

The West Coast

California – Part 4

I have two more stops in California planned - the Redwoods and Mt Shasta. After leaving MacKerricher State Park I drive north on Route 1 along the coast and enjoy views of the Pacific and coastline cliffs and then head east into forested areas. It's a long day of driving – the road is winding and I'm climbing in elevation. I drive through Humboldt Redwoods State Park and arrive at my campground on the Avenue of the Giants.

The name fits the area. The trees are giants although I don't think they are as large as the sequoias. There are side roads to pull into and I explore one that gives me access to the Eel River. I spend one day visiting Rockefeller Redwood Forest, enjoying a leisurely walk among the giants. Local artists show their carving talents, and I visit a few of the designated trees. The Immortal tree is located at my campground and is estimated to be 950 – 1000 years old. The Eternal Tree House is built in the trunk of a tree and the room is big enough to walk around in. Photos include Eel River, Rockefeller Redwood Forest, carvings, tree house.



A few days among the giants comes to an end and it's time to continue my trek north. My last stop in California is in the Mt Shasta area. I've spent a little more than a month in California and there is so much more to see. This is a huge state!

My route to Mt Shasta takes me through the Whiskeytown National Recreation area and I enjoy my lunch with a beautiful view of Whiskeytown Lake. Some interesting facts about Whiskeytown Lake – there is a line of bouys stretching across the lake and one immediately thinks it's to prevent boaters from getting too close to swimmers. But that is not the purpose of the line. Attached to the line is a plastic curtain that drops about 100 feet below the water surface. The purpose is to keep the warm water away from the cold water which has been directed to the bottom of the lake by another curtain. The cold water at the bottom of the lake continues to flow bound for the Sacramento River. The purpose of this effort is to save the Chinook Salmon spawning grounds in the Sacramento River which require water temperatures below 56 degrees to survive.

I reach I-5 and soon Mt Shasta dominates the view. It's located on the southern end of the Cascades and is the fifth highest peak in California at over 14 thousand feet. It's early June and snow still covers the upper elevations. I'm told that snow levels are down and the southern part of the state will not get relief from the drought. I'm camping at a resort on Lake Siskiyou and it has everything - restaurant, beach, full hookup and cable tv. Too bad I'm only here 2 nights. I explored the town of Mt Shasta and enjoyed the farmers market that was open. It was a small market but there was a nice variety of vendors. I filled up my basket and headed back to camp to prepare for my next day's journey which would take me into Oregon. Photos include Mt Shasta from I-5, Whiskeytown Lake, view of Mt Shasta at Lake Siskiyou campground, Farmers market.

