



Visitor Guide Summer 2014



photo by Stephanie Kyriazis

Surviving Summer in Death Valley

Summer in Death Valley is extreme. These conditions can be dangerous to the foolhardy or unprepared. Summer visitors to Death Valley must take special precautions to have a safe and enjoyable trip.

You keep cool by sweating.

- On a 110°F (44°C) day you will perspire away about one liter of water an hour. Exercise or exposure to the sun increases that rate.
- If you do not replace that water as you use it up, your body will lose control of its temperature.
- If you feel dizzy, nauseous, or develop a headache, get out of the sun immediately and drink plenty of water.

Heat and dehydration can kill.

- Thirst, like pain, is a warning.
- Dehydration is already occurring once you feel thirsty.
- Drink at least one gallon (4 liters) of water per person a day.
- Drink it freely and often, do not ration or save it.
- In your car, bring plenty of extra water in case of emergency and always bring a water bottle for even the shortest hikes.

Clothing helps keep you cooler.

- Clothing retains perspiration & protects you from solar radiation.
- If you are not wearing a shirt, sunglasses, and a broad-brimmed hat, you are not prepared to walk anywhere in Death Valley.
- Do not walk away from your vehicle onto the salt flats (or anywhere below sea level) when the temperatures are above 100°F (38°C). There is no shade and the reflected light is intense.

Higher elevations are cooler.

- When the floor of Death Valley is too warm for comfortable sight seeing, visit the higher elevations of the park.
- Take a trip to Dantes View, Aguerberry Point, and Wildrose Canyon to escape the heat.

Watch your vehicle gauges.

- Turn off your air conditioner as you drive out of the valley to lessen strain on your car.
- If the engine overheats, do not stop the motor. Face it into the wind and let it idle.

Average Temperatures

	MAX	MIN
January	67°F / 19°C	40°F / 4°C
February	73°F / 23°C	46°F / 8°C
March	82°F / 27°C	55°F / 13°C
April	90°F / 32°C	62°F / 17°C
May	100°F / 38°C	73°F / 23°C
June	110°F / 43°C	81°F / 27°C
July	116°F / 47°C	88°F / 31°C
August	115°F / 46°C	86°F / 30°C
September	106°F / 41°C	76°F / 24°C
October	93°F / 34°C	61°F / 16°C
November	77°F / 25°C	48°F / 9°C
December	65°F / 18°C	38°F / 3°C

Official weather station at Furnace Creek



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Safety & Park Rules

ENGLISH

Safety

- **Water:** Drink at least one gallon (4 liters) of water per day. Carry plenty of extra drinking water in your car.
- **Heat & Dehydration:** If you feel dizzy, nauseous or have a headache, get out of the sun immediately and drink plenty of water. Dampen your clothing to lower body temperature. Heat and dehydration can kill.



- **Summer Driving:** Stay on paved roads in summer. If your car breaks down, stay with it until help comes. Be prepared; carry plenty of extra water.
- **Stay alert and slow down:** The most common cause of death in the park is single car vehicle accidents. A moment of inattention can send you, your car, and your loved ones flipping into the rocky desert.
- **Do not rely on technology!** Your cell phone will not work in most of the park. GPS devices frequently tell Death Valley visitors to turn off well-traveled roads, and take "shortcuts" over the desert and into canyons. Common sense and good judgment are far more reliable.
- **Hiking:** DO NOT hike in the low elevations when temperatures are hot. The mountains are cooler in summer.
- **Flash Floods:** Avoid canyons during rain storms and be prepared to move to higher ground. While driving, be alert for water running in washes and across road dips.
- **Dangerous Animals:** Never place your hands or feet where you cannot see. Rattlesnakes, scorpions or black widow spiders may be sheltered there.

Rules

- **Entrance fees apply to all visitors!** Please see page 4 for the exact amount you should pay.
- **Pets and Bicycles** are not allowed on trails or in Wilderness which covers over 90% of the park.
- **Do not enter mine tunnels or shafts.** Mines may be unstable, have hidden shafts, pockets of bad air and poisonous gas.
- **Do not feed birds or animals.** This is for your safety and the health of our wildlife. Plus, it is against the law!
- **Driving off roads is prohibited.** Stay on established roads.
- **Do not take anything!** Leave rocks, plants and historic objects where you find them for everyone to enjoy.

DEUTSCH

Sicherheit

- **Wasser:** Trinken Sie mindestens vier Liter Wasser pro Tag. Führen Sie immer noch zusätzliches Trinkwasser im Auto mit sich
- **Hitze & Flüssigkeitsverlust:** Wenn Sie sich schwindelig fühlen, Ihnen übel ist oder Sie Kopfschmerzen bekommen, gehen Sie sofort aus der Sonne und trinken Sie reichlich Wasser. Feuchten Sie Ihre Kleidung an, um Ihre Körpertemperatur zu senken. Hitze und Flüssigkeitsverlust können tödlich sein.
- **Fahren im Sommer:** Bleiben Sie auf befestigten Straßen. Wenn Ihr Auto liegenbleibt, bleiben Sie vor Ort und warten Sie, bis Hilfe kommt. Seien Sie vorbereitet: nehmen Sie immer reichlich Wasser in Ihrem Auto mit.
- **Bleiben Sie wachsam und fahren Sie langsam:** Die hauptsächliche Todesursache im Death Valley ist ein einfacher Autounfall. Ein Moment der Unachtsamkeit kann Sie, Ihr Auto und Ihre Lieben dazu verdammen, in der steinigen Wüste zu enden.
- **Verlassen Sie sich nicht auf die Technik!** Ihr Handy wird im größten Teil des Parks nicht funktionieren. GPS Geräte weisen Besucher des Death Valleys häufig an, die viel befahrenen Straßen zu verlassen und "Abkürzungen" durch die Wüste und die Canyons zu nehmen. Gesunder Menschenverstand, eine Karte des Death Valley und ein gutes Urteilsvermögen sind sehr viel sicherer.

