

CAMPING/ Many spots in Monterey County

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Fremont Peak State Park's campground features 25 primitive campsites. Plus, nearby hikes offer scenic views of the Salinas Valley and the Monterey Bay.

One of Fremont Peak's highlights is its observatory, which features a 30-inch telescope.

The observatory hosts evening astronomy programs open to the public on various evenings.

Even closer is the Laguna Seca Recreation Area, which can be reached in 20 minutes for most people.

You're not going to have the ocean views of other campgrounds, but there are scenic views of the Salinas Valley. Or, spend the day at the Rifle and Pistol Range.

Another of the closest places to access is Veteran's Memorial Park in Monterey.

It's a good choice for kids or those who want a night or two outside the house without getting too far away from civilization. The view of the bay is a nice one, but campers also are only about a mile from downtown Monterey.

The park has 40 campsites, a playground and access to the Huckleberry Hill Nature Preserve.

"They get to see the backside of the presidio," said senior parks maintenance worker Bob Gordon of the hikes through the nature preserve.

"If you go to the top of Huckleberry Hill, there's a great view of the bay. When you hike it's very woodsy and you don't feel like you're close to the city. Once you get to a certain point, you don't see anybody."

And the park's proximity to the city, although convenient, is still far enough so that visitors aren't likely to experience honking cars and crowds of people.

"It's absolutely gorgeous up here," Gordon said. "We don't have to deal with a bunch of

ONLINE

A sampling of Web sites for camping spots in the Monterey County area:

n **PFEIFFER BIG SUR STATE PARK**, Big Sur, 667-2315

www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=570

n **ANDREW MOLERA STATE PARK**, Big Sur, 667-2315

www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=582

n **JULIA PFEIFFER BURNS STATE PARK**, Big Sur, 667-2315

www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=578

n **FERNWOOD RESORT**, Big Sur, 667-2422

www.fernwoodbigsur.com

n **LIMEKILN STATE PARK**, Big Sur, 667-2403

www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=577

n **LAGUNA SECA RECREATION AREA**, Salinas, 755-4899

www.co.monterey.ca.us/parks/laguna_seca.htm

n **VETERAN'S MEMORIAL PARK**, Monterey, 646-3865

www.monterey.org/rec/vetspark.html

n **PINNACLES CAMPGROUND INC.**, Paicines, 389-4462

www.pinnacamp.com

n **LAKE SAN ANTONIO**, Bradley, (805) 472-2311

www.lakesanantonio.net

n **FREMONT PEAK STATE PARK**, San Juan Bautista, 623-4255

www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=564

n **MANRESA STATE BEACH**, Aptos, 761-1795

www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=545

n **NEW BRIGHTON STATE BEACH**, Capitola, 464-6330

www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=542

n **SUNSET STATE BEACH CAMPGROUND**, Watsonville, 763-7063

www.santacruzstateparks.org/parks/sunset/index.php

traffic or people yelling or screaming."



THE SALINAS CALIFORNIAN FILE PHOTO

Tents abound at Laguna Seca during the Spirit West Coast music festival in July 2003.

Contact Leslie Escobar at lescobar@thecalifornian.com.

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