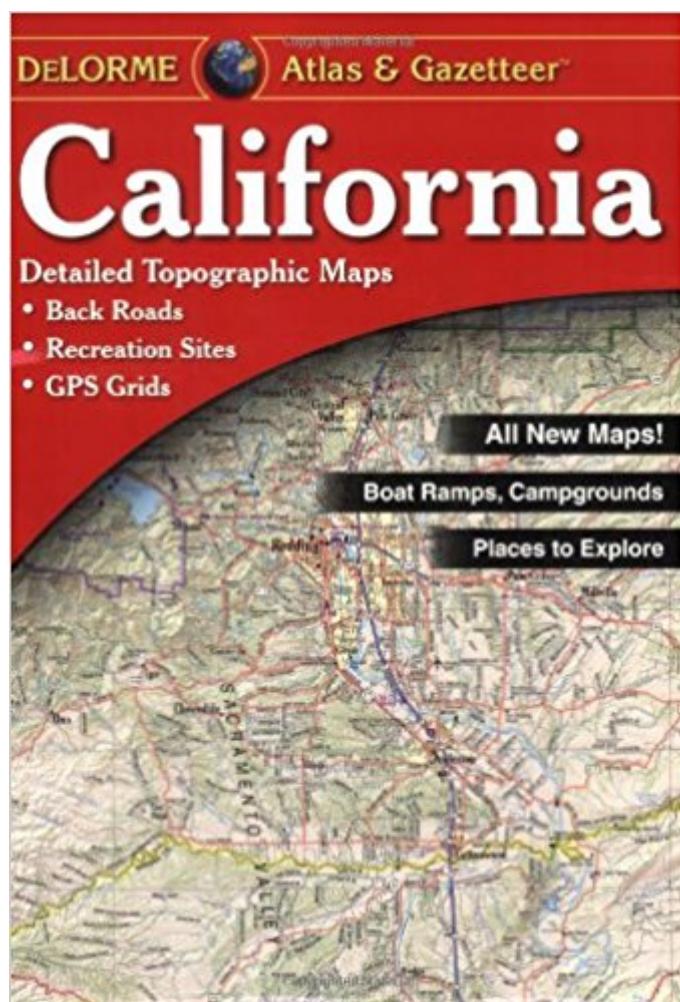


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California Atlas & Gazetteer (Delorme Atlas & Gazetteer Series)



Synopsis

Wouldn't it be nice to always have exactly the right kind of map, whatever your needs may be? You will, with the uniquely versatile DeLorme Atlas & Gazetteer Series. These topographic atlases cover individual states with the most comprehensive detail available, including back roads, backwater lakes and streams, boat ramps, forests, wetlands, trailheads, campgrounds, public lands, prime hunting and fishing spots, and countless landmarks and points of interest. You'll also find a wealth of information on everything from family outings to wilderness adventures. The Atlas & Gazetteer is ideal for outdoor recreation, business travel, home or office reference, and countless other uses.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Being the owner of a number of Delorme Atlas & Gazetteer's, I was replacing a worn out Northern California version. This edition, covering all of California is the replacement for both of the older Northern & Southern California Atlas'. Rather than adding more pages, they have changed the scale to fit the maps onto fewer pages. The result is that this is much more like a road atlas, but at two or three times the price. It really is a disappointment. Pretty much every reason I collected them before: the scale, the detail, has disappeared. They also seem to have used their now very old data to produce it. For example, they still show an airstrip in Atwater that has been gone for at least twenty years. Not abandoned, but changed into an industrial area and kart track. Even with GPS maps, there is a market for these atlas & gazetteer products, but only if they have at least as much detail as the older versions. Otherwise, get a road atlas. You won't be missing much, and it will probably be

more current.

