

## VENTURA

### Where to go when the surf's down

Imagine a sleepy mountain valley in southern California so incredible it was used as "Shangri-La" in the 1930's movie *Lost Horizon*. This valley, Ojai, is located only 15 miles inland on Highway 33 from Ventura.

The Ojai holds sandstone cliffs up to 80 feet high, and excellent boulders are scattered throughout the valley. The area is also home to some of the best mountain biking in southern California. Similar to that around Santa Barbara, Ojai's sandstone is generally steep and solid, although more edgy in nature. Crux moves tend to involve steep face holds and buttery slopers. Climbing season is year-round. Summer days are often too hot after 10 a.m., but it usually cools down enough for comfortable evening bouldering.

The Ojai has over 40 named climbs and at least 30 developed boulders; most climbing lies in the 5.9 to 5.11+ range. The highest concentration of routes is on The Foot, a crag at the top of Foothill Road. Reese Martin developed this crag while recovering from tendon injuries during the winter of 1986-87; also joining in were Bill Powers, Dale Buckstaff, and Steve Mrazek. Their heroic wire-brushing efforts resulted in 20 climbs equipped with solid fixed pins and 3/8-inch bolts, all placed on the lead.

The Ojai locals adhere to a strong ground-up ethic, and are committed to placing bombproof anchors. New routes are usually cleaned on rappel first, then led from the ground. Unsound bolts and fixed pro have been replaced with stout anchors placed on rappel.

All routes here are easily topoped; bring a second rope to tie off boulders for anchors. Don't miss *Chummin' For Splatter* (5.11b), *Ruthless Poodles* (5.10), or *Private Ojai* (5.11). Excellent bouldering and mountain biking surround the area.

While the crags and trails are on



Reese Martin on the Ventura River Wall.

Photo: Chuck Journey

U.S. Forest Service land, the upper end of Foothill Road is private, so please drive slowly and stick to the trails. When you park do not block access to driveways. Cars parked in stupid locations have been towed and such actions generate unneeded friction with the landowners.

The Thacher School area has fine bouldering and topoping in a very idyllic, private setting. Start at the Jameson boulderfield and explore the 20 or so boulders scattered about. The climbing is on Thacher School property and, while climbers are welcome, the owners request that you use colored chalk or none at all. Please drive slowly to avoid dust problems, respect all gates, and enjoy the magical sunsets.

For local surf/crag dogs, the Ventura River Wall is *the* place to hang. Located less than 600 feet from the ocean near Surfers Point, this pumper 250-foot traversing wall has moves ranging from 5.10 to 5.12+, with the highest holds less than ten feet off the deck.

The real rock holds, collected from climbing areas throughout the West (for good karma), are interspersed with Metolius holds. All holds are epoxied to the concrete rather than bolted in place to avoid any possibility of structural damage to the wall itself. The River Wall is a great place to boulder when the surf is flat, and to meet locals. Notorious local climbers-turned-surfdogs such as Jonny Woodward, Russ Clune, and Mark Robinson train here.

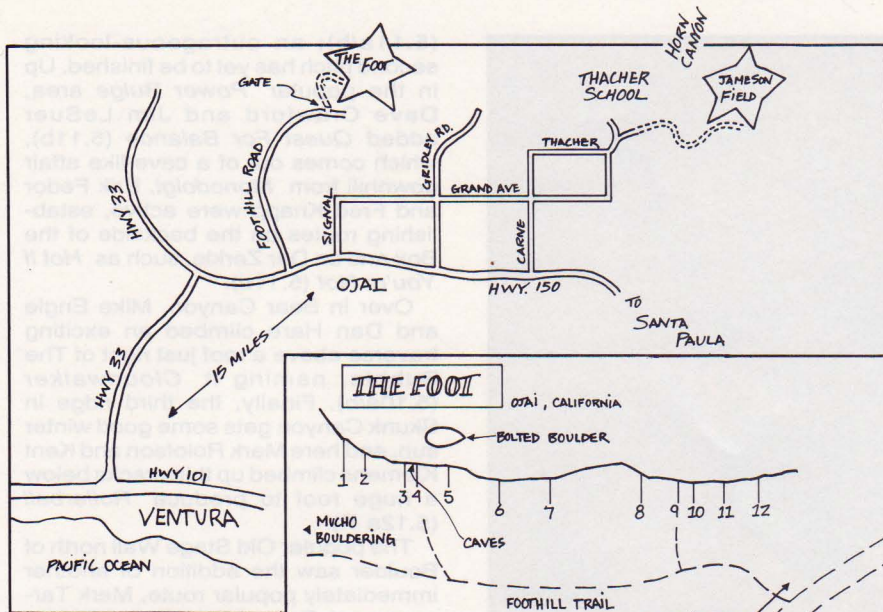
The Ventura River Wall is maintained by a loosely organized group known as the Ventura River Wall Association. They have dozens of new Entreprises holds to expand the existing wall, and for an additional wall, but they need money to buy glue. All donations will be used to maintain and expand this unique venue. Give them your money; they'll do the rest. Send donations to: Ventura River Wall Association, c/o Reese Martin-Russ Clune, 2436 Mohican Lane, Ventura, CA 93001.

— Reese Martin

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### OJAI VALLEY — THE FOOT

1. **K-Mart Kidnap** (5.8). Slab past cave, no pro. (FA: Reese Martin, 2/86.)
2. **In A Rut** (5.10d). 2 bolts. (Martin, 5/86.)
3. **Chummin' For Splatter** (5.11b). Roof w/ bizarre crux. 3 bolts, 2 pins. (FA: Steve Mrazek, Martin, 2/88.)
4. **I Love L.A.** (5.9 + R). 2 bolts, 2 pins. (FA: Bill Powers, Martin, 2/86.)
5. **Ruthless Poodles** (5.10b). 3 bolts, 2 pins. (FA: Martin, 5/86.)
6. **Clean Sweep** (5.9). 2 bolts. (FA: Tim Coates, Mike Moore, 1/87.)
7. **Sob Story** (5.8). 2 bolts. (FA: Martin, Dale Buckstaff, 3/87.)

8. **Overblown** (5.8). Roof. (FA: Martin, Steve Offerman, 12/86.)
9. **Moon Doggies** (5.8). Fun crack. (FA: Martin, solo, 2/86.)
10. **Private Ojai** (5.11). Thin face w/2 bolts. (FA: Martin, Powers, 12/86.)
11. **From The Ashes** (5.10b). Face to groove. 2 bolts. (FA: Martin, 1/87.)
12. **Watergroove** (5.9). No pro. (FA: Martin, solo, 1/87.)

## COLORADO

### FRONT RANGE

## Winter of discontent

A severe winter stifled activity in the Boulder region, while the Morrison bouldering area and Shelf Road have been the "hot spots." Many of the new routes reported here were actually squeezed in last year before the cold snap.

Up on Lumpy Ridge, a fine new line was added to Sundance Buttress; on the blunt arête between *Guillotine* and *Whiteman*, Topher Donahue, Diane Russell, and Sandy McKee found *Bosch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid* (5.12a), three pitches of sustained face climbing protected mostly by bolts.

In Eldorado Canyon, *Thunderbolts From Hell* (5.12a), put up by Gary Ringsby and Steven Dieckhoff, is said to be a good new offshoot from *Morning Thunder* on the West Ridge. It continues left along the lip of the large overhang instead of trending right on the thin crack.

Far from climbed out, the Flatirons yielded more of their secrets. In Fern Canyon, the west face of the Goose coughed up a strenuous flake/face climb to Richard Wright and Karen Kuddes. Wright came back later with Tarrant and free climbed *Cab*

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