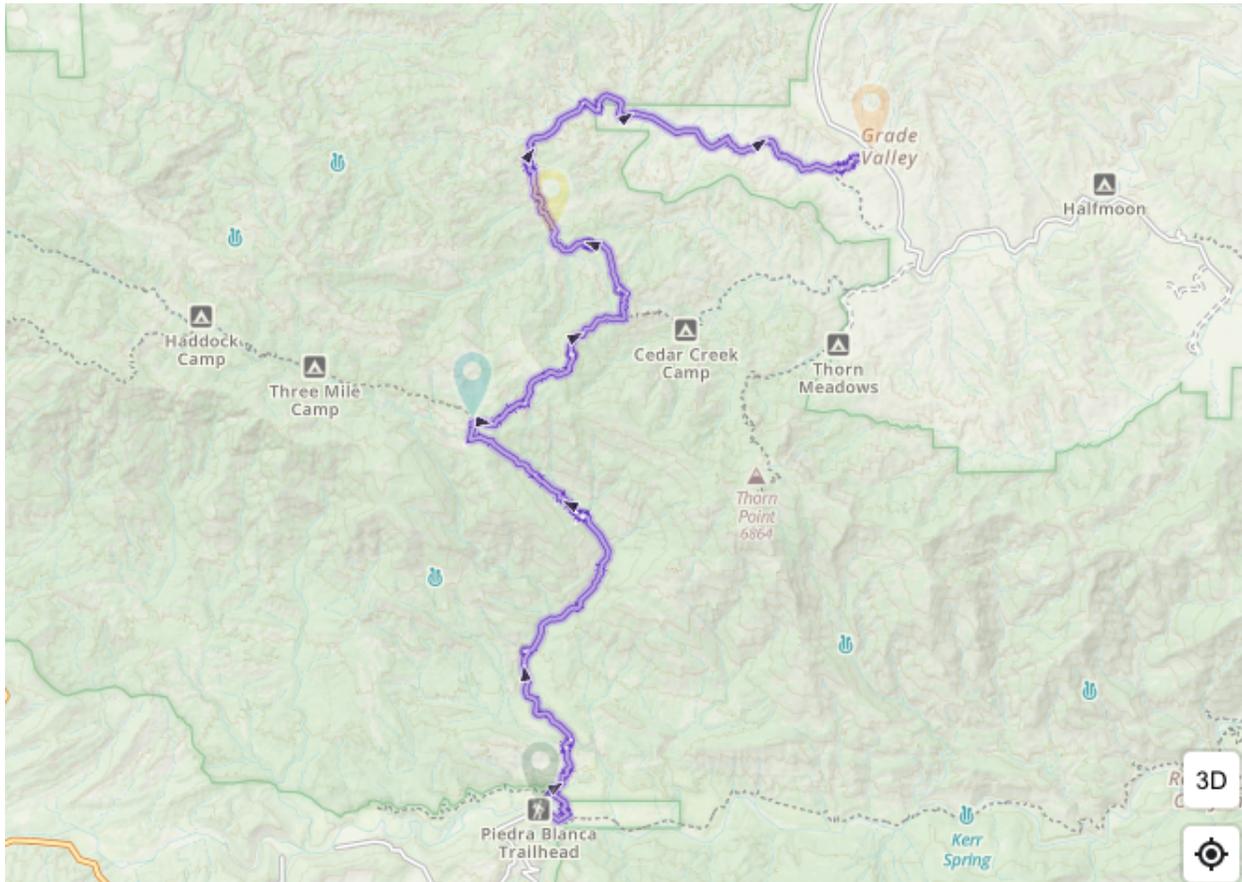


FALL 2021

PORTAL / PASSAGE

Sespe Wilderness, Los Padres National Forest, Ojai CA



Description

This trip explores the feeling of entering a separate time-space; delineated, and lifted off the familiar world. In the mountains, we tune to the sensation of descending deep canyons, moving vertically through changes in an ecosystem that seem to stack layer upon layer like a sedimentary clock. We peer into the otherworldliness of a round pool, like a mirror that holds another side. What occurs within these boundaries? A transformation? A rite of passage? An encounter? Mountain spaces - clearings, crevices, passes, and peaks - appear as portals to these kinds of events throughout literature and myth. Threshold devices. Where, and how, do we enter? How do we know we are there? Can we know we are there? Do we ever find it, or are we always only looking?

Trip Details

The Sespe Wilderness and our particular route were chosen for markers that might signal entry into a portal or themselves be portals; ethereal white rocks, fishbowls of water carved in stone, and a point-to-point journey that is itself a passage from one place to another. We will begin at Piedra Blanca Trailhead and hike 16 miles over 3 days, culminating at Fishbowls Trailhead. Helpful information about the area and current conditions can be found [here](#) or [here](#).

Itinerary

Day 1	Meet at Piedra Blanca trailhead at 11 am. Hike to Pine Mountain Lodge Camp area and set up camp.	6.5 mi
Day 2	Hike from Pine Mountain Lodge to Fishbowls area via Cedar Creek Trail. Set up camp at Fishbowls and explore, reflect, talk etc.	4 mi
Day 3	Hike out to shuttle vehicles via Fishbowls Trail. Drive back to cars at Piedra Blanca Trailhead.	5.5 mi

[View Map](#)

Total Mileage: 16 mi

Total Elevation: 4,500 ft (3,400 ft elevation gain on Day 1)

Difficulty: Easy to moderate. Mileage each day is manageable, though Day 1 will involve a steady climb. Some sections of trail may be overgrown and/or exposed. A few minor stream crossings may be required.

Expected Conditions:

- **Weather** - Days in the upper 70s and nights in the upper 40s. Some sections of trail could be hot and exposed, especially on Day 1. Sun protection (UV hats, clothing, sunscreen, etc) is advised.
- **Trail** - Easy terrain for the most part. Possibly overgrown in areas. Long pants and sleeves advised.
- **Water** - Between the Piedra Blanca Creek and Piru Creek, we will have ample water sources available along the hike. Streams at both Pine Mountain Lodge and Fishbowls should be flowing.
- **Gear Considerations** - You'll want*:
 - Long pants and sleeves (lightweight)
 - Sun protection
 - Layers for chillier nights
 - BEAR CAN - this is an active bear area!
 - Trekking poles
 - Water purification system

* Please let us know if you have any questions about gear, or would like a tip for obtaining or borrowing something!

Getting to the Trailhead

- Meet up at [Piedra Blanca Trailhead](#) by 10:30 am

Christina and Sophia will be leaving cars at Fishbowls Trailhead to shuttle us back to the starting point (a 1.5 hour drive) on Sunday.

- Permits - you will need an Adventure Pass to leave your car at Piedra Blanca for the weekend. Available at REI or any of [these vendors](#).