



Free Tour Options – On Your Own -- Wednesday, July 22, 2009

In the event you choose to spend the afternoon on your own, here are a couple of free options, one within walking distance and one with a \$15 cab ride. Both options should be very exciting and informative.

OPTION 1:

Walking Excursion to Vista Hermosa Park

[The hotel is situated at 4th and Figueroa. Total walking distance: 8 long blocks]

Website: www.lamountains.com/parks.asp?parkid=672

Park Address: 100 N. Toluca Street

For More Information: (213) 250-1100

Vista Hermosa Park is

a 10 acre neighborhood park in north-western central downtown, located on an old oil field and known earthquake fault. Designed as a "mountain watershed experience", features include a waterfall and stream, oak trees, trails, meadow, children's

play area and outdoor amphitheater. A highlight is the permeable parking lot that drains into a 20,000 gallon underground cistern. This is the first new park in downtown Los Angeles since 1895. It was a joint project developed by the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority and the LA Unified School District.



OPTION2:

Visit the Audubon Center at Ernest Debs Park

[The hotel is situated at 4th and Figueroa. Total distance: 5 miles. A cab ride is \$15 one-way]

Website: www.laparks.org/dos/parks/facility/ernestEDebsPk.htm

Park Address: 4700 North Griffin Avenue

General Information: (323) 221-2255

Ernest Debs Park is 15 acres of trails and the 5,000 sq. ft. Audubon Center. The Audubon Center building was the first in the nation to receive a "Platinum" rating from the US Green Council for its use of all natural materials and being "off the grid" utilizing solar systems for all its energy needs. A number of small mammals, lizards, butterflies, and birds can be observed in this oasis within the city. Habitats include restored chaparral, grassland, and riparian communities.



[CLICK HERE](#) to view an article from the LA Times on how this beautiful \$15 million park was developed on top of old oil fields, an earthquake fault and what had become a weed-infested, dusty lot.

Sources: ESRI, TeleAtlas

MARK HAFFER Los Angeles Times