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**Calistoga California – Napa Valley  
Oat Hill Road (Strong Intermediate to Advanced)**



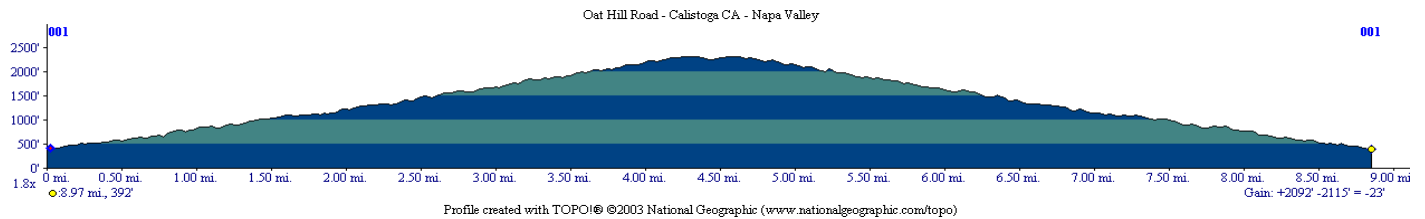
Focus on You Photography  
Down Hill From China Camp  
Oat Hill Road – Calistoga, CA. – Napa Valley

From St. Helena, Ca., follow Hwy 29 north to Calistoga, CA. Continue on Hwy 29 through the town of Calistoga. Highway 29 will cross over from the west side of the valley to the east side of the valley directly through Calistoga. Once through Calistoga and on the east side of the valley you will come to a 4 way stop sign intersection. The start of the trail is in the dirt parking directly east of the stop sign. At this intersection, Hwy. 29 heads left to the north, and Silverado Trail goes to the right, south. This intersection is the start of the trail. It heads due east into the hills from the dirt parking lot. This is one of the most attention demanding trails I have ridden with 2092 feet of climbing in 4.5 miles. Don't get me wrong, it was a blast, just challenging. The trail starts as a narrow single track, then opens up almost into jeep road wide. It is very rocky, but the rocks are smaller baseball size for the first 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the ride. The last 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the ride is very technical. The path you are riding on looks like lava flow rock. There is little to no dirt, and is more like trials riding uphill than actual riding. There are many rock steps, and rock cracks that have to be negotiated perfectly or you have to walk. At most an advanced rider will

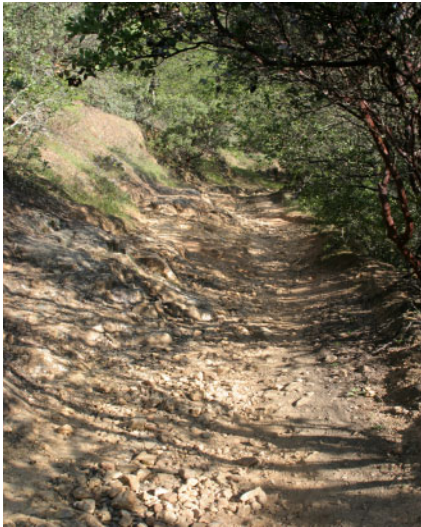
have to walk a couple of sections, but then jump right back on the bike and continue on. I rode the entire trail on a Cannondale Scalpel that normally has 3" of travel. I made the mistake of riding almost all the trip with the suspension locked out. I only had 3 miles left when I finally woke up and turned on my suspension. This also goes to show how mentally demanding this trail is. You are always looking for the clear line on this ride. You are constantly negotiating rocks, cracks, step ups, and step downs. There are very few sections of this trail that let up. My problem was that I was so concentrated on my line that I did not even realize that my suspension was locked out.

## Oat Hill Road (Red Trail)

**4.1 miles 1690 ft. total elevation gain (Intermediate)**



From the dirt parking at the intersection of Hwy 29 and Silverado Trail, head left up the single



track. This trail starts out fairly narrow. Continue up the single track and in about 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of a mile the trail will open up into almost jeep road wide. Here the trail starts to get rocky, take a look at the picture on the left. This trail is a one way trail only. It just climbs and climbs with some cut off single track trails that come in from the turns above. The down hillers use these cut off's. From the start, follow the trail uphill for 3.8 miles and 1412 feet of climbing. Here you are about 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the way to the top of the climb.

This is a good place to get off of the bike and take a look at the Palisade cliffs above. This is also a great place to get off the bike and take a drink of water and maybe a little food.

The trail to this point has been fairly demanding and has given little time to take your hands off of the bars to go for some water. From this one flat overlook, the trail gets very interesting. The trail from here to the top is almost entirely lava flow rocks, see the picture below. There is little to no dirt on the trail, just rock. There are many step-up's, cracks, and off camber sections. You have to have the perfect speed, not too fast to get pushed around, but not too slow to get stopped by the cracks and drops. It is very challenging, but clearable. One of the most interesting historical notes to this ride are the wagon wheel ruts cut into the rock trail, see the picture to the right. As you follow the trail you will see the ruts in the rock all the way up to the summit. So, just remember, in the 1800s, during the





gold rush days, others did this trail in wagons. It is hard enough on a bike, I can't imagine doing this trail in a wagon. So, from the saddle, follow the trail mostly east for another 0.7 miles and another 500 feet of climbing up nothing but rock. Once at the saddle the trail splits 4 ways. Back the way you came, which is what I did, right which will take you back down to Silverado Trail.



