

USA – California - San Diego – Driving Tour – Beach, Mountains and Desert

Full Day + or overnight

This drive starts at the beach, shifts up into the mountains, drops into the desert and ends up back at the boat / beach.

Start by heading over to Ocean Beach, Mission Beach, Pacific Beach or La Jolla Cove.

Have a surf or swim, and breakfast. <http://chowhound.chow.com/topics/510478>

From the above listed beach communities to Julian in the mountains is about a 90 minute drive.

Go east on the 8.

Exit the 79 and follow signs to Julian. <http://www.julianca.com/index.htm>

Park and walk around Julian, a small mountain town famous for apple pies. Walking around Julian is like stepping back in time 100 years.

Julia to Mt Palomar is about 45 – 60 minutes.

Go north out of Julian on the 79.

Turn off on the 76 west.

Watch for signs for Mount Palomar. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palomar_Mountain

You climb to around 1871 meters elevation with a huge telescope at the top. Amazing views and excellent high elevation hiking.

Down the mountain and drop into the desert..

Backtrack to Julian, and carry on to the east along the 78 and follow signs to Borrego Springs, gateway to the desert. <http://www.borregospringschamber.com/index.html>

This section is very interesting as you drop fast from Julian where there is frequent snow in the winter, to the desert floor where there is hardly any rain and it may be terrifically hot. Dropping into the desert is worthwhile just to experience the climate and geography changes.

Borrego Springs is the gateway to the Anza Borrego Desert State Park. If you have the time and desire, this park has outstanding hiking, biking, rock climbing, camping. Beware, temperatures can be excessively high during the May – October time frame. <http://www.abdsp.org/>

The final leg is back to the coast. Backtrack up to Julia and along the 79 to the 8 west, or find your way along the desert floor south to the 8 west.