

# Where to Walk in Nevada City and Nearby Areas: 5 Local Favorites

By Valerie Moberg



*Nevada City and the surrounding area is made for walking and trails abound. Most are easily accessible, a short drive from Nevada City, and can be easily navigated in street shoes. Whether you're a history buff, bird-watcher, photographer, or all around lover of nature, you'll find it on the trails in Nevada City and the surrounding area.*

**Hirschman Trail** is the newest addition to the trail scene. A mile from the heart of downtown Nevada City, the 2.4 mile trail gives young and old a chance to enjoy nature. Named after the Hirschman brothers who were pioneer miners and merchants, the pond is the dynamic centerpiece of the area's natural beauty. A map of the trail can be obtained through the Bear Yuba Land Trust website: [www.bylt.org](http://www.bylt.org).

**If you like the idea of hiking where it's flat, then the Cascade Canal Trail** is for you. Located between Grass Valley and Nevada City at the corner of Banner Lava Cap and Gracie Rd., the trail borders the Nevada Irrigation District (NID) canals. Although there are several ditch trails, this particular trail is one of the most popular. If you're adventurous, you can walk the entire 4.25 miles and back, or you can take advantage of the half-mile and mile markers and choose the length of your destination. A map of the Cascade Canal Trail is available through the Bear Yuba Land Trust.

**Looking for a trail that is wheelchair accessible?** You'll want to go to the South Yuba Independence Trail, which is located on Highway 49, just 5.5 miles north of Nevada City. Wheelchair accessible for 1.5 miles in each direction of the trailhead, the trail follows the path of the Excelsior Canal which was built during the Gold Rush. The best part of this gently sloping hike is the always spectacular view of the Yuba River. A map of this trail can be found through the California Department of Parks and Recreation at [http://www.parks.gov/?page\\_id=25343](http://www.parks.gov/?page_id=25343).

If you love history, the Nevada County Historical Society has put together a brochure of self-guided walks through museums, exhibits and historical sites of both Nevada City and neighboring Grass Valley. Highlights of Nevada City include the National Hotel (which is reputed to be haunted), the Nevada Theater (the oldest theater in California), the Railroad Museum, and Pioneer Park. In Grass Valley you will see the North Star Mining Museum and Pelton Wheel Exhibit, Empire Mine State Park (which has several miles of hiking trails), Lola Montez House, and St. Joseph's Chapel. **You can pick up a copy of the Golden History brochure at The Broad Street Inn at 517 West Broad Street.**

The Empire Mine State Historic Park has approximately 14 miles of walking trails that are open year-round from sunrise to sunset. One of the most popular hikes is the Hardrock Trail and Osborn Hill Loop, which goes around the Empire Mine site as well as several other smaller mine sites. As you walk be sure to look for old foundations and rusted machinery that were a part of hardrock mining history. **Trail maps are available at the Visitor Center** at 10791 East Empire Street, Grass Valley. Everything you need to know about Empire Mine State Historic Park can be found on their website: <http://www.empiremine.org>.

Valerie Moberg is the proprietor of the historic Broad Street Inn, and the go-to person for information about Nevada City. Built in 1870, Broad Street Inn is a small, family-owned, eco-friendly green business that prides itself on providing comfortable accommodations at affordable rates. Located in the heart of historic downtown Nevada City, this Victorian inn offers six contemporary rooms and a peaceful garden setting just a short walk from downtown Nevada City's great shops, restaurants, theaters, and wineries. For more information about the Broad Street Inn and the Nevada City area, contact Valerie by phone (530.265.2239) or email ([info@broadstreetinn.com](mailto:info@broadstreetinn.com)) or on the Web: <http://www.broadstreetinn.com>.