

Unseen Waterways Of Marin County - Discover the Hidden Gems



UnseenMarin.com
Central Marin Waterways

Marin County in California is renowned for its breathtaking natural landscapes, stunning coastal views, and picturesque hiking trails. However, many visitors and even locals remain unaware of the hidden waterways that flow through this

beautiful county. In this article, we will uncover the unseen waterways of Marin County that offer a unique and enchanting experience.

The Magical Corte Madera Creek

Let's begin our journey by exploring the magical Corte Madera Creek. Flowing through the heart of Marin County, this creek offers a tranquil haven for nature enthusiasts. The crystal-clear waters meander through lush green forests, creating a serene atmosphere that feels like a hidden paradise. Walking along its banks, you will encounter an abundance of wildlife, including deer, birds, and even the occasional otter. Whether you prefer kayaking, fishing, or simply strolling amidst nature, the Corte Madera Creek is a must-visit destination.



Unseen Waterways of Marin County

by Marques Vickers(Kindle Edition)

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Discover the Hidden Lakes

Moving further inland, you will be amazed by the hidden lakes nestled in the hills of Marin County. Lake Lagunitas, Lake Alpine, and Phoenix Lake are just a few examples of these hidden gems. Surrounded by towering trees and offering pristine waters, these lakes provide a serene getaway from the hustle and bustle

of city life. Pack a picnic, bring your fishing gear, or simply enjoy a peaceful walk around the shores, and immerse yourself in the tranquility of these lesser-known oases.

Exploring the Coastal Estuaries

Marin County is also home to several coastal estuaries that showcase the convergence of freshwater and saltwater ecosystems. Richardson Bay and Tomales Bay are two prominent examples that offer a unique opportunity to witness the diverse marine life that thrives in these habitats. From herons and pelicans to seals and sea lions, prepare to be amazed by the vibrant wildlife that call these estuaries their home.

Unveiling the Hidden Waterfalls

While waterfalls might not be the first thing that comes to mind when thinking about Marin County, this stunning region surprisingly harbors a few hidden falls waiting to be explored. Carson Falls, Cascade Falls, and Cataract Falls are among the most noteworthy. Trek through verdant forests, cross babbling brooks, and feel the mist on your face as you discover these hidden marvels. The soothing sound of cascading water combined with the beauty of the natural surroundings create an unforgettable experience.

A Journey Through Marin's Secret Canyons

Lastly, Marin County's hidden waterways wouldn't be complete without mentioning its secret canyons. Steeped in mystery and seclusion, these canyons offer an escape into a world untouched by the modern hustle. Tennessee Valley and Muir Woods National Monument are just a couple of the hidden gems waiting to be explored. Hike through lush canyons, marvel at towering redwoods, and allow yourself to be immersed in the tranquility that only nature can provide.

The unseen waterways of Marin County are a treasure trove for those seeking to escape into nature's serenity. These hidden gems offer an opportunity to explore the county's lesser-known yet magnificent landscapes. From the magical Corte Madera Creek to the tranquil lakes, coastal estuaries, hidden waterfalls, and secret canyons, Marin County has so much more to offer beyond its famous landmarks. So, the next time you find yourself in this breathtaking region, don't forget to embark on a journey to discover the unseen waterways that lie beneath the surface.



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This edition is a photographic journey tracing each of Marin County's fourteen principle waterways from their source to termination point. The sequence of images follows this course making it a stride-by-stride accompaniment with the camera lens.

The creeks and streams that eminently flow throughout Marin County are important draining outlets originating from the elevated mountain ranges that frame the skeleton of the region. Each creek becomes an important tributary that

ultimately flows into the San Francisco Bay. Marin County has one of the highest rainfall averages in the San Francisco Bay area and flooding has been a constant throughout its history.

The Coastal Miwok tribe inhabited the territory of Marin County for hundreds of years harvesting and gathering crops, hunting and fishing for salmon and steelhead trout. Their population was speculated to be near 5,000 and their lands stretched from Marin to southern Sonoma county and Bodega Bay.

With the encroachment by Spanish settlers and missionaries and the creation of Missions San Francisco de Asis and San Rafael, the native population became depleted to 300 by 1848 and 60 by 1880. The principle cause for their demise became their exposure to European diseases, which their immune systems could not resist. The remains of a settlement and the burial site of their leader Chief Marin were unearthed near the juncture of Sycamore and Locust Streets in Mill Valley.

With the ascension of the Mexican government, which wrested their independence from Spain, the missions were closed. The new government divided the region into two separate land grants in the 1830s.

Over the subsequent two centuries, the region would evolve into upscale suburban enclaves with Mount Tamalpais looming prominently in the background. One might easily imagine an earlier rustic landscape clotted with dense forests. Corte de Madera is translated from the Spanish into a place where wood is cut and Mill Valley was renowned for its celebrated sawmill. The structure still remains along Mill Creek.

Within the tenure of this photography project, I had the opportunity to witness the duality of each waterway's existence. For most of the year, the creeks remain

docile and placidly flowing. When I began photographing, California was in the midst of a devastating five-year drought. Water levels had recessed to dangerously low stages.

During March 2016, forecasted El Nino rains drenched Marin County for a ten-day period with steady and substantial rains. This followed a February with no rainfall. The sluggish creeks suddenly swelled and an abrupt surge radically transformed their appearance. The calm streams resembled raging rivers. The crystalline waters became muddied by sediment. Nature had reawakened from five years of dormancy and draught.

During this stretch, excess floodwaters fortunately did not materialize. One day they ultimately will as they have for generations and centuries. These untamable bodies of water cannot be fully constricted within the confines of city planning and construction development. Portions flow under commercial and residential structures and offer residents an alluring picturesque view. The pleasure is tempered by an uneasy truce once torrential rains resume.

Each creek seems uniquely distinct and many sustain foliage and fauna that augment the splendor. Most are easily accessible and feature adjacent hiking trails. Sections remain concealed by private property constructions.

The Marin waterways are a poignant reminder that no matter how resolute mankind attempts to subdue nature, the temporarily vanquished will ultimately prevail.



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