- **Wandern:** Wandern Sie im Sommer NICHT in den tieferen Lagen. Die Berge, welche das Death Valley umgeben, sind kühler und dort gibt es viele Wege.
- **Sturzfluten:** Meiden Sie die Canyons während eines Sturms mit Regen und bereiten Sie sich darauf vor, jederzeit einen höher gelegenen Ort aufsuchen zu können. Achten Sie während der Fahrt auf Wasser, das in Pfützen und Schlaglöcher läuft.



- **Gefährliche Tiere:** Setzen Sie nie eine Hand oder einen Fuß an eine Stelle, die Sie vorher nicht sehen konnten. Klaperschlangen, Skorpione oder Schwarze Witwen (Spinnen) könnten dort Unterschlupf gefunden haben.

Regeln

- **Eintrittsgebühren müssen von allen Besuchern gezahlt werden!** Bitte informieren Sie sich auf Seite 4 über die genaue Höhe der Gebühren.
- **Hunde und Fahrräder** sind nicht erlaubt auf Pfaden oder in der Wildnis, die 90% des Parks umfasst.
- **Betreten Sie keine Minentunnel oder Schächte.** Minen können instabil sein, versteckte Schächte haben und Einschlüssen von schlechter Luft oder giftigem Gas enthalten.
- **Füttern Sie keine Vögel oder wilden Tiere.** Dies dient Ihrer Sicherheit und der Gesundheit unserer Tierwelt.
- **Fahren abseits der Straßen ist verboten.** Bleiben Sie auf den ausgewiesenen Straßen.
- **Nehmen Sie nichts mit!** Lassen Sie Steine, Pflanzen oder historische Objekte dort, wo Sie sie finden, damit jeder sich an Ihnen erfreuen kann.

FRANÇAIS

Sécurité

- **Boire de l'eau:** Buvez du moins un gallon (4 litres) d'eau par jour. Apportez beaucoup d'eau potable supplémentaire dans votre voiture.
- **La chaleur et la déshydratation:** Si vous ressentez des étourdissements, des nausées, ou des maux de tête, mettez-vous à l'abri du soleil et buvez beaucoup d'eau. Humectez des vêtements afin de baisser votre température corporelle. La chaleur et la déshydratation peuvent vous tuer.
- **La conduite en été:** Restez sur les routes pavées. Si votre voiture tombe en panne, restez là jusqu'à ce que les secours arrivent. Soyez prêt; apportez beaucoup d'eau supplémentaire.



- **Rester vigilant et freiner la voiture:** La principale cause de décès à Death Valley est un accident impliquant un seul véhicule. Un moment d'inattention peut faire se retourner votre voiture, lançant vous-même et vos proches dans le désert rocailleux.
- **Ne pas dépendre de la technologie!** Votre téléphone cellulaire ne marchera pas dans quasiment tout le parc. Les dispositifs GPS indiquent aux visiteurs de quitter les grands chemins et de prendre des «raccourcis» à travers le désert et dans les canyons. Le bon sens, une carte de Death Valley, et un jugement éclairé sont beaucoup plus fiables.
- **La randonnée:** NE faites PAS de la randonnée dans les zones à basse altitude en été. Les montagnes qui entourent Death Valley sont plus fraîches et il y a beaucoup de sentiers.
- **Les inondations soudaines:** Evitez les canyons pendant les orages et soyez prêt à vous déplacer en terrain plus élevé. En conduisant, soyez attentif aux puissants débits d'eau et aux eaux dans les creux de la route.
- **Les animaux dangereux:** Ne placez jamais vos mains ou vos pieds là où vous ne pouvez pas d'abord voir. Des crotales, des scorpions, ou des veuves noires peuvent s'y cacher.

Règles

- **Les droits d'entrée s'appliquent à tous les visiteurs!** Veuillez consulter la page 4 pour le montant exact que vous devez payer.
- **Les chiens et les vélos** sont interdits sur les sentiers ou aux milieux sauvages, ce qui couvre plus de 90 pour cent du parc.
- **Ne pas entrer dans les tunnels ou les puits de mine.** Les mines peuvent être instables, avoir des puits cachés, ou des poches d'air de mauvaise qualité et de gaz toxique.
- **Ne pas alimenter les oiseaux ou les animaux sauvages.** C'est pour s'assurer votre sécurité aussi bien que la santé de notre faune et flore.
- **La conduite hors route est interdite.** Restez sur les routes établies.
- **Ne rien prendre!** Laissez les pierres, les plantes, et les objets historiques là où vous les trouvez pour que tout le monde puisse en profiter.

ITALIANO

Sicurezza

- **Acqua:** Bevete almeno un gallone (4 litri) d'acqua ogni giorno. Portate più acqua nella vostra macchina in modo da averne abbastanza se finite l'acqua che portate con voi.
- **Caldo e Disidratazione:** Se avete la testa che gira, la nausea o mal di testa, trovate subito dell'ombra o un posto dove non c'è il sole e bevete molta acqua. Inumidite i vestiti per abbassare la temperatura del corpo. Il caldo e la disidratazione possono uccidervi.
- **Guidare durante l'estate:** Rimanete sulle strade asfaltate. Se la vostra macchina si guasta, rimanete con la macchina finché arrivano i soccorsi. Siate preparati; portate tanta acqua.
- **Stare in allerta e rallentate:** La causa di morte più comune nella Death Valley è un incidente di una sola macchina. Un momento di disattenzione può ribaltare la vostra macchina nel deserto roccioso, con voi e i vostri cari dentro.
- **Non fate troppo affidamento sulla tecnologia!** Il vostro cellulare non funziona nella maggior parte del parco. I GPS dicono spesso ai visitatori del parco di prendere una "scorciatoia" attraverso il deserto e nei canyon, lontano dalle strade molto trafficate. Il buon senso, una mappa della Death Valley e decisioni assennate sono più affidabili della tecnologia.

- **Escursionismo:** Non fate escursionismo a basse altitudini durante l'estate. Le montagne intorno alla Death Valley sono più fredde e ci sono molti sentieri.
- **Allagamenti:** Evitate i canyon durante i temporali e siate preparati a muovervi verso un punto più elevato. Mentre guidate, state attenti all'acqua che corre attraverso la strada.
- **Animali Pericolosi:** Non mettere mai le mani o i piedi dove non potete vedere. Crotali, scorpioni, o vedove nere potrebbero esservi nascosti.

Regole

- **Le tasse di entrata si applicano a tutti i visitatori!** Per favore, controllate a pagina 4 per il costo esatto che dovrete pagare.
- **Cani e Biciclette** non sono permessi sui sentieri o nell'area selvatica che copre 90% del parco.
- **Non entrare nei tunnel delle miniere o nei pozzi.** Le miniere potrebbero essere instabili, avere pozzi nascosti e sacche di aria o gas tossici.



- **Non dar da mangiare agli uccelli o agli animali selvatici.** Questa regola è per la vostra protezione e la salute della nostra fauna.
- **È vietato guidare fuori dalle strade.** Rimanete sulle strade segnalate.
- **Non portate via niente!** Lasciate i sassi, le piante, e gli oggetti storici dove li avete trovati in modo che tutti possano goderne.

What to See & Do: Summer



Auto Touring

- **Zabriskie Point:** Surrounded by a maze of wildly eroded and vibrantly colored badlands, this spectacular view is one of the park's most famous. Zabriskie Point is a popular sunrise and sunset viewing location. The viewpoint is a short walk uphill from the parking area.
- **Twenty Mule Team Canyon:** Winding through otherworldly badlands, this 2.7 mile / 4.3 km, one-way loop drive is unpaved, but accessible to vehicles other than buses, RV's, and trailers.
- **Artist's Drive:** A scenic loop drive through multi-hued volcanic and sedimentary hills. Artist's Palette is especially photogenic in late afternoon light. The 9 mile / 14.5 km paved road is one-way and is only drivable with vehicles less than 25 feet / 7.6 m in length.
- **Devil's Golf Course:** An immense area of rock salt eroded by wind and rain into jagged spires. So incredibly serrated that "only the devil could play golf on such rough links." The unpaved road leading to it is often closed after rain.
- **Badwater Basin:** The lowest point in North America, Badwater Basin is a surreal landscape of vast salt flats. A temporary lake may form here after heavy rainstorms. Do not walk on the salt flats in hot weather. Wheelchair accessible.
- **Dante's View:** The most breathtaking viewpoint in the park, this mountain-top overlook is more than 5000 ft / 1524 m above the floor of Death Valley. Cooler temperatures at that elevation allow for short walks along the ridge. The paved road is open to vehicles less than 25 ft / 7.6 m in length.
- **Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes:** Tawny dunes smoothly rise nearly 100 feet / 30 m from Mesquite Flat. Late afternoon light accentuates the ripples and patterns while morning is a good time to view tracks of nocturnal wildlife. Moonlight on the dunes can be magical, yet night explorers should be alert for sidewinder rattlesnakes during the warm season.
- **Ubehebe Crater:** Just a few hundred years ago a massive volcanic explosion caused by steam pressure when hot magma contacted the underground water table, shattered the silence of northern Death Valley. When the cinders and dust settled, this 600 foot / 183 m deep crater remained.
- **Father Crowley Vista:** A landscape of dark lava flows and volcanic cinders abruptly gives way to the gash of Rainbow Canyon below this viewpoint. Walk the dirt track east of the parking lot for a grand overlook of the northern Panamint Valley. Wheelchair accessible.

Panamint Mountains

The higher the elevation, the cooler it will be. The Panamint Mountains are the highest in the park and often snow-covered in winter, but summer is the perfect time to visit. While the valley swelters, wildflowers may be blooming on the tallest peaks. This area is accessible only to vehicles less than 25 ft / 7.6 m in length.

- **Aguereberry Point:** One thousand feet higher than Dante's View, this viewpoint gives a perspective over Death Valley from the west. Along the gravel road are the remains of Pete Aguereberry's camp and his Eureka Mine. The last climb to the point may require a high-clearance vehicle.
- **Wildrose Charcoal Kilns:** These ten beehive-shaped structures are among the best preserved in the west. Built in 1876 to provide fuel to process silver/lead ore, they still smell of smoke today. The last 2 miles of gravel road to the kilns are passable to most vehicles.
- **Wildrose Peak Trail (4.2 miles / 6.7 km one-way)** A good high peak (9,064 ft / 2762 m) to climb in the summer. Trail begins at north end of Charcoal Kilns with an elevation gain of 2,200 ft / 670 m. Spectacular views beyond 2 mile / 3.2 km point.
- **Telescope Peak Trail (7 miles / 11.2 km one-way)** This strenuous trail to highest peak in the park (11,049 ft / 3368 m) with a 3000 ft / 914 m elevation gain. Trail is usually snow-free by June. Start at Mahogany Flat Campground at end of Wildrose Canyon Road. Steep road after Charcoal Kilns.

Scotty's Castle Tours

Prospector "Death Valley Scotty" claimed this elaborate Spanish-style mansion was built by gold from his fictitious mine. In reality, it was the 1920s vacation home of his wealthy friends, Albert & Bessie Johnson. Today, living history tours of the castle's richly furnished interior are given by costumed park rangers.

House Tour	
General Admission	\$15
Underground Tour	
General Admission	\$15
House & Underground Combo	
General Admission.....	\$25
Lower Vine Hiking Tour	
General Admission.....	\$20
Individual Discounts	
Youth (ages 6-15)	50%
Children 5 and younger	Free
Interagency Senior Pass holder	50%
Interagency Access Pass holder ...	50%



House Tour

Best tour for first-time visitors. Tours are led by National Park Service Rangers, dressed in 1939-style clothing. The guide will share stories about the heyday of the Castle in the late '30s, the construction in the 1920s, and the curious relationship between the Johnsons and Scotty. The house is fully furnished with the Johnsons' original decorations. Some of their clothing even hangs in the closets! A highlight of the program is listening to the Welte Mignon theater organ. Tours offered daily, times vary. One hour. Wheelchair lift may be available.

Underground Tour

Scotty's Castle was very remote when it was built in the 1920s. The underground tour focuses on how the Johnsons built a comfortable vacation home in Death Valley. The tour sees the basement, underground tunnels, heating system, original pipes, original power generation and power storage systems. A highlight is the demonstration of electrical generation using an original Pelton water wheel. One hour tours are offered most days from November through April, times vary. Tour involves stairs, no lift available.

Reservations

Reservations are not necessary for tours, but can reduce wait time once you arrive. Tickets may be purchased at least one day in advance from www.recreation.gov or by calling 1-877-444-6777. On the day of the tour, tickets may only be purchased in person at the Scotty's Castle Visitor Center.

Other Cool Things

- **Furnace Creek Visitor Center:** The main park visitor center has new exhibits, park film, bookstore, and rangers on hand to answer questions. Free WiFi 10 am to 3 pm
- **Swimming Pools:** Did you bring your swimsuit? Stovepipe Wells Resort and Furnace Creek Ranch have pools available to use for a fee.
- **Borax Museum:** A privately-owned museum located in the Furnace Creek Ranch. Exhibits include a mineral collection and the history of borax in Death Valley. Behind the museum building is an assembly of mining and transportation equipment.
- **Nighttime Walks:** After the blazing sun sets, you may see more stars than you ever imagined or the desert bathed in moonlight. Although it can still be hot in the evening, night is when desert wildlife becomes active.



Entrance Fees

Pay the park entrance fee at the Furnace Creek Visitor Center, Scotty's Castle Visitor Center, Stovepipe Wells Ranger Station or at one of the automated fee machines placed throughout the park.

Single Visit Pass (valid up to 7 days)

Vehicle & passengers.....\$20
 Individual entering on motorcycle, bicycle, or foot.....\$10

Annual Pass

Death Valley Annual Pass.....\$40
 Interagency Annual Pass.....\$80
 Interagency Military Pass.....\$free
 (for active duty military & dependents)

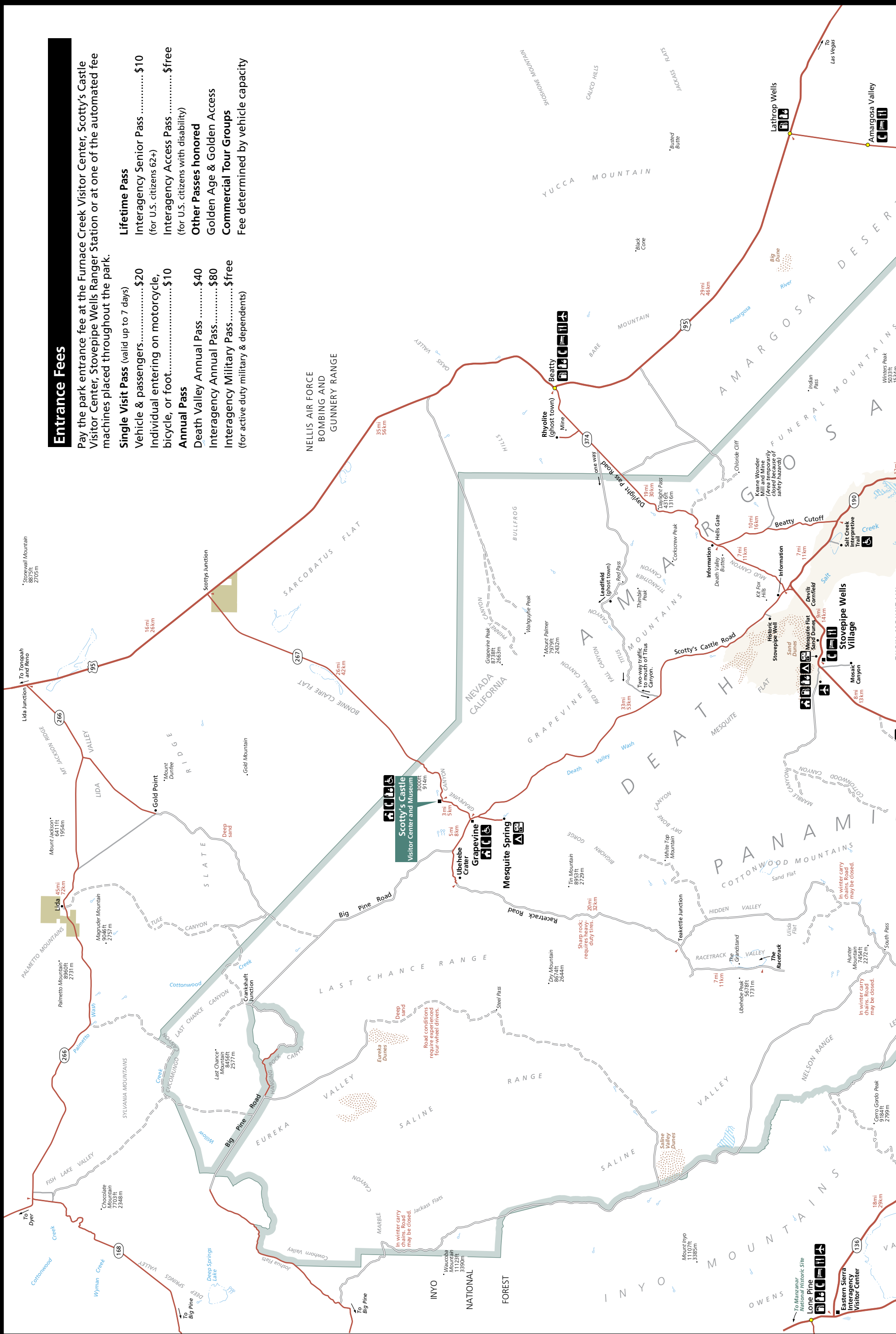
Lifetime Pass

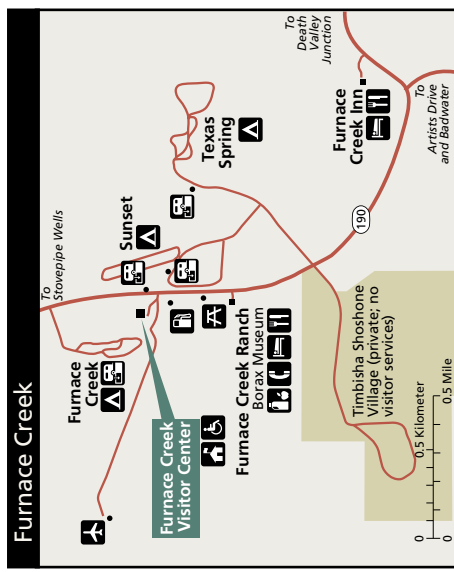
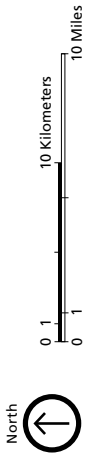
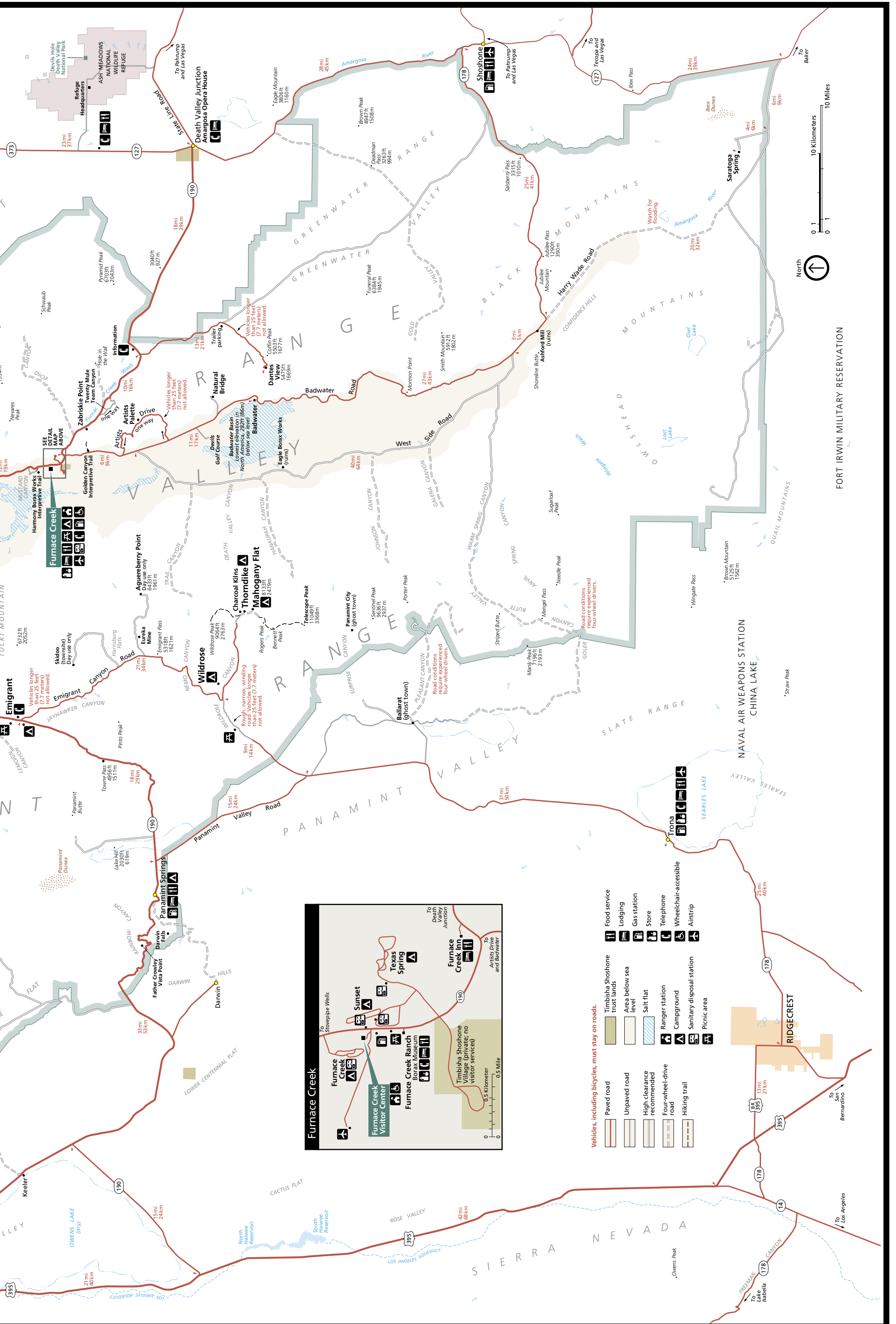
Interagency Senior Pass.....\$10
 (for U.S. citizens 62+)
 Interagency Access Pass.....\$free
 (for U.S. citizens with disability)

Other Passes honored

Golden Age & Golden Access
 Commercial Tour Groups

Fee determined by vehicle capacity





- Vehicles, including bicycles, must stay on roads.**
- Paved road
 - Unpaved road
 - High clearance recommended
 - Four-wheel-drive road
 - Hiking trail
 - Timbisha Shoshone trust lands
 - Area below sea level
 - Salt flat
 - Ranger station
 - Campground
 - Sanitary disposal station
 - Picnic area
 - Food service
 - Lodging
 - Gas station
 - Store
 - Telephone
 - Wheelchair-accessible
 - Airstrip

FORT IRWIN MILITARY RESERVATION

NAVAL AIR WEAPONS STATION
CHINA LAKE

RIDGECREST

Dark Night Sky



photo by Dan Duriscoe

“You have never really seen the stars till you have seen them in Death Valley. The clear, limpid atmosphere brings them very close. You feel you could reach up and pull them down.” – Bessie Johnson

Very little has changed about the Death Valley sky since Bessie Johnson wrote these words. In February 2013, the International Dark Sky Association certified Death Valley National Park as a “Gold Tier” International Dark Sky Park. This means the night skies in Death Valley are very dark and minimally impacted by city lights.

The modern world is losing its dark skies. Due to growing cities, a vast majority of Americans cannot see the Milky Way from their homes, and many children born today will never see a truly dark sky. Death Valley is an oasis of dark nights in a bright world. Ninety-one percent of Death Valley National Park is designated wilderness. Permanent developments are prohibited within wilderness, and the few park developments outside wilderness are small and isolated.

Thanks to reduced lighting inside the park, and limited city lights outside the park, our eyes can see many wonders in the dark the night skies. On moonless nights, bright planets like Jupiter and Venus dominate the view. You can also see the Milky Way, star clusters like the Pleiades, and even the distant Andromeda Galaxy – 2.5 million light years away – all with the naked eye. Conversely, when the moon is full, it outshines all but the brightest stars. Exploring Death Valley by the light of the full moon is like seeing a completely different place as the moon casts dramatic shadows on a once-familiar landscape.

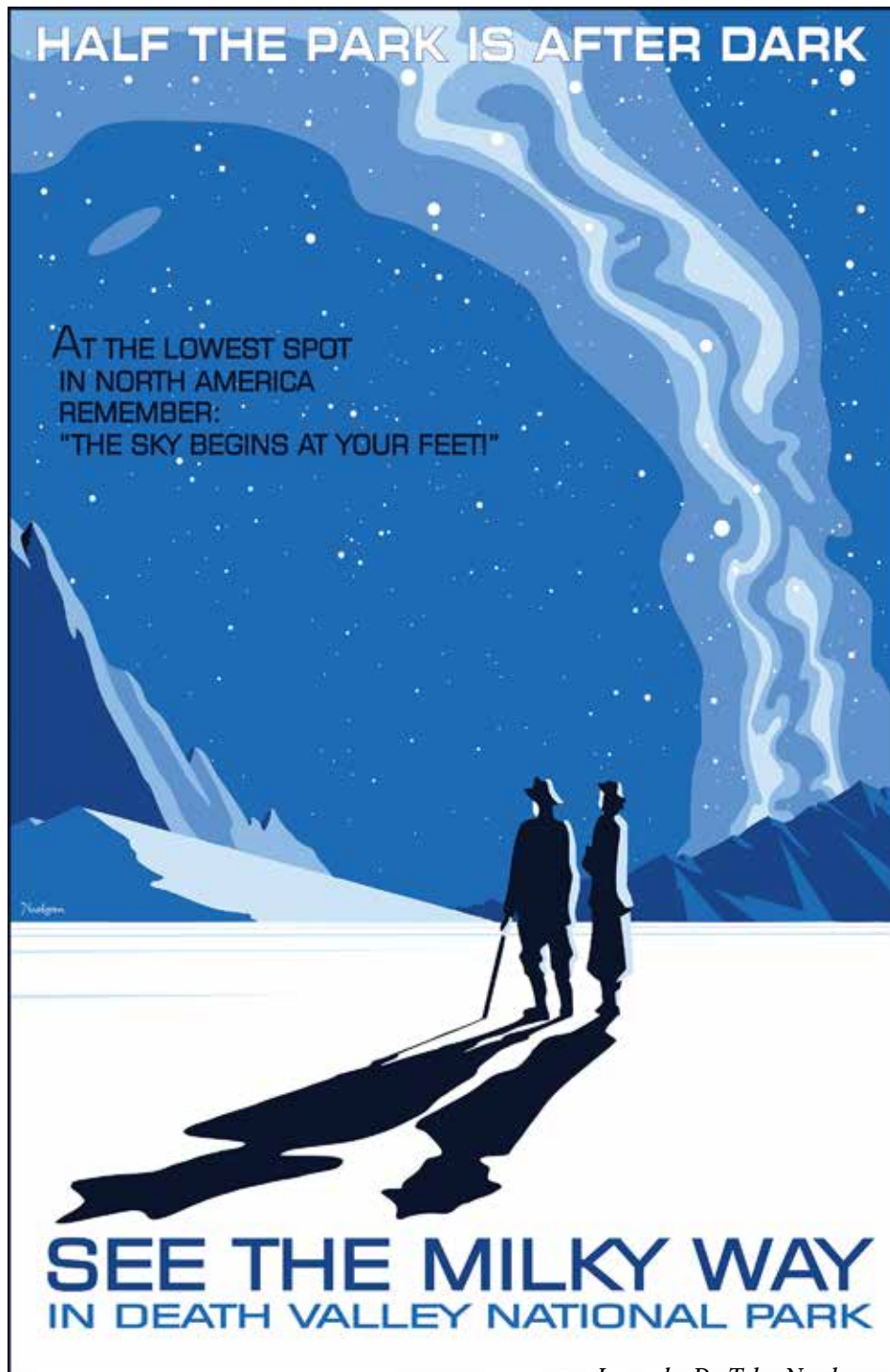


Image by Dr. Tyler Nordgren

Death Valley: International Dark Sky Park

Death Valley National Park harbors some of the darkest night skies in the United States. That dark sky led the International Dark-Sky Association to designate the park as the third and largest International Dark Sky Park.

“The Dark Sky Park designation represents not only the efforts of the park and its partners, but the dedication of avid amateur astronomers who have sought the park’s world-class starry skies for decades,” said Dan Duriscoe, of the National Park Service’s Natural Sounds and Night Skies Division.

To qualify for the dark sky designation, the park improved external lighting at facilities in the Furnace Creek and Stovepipe Wells areas, reducing energy consumption, sky glow, and glare. The

designation requires the park to sustain its efforts to protect night sky resources and visitor education. Implementation of the park’s lighting guidelines will improve the natural character of the night and leave the stars untarnished in other areas of the park.

Park rangers offer monthly night sky programs and hold stargazing events with astronomy organizations. Using high-powered telescopes, visitors can explore the mysteries of Death Valley’s dark, night skies.

“At Death Valley the sky literally begins at your feet,” said Tyler Nordgren, Associate Professor of Physics at the University of Redlands (Calif.) and International Dark-Sky Association board member. “When my students and I

look up at night from our southern California campus, we can usually count 12 stars in the sky. However, less than a five hour drive from Los Angeles there’s a place where anyone can look up and see the universe the way everyone could 100 years ago.”

The park’s actions to reduce unnecessary lighting also tie in with “Starry, Starry Night,” one of the goals in A Call to Action—the National Park Service’s stewardship and engagement priorities for its second century.

For more information about the National Park Service’s Night Skies Program, visit www.nature.nps.gov/night/.

The International Dark-Sky Association is online at www.dark-sky.org.

Night Sky Almanac

JUNE 2014

Planets visible

- ★ Venus: east before sunrise
- ★ Mars : SW in the evening; next to Moon on June 7
- ★ Jupiter: west after sunset until 6/20
- ★ Saturn: south in the evening

The Moon

- ★ Full Moon: June 12
- ★ New Moon: June 27

Summer Solstice

- ★ June 21

JULY 2014

Planets visible

- ★ Mercury & Venus: east before dawn
- ★ Mars & Saturn: SW in the evening

The Moon

- ★ Full Moon: July 12
- ★ New Moon: July 26

Delta Aquarid Meteor Shower

- ★ Peak: July 28-29

AUGUST 2014

Planets visible

- ★ Venus & Jupiter: east before dawn; close together August 18
- ★ Mars & Saturn: SW in the evening

The Moon

- ★ Full Moon: August 10
- ★ New Moon: August 25

Perseid Meteor Shower

- ★ Peak: August 12-13

SEPTEMBER 2014

Planets visible

- ★ Mercury: west at dusk, early Oct.
- ★ Mars: SW in the evening
- ★ Jupiter: east before dawn

The Moon

- ★ Full Moon: September 8
- ★ New Moon: September 23

Autumn Equinox

- ★ September 22

OCTOBER 2014

Planets visible

- ★ Mercury: east before dawn, late Oct
- ★ Mars: SW in the evening
- ★ Jupiter: east after 1 am
- ★ Saturn: west after sunset

The Moon

- ★ Full Moon: October 8
- ★ New Moon: October 23

Partial Solar Eclipse

- ★ October 23, 2 to 4 pm; use solar viewing glasses

Orionid Meteor Shower

- ★ Peak: 21-22

NOVEMBER 2014

Planets visible

- ★ Mercury: east before dawn, early November
- ★ Mars: SW in the evening
- ★ Jupiter: S to SE at dawn

The Moon

- ★ Full Moon: November 6
- ★ New Moon: November 22

Leonid Meteor Shower

- ★ Peak: November 17-18

DECEMBER 2014

Planets visible

- ★ Venus: SW at dusk, late December
- ★ Saturn: SE before dawn
- ★ Mars: SW at dusk
- ★ Jupiter: east after 9:30 pm

The Moon

- ★ Full Moon: December 6
- ★ New Moon: December 21

Winter Solstice

- ★ December 21

Geminid Meteor Shower

- ★ Peak: December 13-14

Wilderness

Death Valley Wilderness

Death Valley National Park has the largest area of designated national park wilderness in the contiguous United States at 3,102,456 acres. That's 91% of the entire National Park! Despite that figure, nearly a thousand miles of paved and dirt roads intersect the wilderness, providing ready access to all but the most remote locations. In other words, most of the land between the roads in Death Valley National Park has been given an additional layer of protection from further development by being designated Wilderness.

Everyone is free to hike or ride horses throughout the wilderness. Although there are few trails and little water, the well prepared traveler will find a lifetime's worth of exploring. Multi-day camping trips are possible, but even a short walk away from the road will immerse you in the solitude and silence that defines the wilderness experience of Death Valley.

Protecting Wild America

"In wilderness is the preservation of the world."

Henry David Thoreau

Americans became concerned with the rapid depletion of natural resources during the 19th century leading to government protection of early national parks such as Yosemite and Yellowstone. These parks, however, were primarily set aside for their scenic qualities. By the 1930s, however, the complexity and importance of entire ecosystems supporting plant and animal species were being studied. Parks such as Everglades in Florida were set aside to preserve wildlife habitat and natural processes which supported them.

As technologies of the 1950s made it easier for more people to access backcountry locations, the federal government, working with conservation groups, sought ways to expand protection of the nation's ever-decreasing wilderness lands. These efforts culminated in the passing of The Wilderness Act of 1964. The language of this bill makes plain the goals inherent in the law: "In order to assure that an increasing population, accompanied by expanding settlement and growing mechanization, does not occupy and modify all areas within the United States and its possessions, leaving no lands designated for preservation and protection in their natural condition, it is hereby declared to be the policy of the Congress to secure for the American people of present and future generations the benefits of an enduring resource of wilderness."

Today there are more than 109 million acres of federally protected Wilderness in 44 states. Yet, their area encompasses only 5.1 percent of the nation's land.



Wilderness Values

Wilderness means many things to many people. For some it involves a trip into the Park's undeveloped and remote backcountry. Others may see wilderness in a picnic near the Mesquite Flat sand dunes. Yet both would understand that it involves basic contact with nature.

Wilderness has been associated with godliness, beauty, freedom, health and American virtues. Unhindered by humans, natural processes provide us all with clean air, soil and water. Large expanses of undisturbed habitat are important to the survival of numerous plant and animal species and provide an ecological baseline with which to understand the impact of humans on nature. Wilderness areas provide beauty, solitude and inspiration as well as opportunities for solitude, hiking, camping, and wildlife viewing. Many important historic and cultural sites and artifacts are protected from disturbance in wilderness locations. Economic benefits are also inherent in wilderness as it enhances surrounding private land values.

Wilderness and Backcountry Stewardship Plan

In 2013 a Wilderness and Backcountry Stewardship Plan was approved for Death Valley National Park. This plan addresses all 3.1 million acres of Congressionally-designated wilderness lands within the park. The plan also includes backcountry road corridors, cabins, and backcountry camping. The Saline Valley Warm Springs area is not covered by this plan.

The plan was developed over four years, with four different opportunities for public input and literally hundreds of individual comments considered. The Timbisha Shoshone Tribe was consulted throughout the planning process, as were the governments of Inyo County, California, Nye County and Esmeralda County, Nevada.

The Death Valley Wilderness and Backcountry Stewardship Plan has a number of provisions to guide the park and its visitors in achieving our shared goal of protecting wilderness character while serving as a premiere national park destination for experiencing wilderness and backcountry adventure. To review the plan in more detail, visit: <http://parkplanning.nps.gov/DEVAWildernessPlanFONSI>.

So what does this plan mean for a visitor to Death Valley's wilderness or backcountry? The following are just some of the changes from past park regulations:

- **Permits:** The plan calls for a free, online mandatory permit system—not a reservation system—for overnight camping in the Wilderness, along backcountry roads, designated primitive campgrounds and in backcountry cabins. However, because of federal funding shortfalls related to the sequester, the implementation of the new permit system is being delayed. Voluntary backcountry permits are still available at all visitor centers and contact stations, but in 2014, there will be no permit required for overnight backcountry or wilderness use.
- **Campfires:** No campfires are allowed in wilderness, but will be allowed in some backcountry sites where the NPS provides fire rings such as primitive campgrounds such as Eureka Dunes. In addition, approximately 50 fire rings will be installed (as funding allows) outside some backcountry cabins, in other primitive campgrounds, and in some dispersed roadside campsites. The Park will work with commercial vendors of firewood within Death Valley and gateway communities to make pest free firewood widely available. Gas cook stoves are allowed both in the backcountry and the wilderness.
- **Dispersed Camping:** Before the adoption of this plan, dispersed roadside and wilderness camping required a two-mile distance from paved roads and some dirt roads. That has now changed to one mile.
- **Designated Roadside Camping:** The plan calls for Designated Roadside Camping Corridors along certain heavily used roadways. However, the implementation of this provision of the plan has also been delayed due to funding challenges.
- **Group Size:** The plan institutes some changes in group size in order to protect wilderness character, visitor experience, and park resources.
- **Backcountry Cabins:** Historic cabins can be found scattered throughout the backcountry. To help protect the structures and prevent overuse, the plan prescribes mandatory free permits, stay limits, and bans fires inside the cabins. Permits will not be required in 2014.
- **Canyoneering:** The plan calls for a mandatory, annual permit for all who canyoneer in Death Valley National Park. No permit will be required for canyoneering in 2014.
- The implementation version of the plan is located online at: <http://www.nps.gov/deva/park-mgmt/upload/Death-Valley-Wilderness-and-Backcountry-Stewardship-Plan>

Visitor Services

location	contact	services
Furnace Creek Visitor Center National Park Service Death Valley Natural History Association	760-786-3200 www.nps.gov/deva	Park information, exhibits, park film, bookstore, ranger talks, drinking water and restrooms. Pay park entrance fees and purchase passes.
Scotty's Castle Visitor Center National Park Service Death Valley Natural History Association	760-786-2392 reservations: 877-444-6777 or recreation.gov	Tours daily (fee charged), park information, bookstore and restrooms. Soft drinks, sandwiches and snacks are also available.
Stovepipe Wells Village Death Valley Lodge Company (park concession)	760-786-2387 escapetodeathvalley.com	Lodging, restaurant, bar, gift shop, convenience store, ATM, gas station, showers, swimming pool, paved airstrip, RV hookups, NPS campground, and ranger station.
Panamint Springs Resort (privately owned)	775-482-7680 deathvalley.com/psr	Lodging, restaurant, bar, gas station, campground, RV hookups, and showers.
Furnace Creek Inn & Ranch Resorts Xanterra Parks & Resorts (privately owned)	760-786-2345 furnacecreekresort.com	Lodging, restaurants, bars, general store, gift shops, ATM, gas station (gasoline, diesel, propane, tire repair) post office, showers, laundromat, swimming, bike rentals, horse rides, RV hookups, borax museum, golf course, tennis courts, and paved airstrip.
Farabee's Jeep Rentals Farabee's is located across the street from the Furnace Creek Inn.	760-786-9872 877-970-5337 DeathValleyJeepRentals.com	Four-wheel-drive Jeep rentals.

CAMPGROUNDS	Season	Elevation	Fee	Sites	Water	Tables	Fire pits	Toilets	RV Hookups	Dump Station
Furnace Creek (NPS)	all year	-196'	\$18**	136	yes	yes	yes	flush	some**	yes
Furnace Creek Ranch	all year	-218'	\$32	12	yes	no	no	flush	yes	yes
Sunset (NPS)	Oct 15-Apr 30	-196'	\$12	270	yes	no	no	flush	no	yes
Texas Spring (NPS)	Oct 15-Apr 30	sea level	\$14	106	yes	yes	yes	flush	no	yes
Stovepipe Wells (NPS)	Sept 15-early May	sea level	\$12	190	yes	some	some	flush	no	yes
Stovepipe Wells RV Park	all year	sea level	\$31	14	yes	some	no	flush	yes	yes
Panamint Springs Resort	all year	2000'	\$7.50-\$30	76	yes	some	yes	flush	yes	no
Mesquite Spring (NPS)	all year	1800'	\$12	40	yes	yes	yes	flush	no	yes
Emigrant (NPS) tent only	all year	2100'	free	10	yes	yes	no	flush	no	no
Wildrose (NPS)	all year	4100'	free	23	yes	yes	yes	vault	no	no
Thorndike* (NPS)	Mar-Nov	7400'	free	6	no	yes	yes	vault	no	no
Mahogany Flat* (NPS)	Mar-Nov	8200'	free	10	no	yes	yes	vault	no	no

*Accessible to high-clearance vehicles only. 4-wheel drive may be necessary.

**Additional \$12 Utility Fee for electric, water, and sewer hook-ups; Utility Fees are not subject to Lifetime Pass discounts.

- **Generator hours** are from 7 am to 7 pm, unless otherwise posted. Generators are not allowed at Texas Springs Campground.

- **Sunset Campground:** To assist us in the event of an emergency, please back in your RV unit or use a pull-through site.

- **Texas Springs Campground** (Upper Loop) Limits on RV site use may apply in springtime to accommodate increased demand for tent camping space. No generators allowed.

- **RESERVATIONS** for Furnace Creek Campground (up to 6 months in advance) and group campsites (up to 12 months in advance) for the camping season between October 15 to April 15 may be made on-line at recreation.gov or by calling **877-444-6777**.