



MOJAVE DESERT PRESERVE

Teutonia Peak Trail

KELSO, CALIFORNIA

Hiking Time: 2 hours

M ▲

Dogs are not allowed on Joshua Tree National Park trails but no worries! **Here in the dog-friendly Mojave Desert Preserve the Teutonia Peak Trail spends more than half its 1.7-mile distance in the densest concentration of Joshua trees on the planet.** The oddly shaped member of the Yucca family, whose uplifted branches caused Mormon settlers to saddle the tree with its Biblical name, grows so thickly on the Cima Dome that it resembles an orchard.

The trail pushes pleasantly towards the foot of 5,755-foot Teutonia Peak. Before Seaman begins the 700-foot climb to the rocky summit the trail passes a silver mine that was worked in the 1890s before being abandoned. The mine shaft is covered by an iron grate. The path up the mountain uses switchbacks and as you gain elevation the unique curvilinear horizon of the Cima Dome takes shape in the distance to the southwest. There is no shade, so plan your canine hike here accordingly.

Speaking of no shade, in the southern part of the preserve are the Kelso Dunes, the largest sand piles in the Mojave Desert. The main dune rises 650 feet and can be reached in 1.5 miles - all in soft sand. There are several neighboring dune summits for Seaman to aim for as well. To reach this giant sandbox for requires navigation of a graded three-mile dirt road that is two-wheel drive friendly. The four-wheel drive will be welcome on the dunes.



PETRIFIED FOREST NATIONAL PARK

all paved trails

PETRIFIED FOREST, ARIZONA

Hiking Time: 2-3 hours

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"Please take your furry friends on trails, even backpacking in the wilderness area." That is not a misprint. That is straight from the park policy. Wow. It does not get any dog-friendlier at a national park than that. All 146 square miles of desert scrub and color-streaked badlands welcome your dog.

For canine hikers not that adventurous Petrified Forest offers three intriguing paved trails, each about one mile long. The *Blue Mesa Trail* descends into an amphitheater surrounded by banded coulees of bluish clay called bentonite. Rainwater is the brush that creates streaky patterns in the barren porous hills.

The Atlantic and Pacific Railroad built though the Painted Desert in the 1880s and profiteers rode the trains to the nation's largest field of petrified wood. They carried off specimens lying in the desert and dynamited the largest logs in search of quartz and purple amethyst crystals. The *Crystal Forest Trail* meanders through the remains of obliterated petrified logs, whose preservation led to the creation of the Petrified Forest in 1906.

Some of those prehistoric trees can be seen on the *Long Logs Path*. Extinct conifers form the largest concentration of petrified wood left in the park. The *Agate House Trail* leads up a slight rise to a reconstructed Anasazi Indian Pueblo built entirely of colorful petrified wood sealed with mud.