

Hike: Calico Hills Loop - closed loop
Trailhead: Calico Basin - marked
Distance: 4 miles
Elevation gain: +1,300 feet (accumulative)
Elevation peak: none
Time: 2 to 3 hours
Difficulty: 2
Danger level: 2
How easy to follow: 3
Children: yes, if experienced hikers
Map: La Madre, MTN See Page 5
Fee: None
Waypoints: See Page 4

Directions: From the Mirage on Las Vegas Boulevard (the Strip) go north three miles and turn left (west) onto Charleston Boulevard. Drive 12.5 miles on Charleston and turn right onto the signed Calico Basin road. Drive 1.1 miles and turn left into the parking lot. If it's not opened, park alongside the road. As of 11-14-05 the parking is still closed, should open soon.

Overview: The route heads west to a saddle. It then descends and heads east traveling in a wash and on the Grand Circle trail. The route drops back into the wash, heads north, and descends back to the trailhead.

Comments: This hike has everything: rock scrambling, a trail, great scenery, and no entrance fee. You do not access the Scenic Loop Road.



Photo 1

The hike is one of the best level 2 hikes in Red Rock Canyon. Once on the south side of Calico Hills, you will see a lot of people if hiking during the popular seasons. **Do not attempt this hike during or just after a rainstorm.**

The Hike: The hike starts along the right side of the parking lot. (See Photo 1.) Your **first destination** is the saddle in

Photo 2. *It's about one mile*



Photo 2

the gully. Before reaching the saddle, the gully flattens temporarily. At the saddle, you get a good view of White

away and a 700-foot ascent. Follow any of the paths that head toward the saddle. The paths eventually merge into one main trail. Photo 3 shows a closer view of the saddle. The grade increases as you follow a vague path along the left side of the gully below the saddle. You'll encounter some Class 2 sections in



Photo 3

Rock Hills Peak, the Scenic Loop Drive, and the Grand Circle Trail.

Your **next destination** is the crag in Photo 4. *It's a third of a mile away and you'll lose about 300 feet in elevation.* Follow any of the numerous paths down the gully trying to avoid brush as you descend. The terrain flattens and there's a catch basin with water just to the south (left) of the crag in Photo 4. Continue west to the crag in Photo 5. Now the route heads south. Follow a path south (left) just before the crag. Continue on the path 30 yards to a wash. Hike SE (left) in the wash. (See Photo 6.) You are now on the south side of Calico Hills.

Your **next destination** is Calico Hills 1 Overlook. *It's one mile away and you'll ascend 350 feet, but lose over 500 feet.* Along this part of the hike you'll either hike in the wash or parallel the wash all the way to Calico Hills 1



Photo 4

Overlook. After the first 100 yards in the wash, you'll see Calico Hills II Overlook up the hill to your right. Once you see the Overlook, look for a path on the right side and follow it up and down back into the wash. It avoids brush in the wash. Once back in the wash, walk 40 yards on a large slab of red sandstone to the unsigned Grand Circle trail (GCT). Do not expect a well-defined trail.

As you start on the GCT a line of rocks on the right side outlines it. In 50 yards the trail gives way to another slab of sandstone. When the GCT resumes, it curves to the left and climbs a class II chute. In another 40 yards follow the trail up sandstone steps. Veer left and walk up a steep sandstone ramp. Once at the top of the ramp, Calico Hills I Overlook comes into view. Follow the GCT a few yards to another steep slab of sandstone. Hike



Photo 5

west (you almost turn 180 degrees here) up the slab. At the top of the slab the trail continues SE. The trail soon descends and crosses the wash. Continue SE to Calico Hills 1 Overlook.

Your **next destination** is a path, which leads down into the wash. Go left onto the Calico Hill 1 Overlook trail and follow it 30 yards to a wooden fence. Just beyond

the fence two boulders form a tunnel. (See Photo 7.) Descend through the tunnel and follow a path down the



Photo 6

slope to a prominent trail.

Your **final destination** is the trailhead, which *lies about two-thirds of a mile away. You gain 165 feet, but lose 375 feet during this final stretch.* Continue on the prominent trail. It will eventually drop into the wash. Hike through the wash (minimal class 2 climbing here). When you see telephone lines off in the distance, look for a path along the left side of the wash. Follow the path a few hundred yards where you intersect an old jeep trail. Head west (left) 100 yards to the ridge. The parking lot is visible from the top of the ridge. Follow the trail down to the parking lot.



Photo 7

Location	Waypoint	Distance	Elevation change
1.Trailhead	36 8 46.36 N	0	0
2. Saddle	115 25 6.05 W 36 9 12.47 N	1.0	+ 700 feet
3. Turn	115 25 53.47 W 36 9 19.91 N	0.33	- 300 feet
4. Calico Hills TH	115 26 11.97 W 36 8 48.12 N	1.0	+ 350 / -500
Trailhead	115 25 44.60 W 36 8 46.36 N	.66	+165 feet - 375 feet
	115 25 6.05 W		

