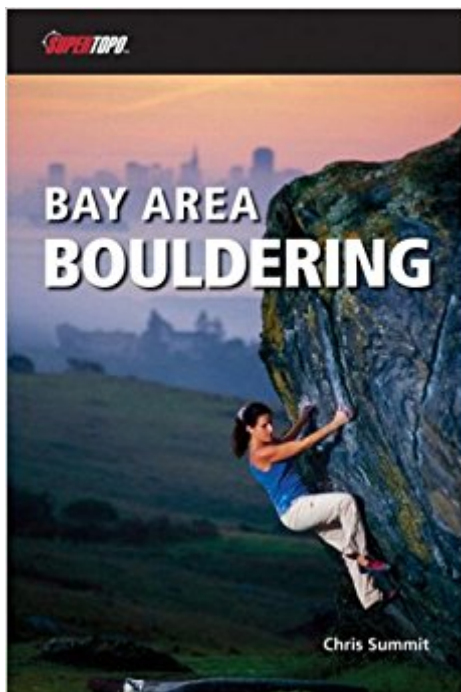


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Bay Area Bouldering 1/E (Supertopo)



Synopsis

Bay Area Bouldering includes over 600 boulder problems within a 1.5 hour drive of San Francisco. Included are over 30 areas from North Coast, South Bay, East Bay and San Francisco. All the classic spots are in this book: Castle Rock, Indian Rock, Mickey's Beach as well as a number of lesser known spots on the North Coast. Sandstone, Schist, Rhyolite, Basalt and Chert are the most prevalent types of stone and each offers a very unique experience. This book includes everything from cruiser jug hauls on sandy beaches to sloper wrestling in lush forests. Author Chris Summit personally climbed and mapped almost every route to ensure the accuracy of the information

Book Information

Series: Supertopo

Paperback: 144 pages

Publisher: Supertopo; 1st edition (May 19, 2010)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0976523531

ISBN-13: 978-0976523536

Product Dimensions: 9 x 6.1 x 0.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 13.6 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 3.6 out of 5 stars 7 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #567,365 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #9 inÂ Books > Travel > United States > California > San Francisco #63 inÂ Books > Sports & Outdoors > Mountaineering > Excursion Guides #154 inÂ Books > Sports & Outdoors > Extreme Sports

Customer Reviews

Chris Summit, 37 years young, was born to climb but didn't find out until he was about 17. A Northern California native, he started climbing and bouldering with his friends on the local crags, Sugarloaf, Goat Rock and Mt. St Helena and was instantly addicted. Since then his natural desire has evolved into a passionate obsession, changing his life forever for the better. In his 17 years of climbing, Chris wrote the small guidebook for his hometown crags called The Wine Country Rocks and worked at the three North Bay climbing gyms setting routes, belaying and teaching indoor and out. He is currently employed at the brand new Rockzilla gym in Napa. He has done many first ascents of sport climbs, traditional climbs and boulder problems all over Northern California. His appetite for new, high quality, unique, and challenging rocks to climb used to drive him to travel far and wide. Now he travels less because he has found that what he is looking for is usually close to

his front door.

First of all let me say that I've been overall pleased with this book. It contains descriptions of several areas to climb around the bay and several routes per area. The down side is in the specificity and variability. Some areas documented have very clear directions for access and clear maps and pictures describing the location of the problems. The description of other areas is lacking in terms of finding the spot and the routes. The book, at the very least, got me out bouldering and pointed me to a few spots I didn't know but in some cases the routes documented eluded me. Having a reference like this is convenient but with the rise of route tracking sites online there are an increasing number of free methods to guide you bouldering. Overall I'm a fan of guide books and compared to some parts of the country where a guide is a photocopy of a hand drawn map from 25 years ago I think this does the job. You may, however, need to augment it with additional research and local knowledge.

I had read that this is considered one of the go-to resources for Bay Area bouldering routes. While it does have many routes, I'm really disappointed by the way they're described. Many times all you get is a single short sentence describing where the entire boulder is, and often no pictures at all. This can be very confusing in areas with many boulders. Routes rarely have pictures, and often if they do the route is denoted by an arrow indicating that it's on the other side of the pictured rock. With so little pictures, I might hope for descriptive words, but those often aren't there either. Overall, if you can get it for a low price and are into bouldering, it can't hurt to have. But I would get it only as an addition to the collection once you already have *Bay Area Rock - Climbing and Bouldering in the San Francisco Bay Area*, which I consider to be a much more descriptive -- albeit more restricted -- resource.

What I was looking for is a picture of each and every one of the problems. Obviously, that's quite hard. It's kinda hard to find the exact problems when a lot are in the same rock. So far, it's been more useful to talk to people in the area.

This guide is poorly produced and doesn't make it easy to find crags or specific problems. Take a look at the first entry for Salt Point. Cool, there's apparently 100+ problems here! Well, we're given the names and ratings of three problems for the Fisk Mill Cove Boulders. No pictures of where on the rock these climbs correspond to, no diagram, just some uninformative names. And it's not for lack of space, since opposite this section is a full-page picture of Kevin Jorgensen climbing in the

sunset and an inset photo of some guy climbing some unspecified problem. Finding the actual parking spot for some of these places can be difficult unless you have a GPS device or remember to check your odometer 25 miles away from the place of interest. Furthermore, some climbs have a line superimposed on a picture of the rock, many more are just a number on an overhead map of the area, and others are just not shown anywhere. Overall, this book is just a little better than piecing together free information from the internet.

Pros: Covers a lot of areas, many I would not have known about had it not been for picking up this book. Cons: The descriptions of each route is hardly adequate. A half sentence describing a sit start somewhere in front of me is not always enough to repeat the specified line. I found Jim Thornburg's 'Bay Area Rock: Climbing + Bouldering' to be much closer to what I wanted from my guidebook. It has many more and I find better photos, as well as lines drawn onto the photos.

Chris Summit's new Bay Area Bouldering Guide covers all of the major bouldering spots in the San Francisco Bay Area, but also provides descriptions of less familiar, but just as high-quality areas along the North Coast. Of course, familiar long-developed areas like Castle Rock State Park, Aquarian Valley, Stinson Beach, Indian Rock, and Glen Canyon are included, but such pristine new spots as Salt Point, Twin Coves and Marshall Gulch can be found here as well. This volume should inspire a new generation of boulderers to continue expanding on the work of their illustrious predecessors. As with other guidebooks from SuperTopo, there are many all-color illustrations, topographics and maps that make it extremely easy to find your way around one of the most popular, major bouldering meccas in the United States.

Chris Summit's BAY AREA BOULDERING includes over 700 boulder problems with in a 1.5 hour drive of San Francisco, from coastal to inland challenges. Over 50 color photos of the Bay Area's best includes not only topos and detailed descriptions for each problem, but tips on where to eat and stay around the destinations.

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