

Garnet Mountain 32H

Lat/Lon 32.9425482,-116.4886281
UTM 11S 547801E 3645034N

Elevation: 5680'+

View Caltopo [map](#) or download [GPX](#)

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Garnet Mountain on [Peakbagger.com](#)

Current Weather on [NOAA](#)

Location: San Diego County, about 12 miles southeast of Julian, 155 miles from Los Angeles

Nearby peaks: Garnet Peak, Monument Peak #1

Land Manager: Cleveland National Forest, Descanso Ranger District (619) 445-6235

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

About the peak

Garnet Mountain (distinct from nearby Garnet Peak) is named for the over 25 mines within 3 miles of its summit. For over a century, prospectors have mined the rich area for minerals and rare metals with great success, with many deposits still accessible today. While not a challenging or tall peak, it makes up for this by giving rockhounds the chance to find a variety of interesting geology and gemstones throughout the area. In addition, the hike up the summit crosses the Kwaaymii Point Overlook, offering unmatched views to the east that make the trip outstanding. Because both routes to the summit are short and straightforward, this peak is often combined with other nearby HPS peaks including Garnet Peak, Monument Peak #1, and Sheephead Mountain which are often combined in a single outing, driven in a loop.

Route 1 starts from a highway and heads north up a fire road a very short distance before veering off directly to the summit off trail for a few hundred feet. This route is an easy hike and should take roughly 30 minutes. A bit longer, Route 2 starts further south at the pleasant Pioneer Mail picnic area and heads up the PCT to the Kwaaymii Point Overlook before joining the Route 1 fire road. This route can be accomplished in roughly 1.5 hours but hikers should leave extra time to enjoy the amazing overlook view.

Special note: The views from the PCT to the east are outstanding. Take some time to absorb this awesome view.

Garnet Mountain has 2 official HPS routes:

Garnet Mountain Route 1

Distance: 0.6 mile round trip on road and cross-country

Difficulty rating: Class 1, easy

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Gain: 200

Time: 1/2 hour round trip

Navigation difficulty: Easy

Road type: Paved

Driving directions:

- Take I-5 south to SR 78 in San Diego County.
- Go east on SR 78 through Escondido to the junction with SR 79 just past the town of Julian. Turn right (south) on SR 79.
- Go 6 miles to the junction with Sunrise Highway (S1) on the left. Turn left. Note your odometer and go as follows:
- At 7.4 miles (after mile marker 30.4), a paved road on the left with a sign "Kwaaymii Point". Turn left.
- Drive 0.3 mile on this road to its end. Park here.

Hiking directions:

- From the parking area (5480'), walk about 100' back up the paved road to a gated dirt road on the north side.
- Cross the gate and hike north up this road.
- Keep left at a fork and continue up to the high point of the road.
- Leave the road here on the left and walk up through light brush to the summit.

Additional Route notes:

Garnet Mountain Route 2

Distance: 2.6 miles round trip on trail, dirt road & use trail

Difficulty rating: Class 1, easy

Trailhead location on [Google Maps](#)

Gain: 400

Time: 1 hour 20 minutes round trip

Navigation difficulty: Easy

Road type: Paved

Driving directions:

- Take I-15 south to SR 79 East in Temecula. (Take the second SR 79 exit when driving from Los Angeles County).
- Go about 58 miles to Julian.
- Continue another 6 miles to the junction with Sunrise Highway (S1) and SR 79. Reset your odometer and turn left.
- At 7.4 miles, Kwaamii Point Road on your left. Keep straight.
- At 8.4 miles, Pioneer Mail Picnic Area. Turn left.
- Park next to the Pacific Crest Trail (PCT).

Hiking directions:

- From the parking area (5280'), hike north on the PCT for about 1 mile to the Kwaamii Point Overlook parking lot.
- From this second parking lot, walk about 100 feet up the paved road to a gated dirt road on the north side.
- Cross the gate and hike north up this road.
- Keep left at a fork and continue up to the high point of the road.
- Leave the road here on the left and walk up through light brush to the summit.

Additional Route notes: