

TONTO National Forest



Recreation
Opportunity
Guide

www.fs.fed.us/r3/tonto



HIKING AND TRAIL RIDING

SKULL MESA TRAIL 248

RANGER DISTRICT

Cave Creek Ranger Station
40202 N. Cave Creek Rd.
Scottsdale, Arizona 85262
Phone (480) 595-3300 Fax (480) 595-3342

TRAILHEADS (TH)

Spur Cross TH
Cave Creek TH (Fee required)
Bronco TH

TERMINI INFORMATION

East end: (3560 feet elevation): Branches off Cottonwood Trail 247 due south of Quien Sabe Peak

West end: (3240 feet elevation): Branches off Cottonwood Trail 247 about 1.5 miles east of Spur Cross Trailhead

TRAIL INFORMATION

Trail use: Light
Trail difficulty: MOST difficult
Trail length: 3 miles
Season of Use: All year
USGS maps: New River Mesa
Elevation: 1340 feet

TRAIL NARRATIVE

From the west end, this trail climbs over 1,000 feet via numerous switchbacks within the first mile. It traverses the top of Skull Mesa to the edge where it drops to the junction with the Quien Sabe Trail 250 and then goes on to rejoin Cottonwood Trail 247.

ATTRACTIONS

- This trail provides many beautiful and panoramic views of the valley.
- The trail's vegetation ranges from desert plants in the lower elevations to mesquite, juniper and palo verde in the higher elevations.
- The area was home to the twelfth century Hohokam Indians.

CONSIDERATIONS

- Closed to motor vehicles
- Not recommended** for horses or novice equestrians.
- The trail is easy to lose across the mesa when grasses are high and rock cairns are numerous.
- Be sure to allow plenty of time if you are not familiar with the routes.
- Carry an adequate supply of drinking water. One gallon/per person/ per day is recommended during hot periods.
- Caution should also be taken when using this trail in the summer heat.
- Help keep your trails clean: **If you PACK IT IN, PACK IT OUT!!**
- Portions of the trail are rough in places and should be traveled with caution.
- Do not drink untreated water. Giardia, a protozoan, is in many water impoundments and streams.