

San Gabriel Peak 12C- Star Emblem Peak

Lat/Lon 34.2433364,-118.0984032
UTM 11S 398853E 3789683N

Elevation: 6161'

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San Gabriel Peak on [Peakbagger.com](#)

Current Weather on [NOAA](#)

Location: Los Angeles County, about 4 miles north of Altadena, 30 miles from Los Angeles

Nearby peaks: Mount Deception, Mount Disappointment, Mount Lowe, Mount Markham

Land Manager: Angeles National Forest, Los Angeles Gateway District (818) 899-1900

USE AT YOUR OWN RISK. CONDITIONS MAY CHANGE, AND UNEXPECTED HAZARDS MAY BE PRESENT.

About the peak

San Gabriel Peak, the high point of this section of the San Gabriel Mountains, has 360 degree view of the surrounding peaks.

Route 1 is described here as a road walk but it is much prettier and shorter to take the North San Gabriel Peak Trail. This trail was built in the 1980s and still maintained by the Jet Propulsion Laboratory Trailbuilders under the direction of engineer Bill Reilly, and is often called by that name. This trail cuts left up the ridge near where the 2N52 road starts and winds up a beautiful forested ridge to the intersection with the same road near the top. This route offers access to adjacent peaks like Mount Disappointment and Mount Deception.

Route 2 starts from Eaton Saddle via Mueller Tunnel and is the shortest and easiest way to the peak. It also offers easy access to Mount Markham and Mount Lowe, even Inspiration Point and Echo Mountain, or continue all the way down to Pasadena with a car shuttle.

There are many ways to climb 2, 3, 4 or 5 peaks in combination for a pleasant day of hiking in this area.

Note: This peak can be combined with several other peaks in the area in one day hike.

Historical notes: When viewed from the Los Angeles Basin, this angular peak behind Mount Lowe appears to dominate the front range. In early Mount Lowe literature, it was called "Observatory Peak", as Professor Lowe planned to extend his mountain railway to the summit and build there "the largest and best equipped astronomical observatory in the world." The observatory was never built (Professor Lowe ran out of money).

In 1894, the USGS used the summit as a triangulation point for mapping the range. As it appeared to be the highest point in the front range of the San Gabriels (more recent surveys show Strawberry Peak to be 3' higher), the government surveyors gave it the name "San Gabriel Peak".

In 1928 a fire lookout tower was built on the summit. It was removed in 1937 because observation was too often obscured by urban-generated haze. The name is derived from San Gabriel Archangel, the fourth of the Franciscan missions, founded in 1771.

John Backus, the former Chairman of the Mountain Records Committee of the HPS, a 6-time list finisher and the first person to lead all the peaks, was eulogized on this peak in December 1988 in a ceremony attended by 175 members and former members of the HPS.

San Gabriel Peak has 2 official HPS routes:

San Gabriel Peak Route 1- North San Gabriel Peak Trail from Red Box

Distance: 4.5 miles round trip on trail and road

Difficulty rating: Class 1, easy

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Adventure Pass may be required

Gain: 1400

Time: 2 hours round trip

Navigation difficulty:

Road type: Paved

Driving directions:

- From the intersection of I-210 and Angeles Crest Highway (SR 2), drive north on Angeles Crest Highway 9.5 miles to Angeles Forest Highway. Keep straight.
- Continue about 4.5 miles to the junction with the Mount Wilson Road at the Red Box Ranger Station. Turn right.
- Drive 0.4 mile to a paved road (2N52) on the right. Park here. Do not block the gate.

Hiking directions:

- At the parking area (4760'), the San Gabriel Peak Trail starts just to the left of the gate. Hike up this trail to where it meets a paved road.
- Turn left and follow the road to a road fork between San Gabriel Peak and Mount Disappointment (5800'-).
- On the southeast side of this flat area, find a trail. Follow it about 200' to a trail junction.
- The right (south and downhill) fork leads to Markham Saddle. Go straight (east) and follow the trail up to the summit.

Additional Route notes:

Note: It is also possible to follow paved road 2N52 from the parking area to the road fork between Mount Disappointment and San Gabriel Peak.

San Gabriel Peak Route 2- From Eaton Saddle

Distance: 4 miles round trip on trail and road

Gain: 1000

Difficulty rating: Class 1, easy

Time: 2 hours round trip

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Navigation difficulty: Easy

Adventure Pass may be required

Road type: Paved

Driving directions:

- From the intersection of I-210 and Angeles Crest Highway (SR 2), drive north on Angeles Crest Highway 9.5 miles to Angeles Forest Highway. Keep straight.
- Continue about 4.5 miles to the junction with the Mount Wilson Road at the Red Box Ranger Station. Turn right.
- Drive 2.3 miles to Eaton Saddle. Park on the right. Do not block the gate.

Hiking directions:

- From the parking area (5100'), pass the gate and hike up the road, through a tunnel, about 1/2 mile to Markham Saddle. This is the turnoff for Mount Markham and Mount Lowe.
- A trail starts on the right. Follow this trail up to a trail fork just short of a road between Mount Disappointment and San Gabriel Peak.
- Turn right and follow the trail up to the summit.

Additional Route notes: