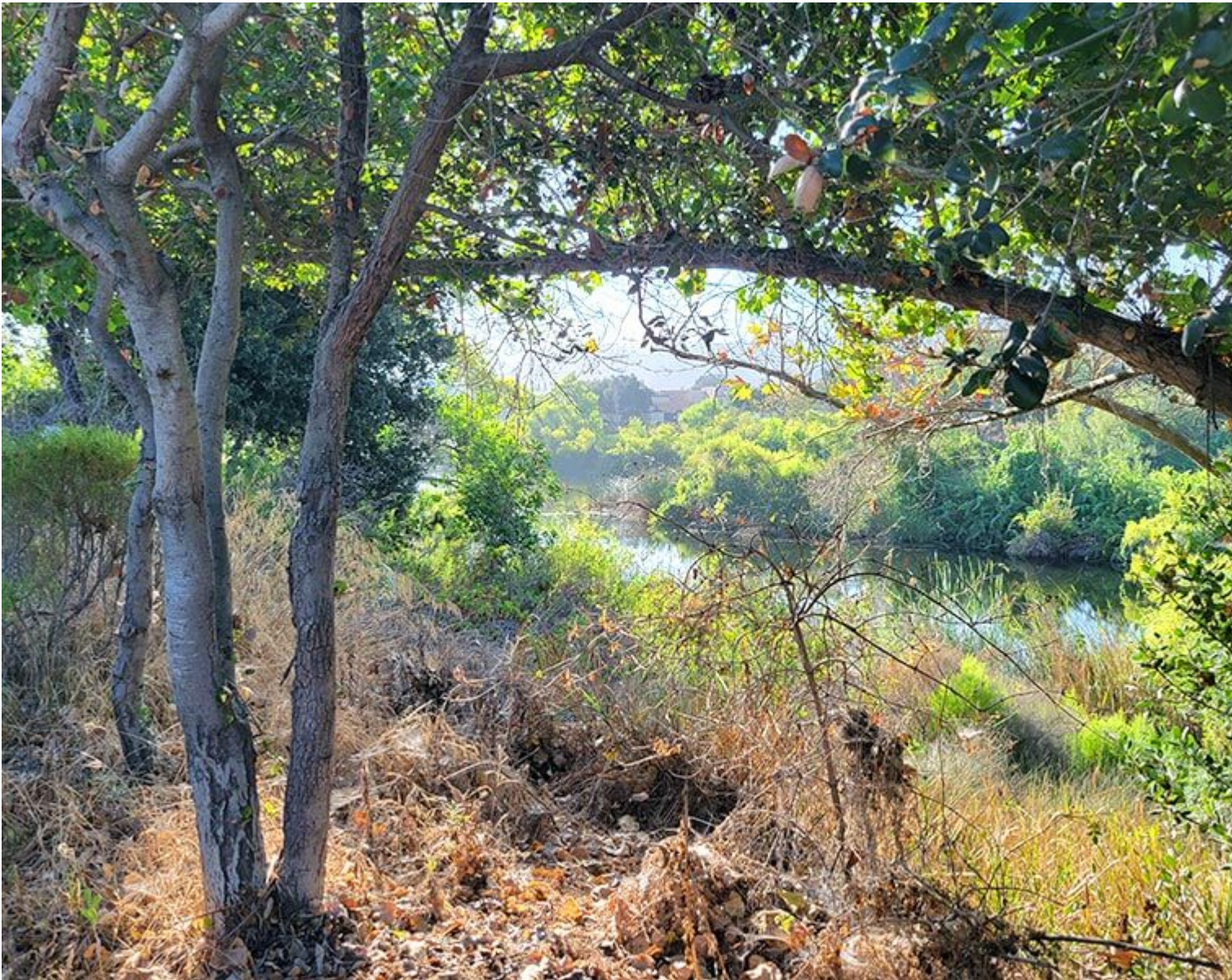
**How to get there:**

Route 7 to Park Blvd & Village Pl. Walk past the Natural History Museum down El Prado towards the Mingei Museum. Head south on Pan American Rd E - the trail starts behind the International Houses. Get directions to [Palm Canyon with our trip planner](#).

**For more information:**

<https://www.balboapark.org/gardens/palm-canyon>





5. Mission Valley River Trail  
Mission Valley East, San Diego, CA 92108

This easy-to-access trail runs along the San Diego River in Mission Valley. It's a paved trail, and parts will require you to cross a street or intersection to continue along the path. The path is on both sides of the river, accessible from Hazard Center Station or Mission Valley Center Station.

**How to get there:**

Take the Green Line to Hazard Center. Walk south towards a path in between the apartment buildings which will lead you to an entrance to the paved path. We recommend that you go to the left from here. Our [trip planner](#) will give you directions.

Another option: exit at Mission Valley Center Station and take a short walk north to the trail.

**For more information:**

## East San Diego



6. Lake Murray  
5540 Kiowa Dr, La Mesa, CA 91942

Blue spaces (visible water surfaces such as coastal water, lakes, and rivers) give similar nature benefits to your mental health. Lake Murray is the perfect spot for a walk, rest, or relaxation by the water. Lake Murray has an asphalt-paved road that lines roughly ? of the reservoir, plus plenty of benches and tables.

### **How to get there:**

Route 14 to Lake Murray Blvd & Kiowa Dr then walk 0.2 miles north on Koiwa Drive to the

entrance. [Get directions to Lake Murray with our trip planner.](#)

**For more information:**

<https://mtrp.org/lake-murray/>

## South Bay



7. Rice Canyon Trail  
670 Rancho Del Rey Pkwy, Chula Vista, CA 91910

Rice Canyon Trail is one of two trails running through a canyon area in Chula Vista. Starting at the west end and going east will get you to a pretty little desert garden at the other end of the trail.

**How to get there:**

Take Route 709 to East H Street & Del Rey Blvd. Part of the trail starts on E H Street. You can also walk north on Del Rey Blvd to S Rancho Del Rey Pkwy - the entrance to Rice Canyon Trail is across the street (see photo above). [Plan your trip to Rice Canyon Trail here.](#)

**For more information:**

<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/california/rice-canyon-trail>



8. Snake Canyon Trail  
830 Paseo Ranchero, Chula Vista, CA 91910

This is another trail that is very close to the Rice Canyon Trail. It is used by mountain bikers and hikers.

**How to get there:**

Route 709 to E H St & Paseo Ranchero - Walk north on Paseo Ranchero and turn left behind the

Fire Station. The entrance is along a fence next to the training center. Use our [trip planner tool](#) to get you to Snake Canyon.

**For more information:**

<https://www.alltrails.com/trail/us/california/snake-trail>



9. Living Coast Discovery Center  
1000 Gunpowder Point Dr., Chula Vista, CA 91910

The Living Coast Discovery Center is located in the San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge. From their door to the San Diego Bay, there are over a mile of walking trails with views of the Coronado Bridge, the San Diego skyline, and Mexico. There are tons of wildlife around the refuge along their easy-to-navigate paths.

Walking the trails is free. Admission to the Living Coast Discovery Center is \$18 for ages 13 and up, \$13 for children 3-12, and children under 2 are free. The center is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. You must use the shuttle to gain access to the trails.

**How to get there:**

The trails are accessible via a [shuttle from the E Street Transit Center](#) off the UC San Diego Blue

Line. Call (619) 409-5900 for shuttle pickup at the transit center.

**For more information:**

<https://www.thelivingcoast.org/>

**News Category:**

San Diego

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