



The Labyrinth

Throughout the world there exists a symbol – a series of concentric lines, carefully connected. This symbol and its family of derivatives has been traced back over 3500 years; it occurs in different cultures, at different points in time, in places as diverse as Peru, Arizona, Iceland, Scandinavia, Crete, Egypt, India and Sumatra. Considered both a timeless art piece and an ancient meditative tool, a labyrinth pathway consists of a single, winding path that leads to a center point and back out again. Thought by many cultures to represent the journey of life, the labyrinth is seen as a universal symbol of an internal pathway. Unlike a maze, the intent of which is to confuse with multiple routes, a labyrinth is heralded as a tool to help clear, quiet and focus the mind, and to aid psychological and spiritual growth. Ancient people often used the labyrinth as a space for honoring the sacred directions, and for the changing of the seasons.

The Labyrinth at Niguel Botanical Preserve is a civic space, designed and built in 2010 to celebrate the dedication and achievements of Laguna Niguel residents recognized as Citizens of the Year. Entrance to the Labyrinth is reached via a 1,000'-long pathway that ascends through the varying landscapes of the Botanical Preserve, up to the highest ridgeline in Crown Valley Community Park. As you emerge from the promenade of trees that commemorates residents' service to their community, the vista aligns along the Labyrinth centerline to focus on the distant peak of Saddleback Mountain, which dominates the horizon of Orange County for 30 miles around. A more symbolically appropriate setting would be hard to find.

The Niguel Labyrinth is unique in being elliptical in shape rather than the more conventional round or square form. Its center contains a multicolor brick mosaic of Bougainvillea, which is the official City flower of Laguna Niguel.



Walking Routes to The Labyrinth at Niguel Botanical Preserve