I'm told that this trail is very technical as well. To the left is the Palisade Trail. Here I'm told that the trail is more of a hiking trail, not a biking trail, and am also told that bikes are not allowed. I did not see any signs, but check with the local Forest Service station first. Then lastly, the trail heads straight to the east and you can follow that one for miles. I followed the trail straight east for about 2 more miles. The trail was more like the lower section, and easier than what you just rode over. No matter which trail you take, be careful and

attentive for hikers. This is a multi use trail, and a shared trail keeps it open for everyone. Enjoy and watch for the fillings to be shaken from your mouth.



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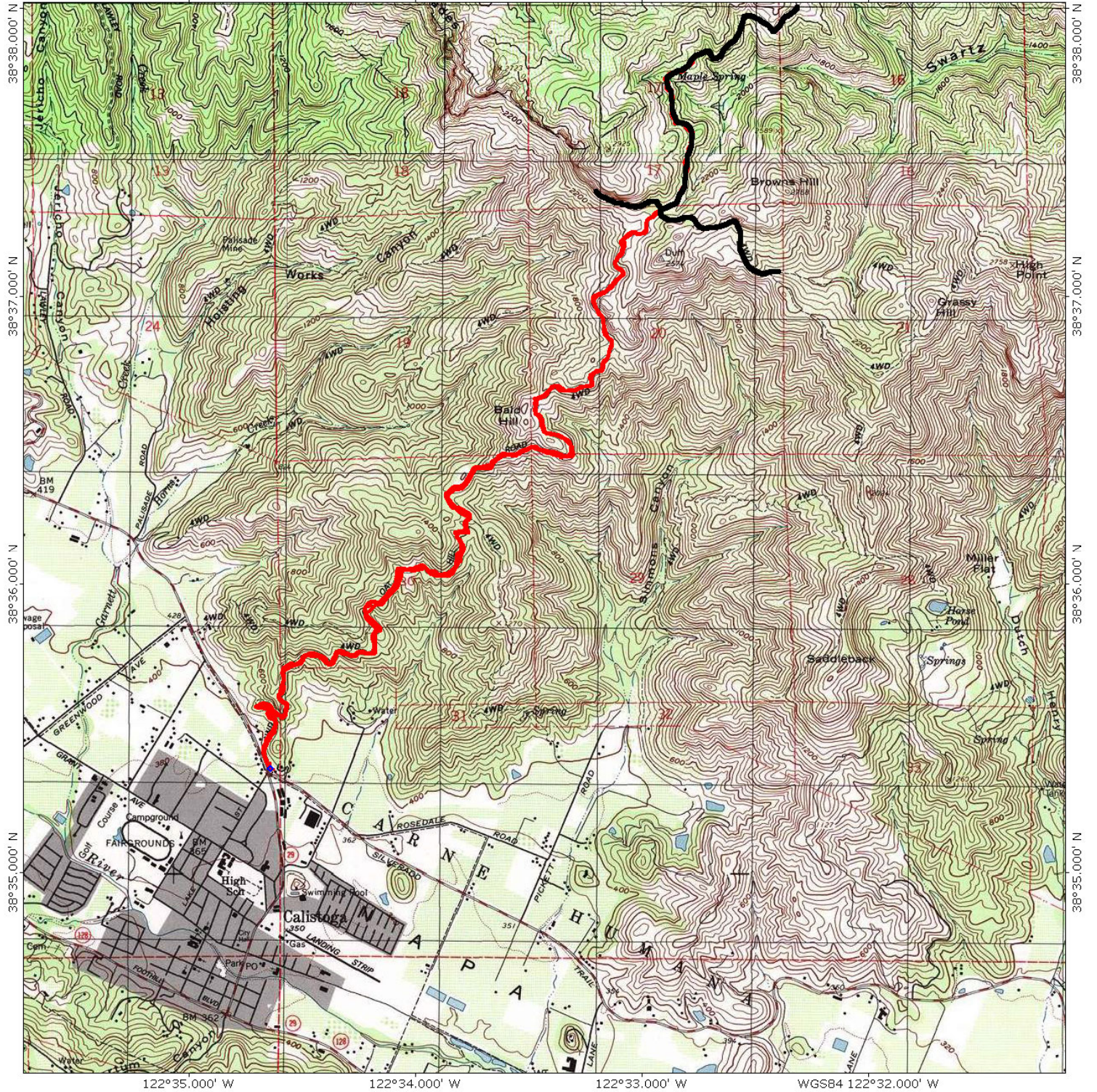
TOPO! map printed on 04/10/07 from "Oak Hill Road - Napa Valley - Calistoga.tpo"

122°35.000' W

122°34.000' W

122°33.000' W

WGS84 122°32.000' W



TN 154°

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