At first blush this Atlas looks authoritative and promising but it does not bear looking at closely. It is riddled with mistakes. I am an ex-cartographer with many years of experience in the field. I am also a map collector. And I also prefer maps to GPS devices. I find them to be much more fun. But there is no fun in this atlas. I have lived in California all my life and know Southern California like the back of my hand. Though I am not sure what primary sources were used in the making of this atlas, I strongly suspect that Delorme got into trouble using outdated USGS maps. They also made some very bad decisions in their cartography. For example, they show, in the many urban areas of the map, a myriad of lines spider-webbing all over the place. These are unnamed roads which do the user absolutely no good whatsoever without the names. They clog up the map terribly and Delorme should have forgone this vanity and, instead, shown less roads but named the ones they showed. This is an unforgivable flaw in this atlas. Furthermore, very important information is not shown at all: the full course of a very important road (especially to tourists)--Mulholland Drive--is not shown. A very popular tourist destination and Los Angeles County Park, Devil's Punchbowl, is omitted entirely. Utterly useless place names that haven't been in use in two generations pop up on this map in great abundance adding to the systematic disinformation this shabby product provides. The mistakes are legion--too many to list here. But, to demonstrate their cavalier attitude toward accuracy, I will point out that they have completely omitted an entire intersection on Interstate 15 in the Temecula Valley: Indian Truck Trail. This Atlas is now in the outhouse where it belongs and where I can peruse it to turn up even more errors. The more one looks at this the worse it gets. If Delorme would do a job this badly on the California Atlas (probably used by more tourists than the atlases of any other state), I shudder to think of what kind of job they've made of the atlases of the other 49 states. My advice is to either find another large-scale atlas of California, download large-scale hybrid printouts from Google Earth (or a similar site) or use your GPS. Whatever you do, do NOT use this atlas as a guide to the many unpaved roads that cover much of the thinly populated areas of Southern California or you might well find yourself in big trouble. The reason for this is that in just one winter season some of these roads are washed out or riddled with boulders that make them impassable. I would also like to point out to any tourists to Southern California to be very, very conservative in your decision to go off the paved road, unless you are very experienced and know SoCal well. Death Valley National Park, to just name one area of many, deals with lost, missing and expired tourists regularly who decided to be adventurous and take an unpaved route through mountains or desert.

How can anybody give this product a 5-star rating?? Being a European I ordered this atlas before I went to California, and it looked great at first sight - the only obvious fault was the binding that did not allow it to be put flat on the table when opened. The only acceptable binding for a road atlas is a spiral spine that allows it to open fully and even be turned "inside out" so you can view one page only. This DeLorme atlas is not user friendly - my wife held it on her knees while I was driving, and the binding made it close itself as soon as she took her hands off the book. Moreover the binding soon proved to be of very poor quality as the pages started to fall out after only 4 days, and that was not due to any abuse from us. As tourists we wanted to use minor roads as well as freeways, and we soon got into trouble. The roads listed as Major Connectors or Major Streets in the legend can be anything from paved 4-lane roads in suburbs to the worst gravel roads only accessible by 4-WDs. One example - the "major connector" leading from Rimrock (page 143 B8) up to State Route 18 near Big Bear City should not be attempted by anything else than a high clearance 4wd with an experienced driver at the wheel. How can DeLorme call this dirt track a major connector?? Inaccurate or misleading information was found in many places, for instance a place called Bagdad (page 132 D4). This place is marked as "City or Town" according to the legend, but not a single house was to be seen there. And that was not the only non-existing "town" in that area. Many places of great interest for the tourist were not specially marked, for instance Calico, one of the best preserved ghost towns in California, is only marked as a town and not as a place of interest. On the other hand DeLorme has found it necessary to mark no less than 8 boat ramps around the tiny Big Bear Lake - what is so important with that?? My conclusion is that this DeLorme atlas is fine if you want to find the best way from one city to another, but if you are a tourist and want to explore the deserts of California, you may miss many interesting spots and even get into hazardous situations if you try to go by their "major connectors".

I was recently the navigator on a 10 day California coast road trip. I ordered the Delorme Atlas to serve as a back-up to my Nuvi GPS. The map is certainly is the better way for looking ahead for rest areas. Half way through the trip, the binding cracked and pages began to fall out. Not good when driving in a convertible with the top down! So I stopped at a Kinko's Copy Center and they replaced the binding with a spiral binding. Now it went from a good atlas to a great atlas! I'm certainly going to do this to any other Delorme atlas I use in the future.

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