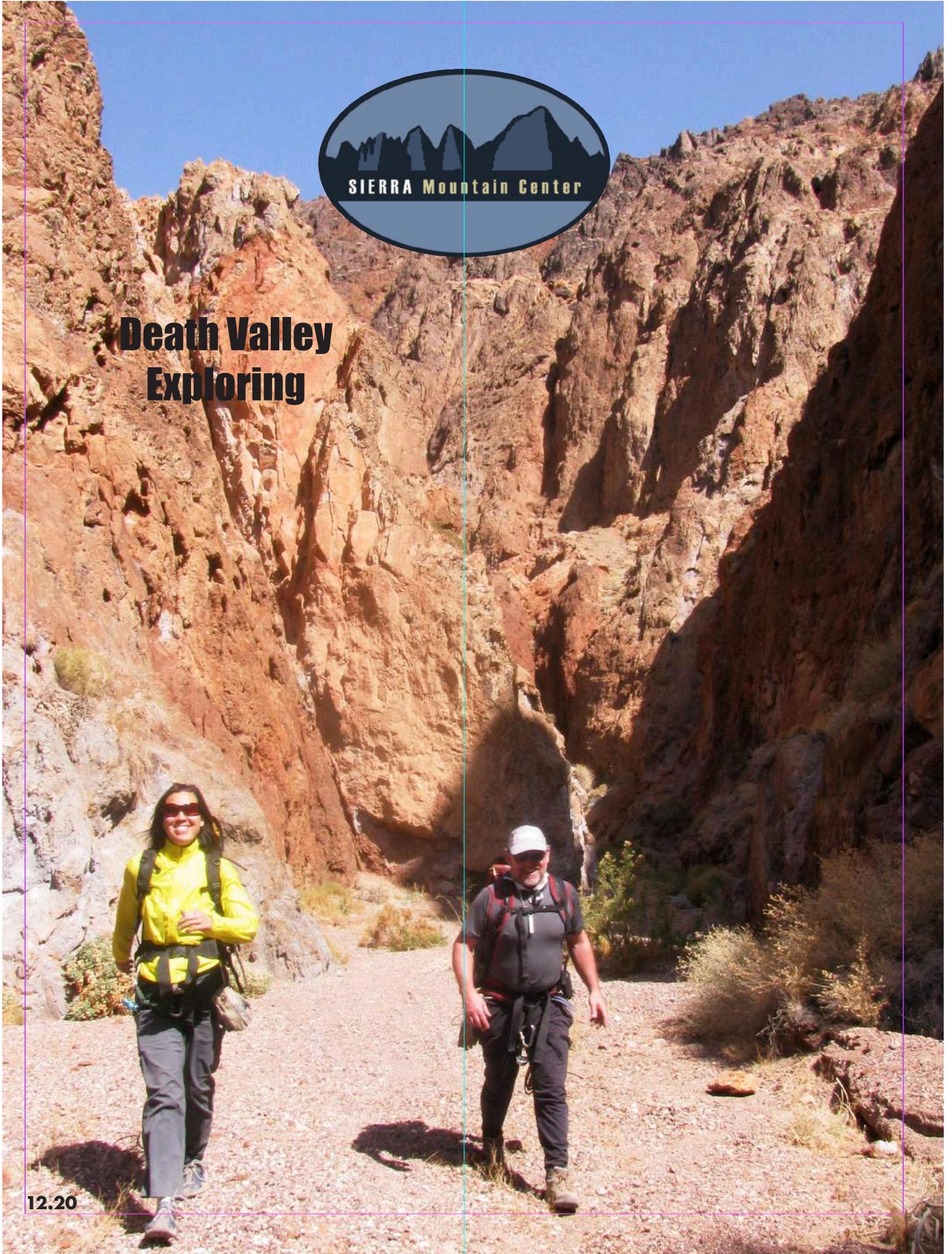




Death Valley Exploring



12.20

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Death Valley is one of the three National Parks near Bishop, but also one of the lesser known and lesser visited ones. But it is our backyard and after decades of adventuring here ourselves, we have recently obtained permits and expanded our offerings to include showing you this remarkable place.

Death Valley has a reputation. What comes to mind are pioneers struggling across the valley abandoning supplies and barely escaping alive. The hottest temperatures recorded on earth. Blinding white salt flats and waterless, parched "desolation".

This might be true. But there is another side to the Valley. Superb desert hiking into shaded canyons where roses grow and unique species such as pupfish live. Deeply eroded canyons with polished limestone grottos and dry waterfalls. Telescope Peak rising in one massive sweep from below sea level to over eleven thousand above, holding snow all winter long. Petroglyphs scratched into canyon walls by a people who long ago figured out how to survive here.

We can help get you there and show you Death Valley. Expand your backpacking horizons and your "off season" hiking opportunities as experienced guides show you around.

The Three Day Death Valley Smorgasbord.

We will make one of the campgrounds near Furnace Creek our base and then over three days choose from our list of 7 possible options choose three, depending upon the desires of the group.

Itinerary:

We will have a campsite arranged near Furnace Creek the night before and you can arrive anytime you want that day. During dinner that evening we will discuss options and preference and make plans for the next three days.

While the option here are nearly limitless we have selected seven that will give you the best introduction to Death Valley. Some of these are trailed hiked, some are true cross country routes where few people go.

Here are our options.

- Fall Canyon - A five mile round trip to spectacular canyon narrows with some bypasses around dry falls to a high fall that blocks higher access.
- Funeral Slot Canyon - Possibly the longest and narrowest slot canyon in the Park with a nine mile round trip hike.
- Grotto Canyon - An intricate labyrinthine canyon, deep enough in places that the sun rarely penetrates. Careful scrambling and climbing around dry falls makes this seem longer than it's six miles
- Lower Bad Canyon - This is one of the giant canyons dropping over 6000 feet from Dantes View to Badwater. We venture up in enough to get a feel for the magnitude and scale of these unique canyons.
- Mt Perry - An eight mile round trip on a rough use trail from the spectacular Dantes view to the summit of the Argus range with expansive views over the whole of Death Valley Park.
- Natural Bridge Canyon - A canyon hike that takes us to the largest natural bridge in the Park and then a little beyond to the impassable fall blocking our access.
- Telescope Peak - The 11,043 high point of the Park sits between Death Valley and Panamint Valley. It is a fourteen mile round trip to the summit and back along a good trail. Winter may have snow and we need to be prepared for that.

Meeting place and time:

We will meet at a Furnace Creek area campground. We will make an advance reservation and send you the campsite

number and location in advance. We will do equipment checks and planning from this basecamp.

What We Provide:

Price includes guiding, permits, campground reservations, all necessary group gear, tents, kitchen gear. This will be car camping so you can bring whatever luxuries you wish.

Bring your own car camping food to prepare in the campground or head out to a nearby restaurant or food court.

Dates and Prices:

Check the latest brochure, call us or go to our web site for dates and rates. Should minimum participant numbers not be reached you will be given the option of paying our private rate, rescheduling, or canceling. Motel/hotel accommodation is not included

Notes and other information:

This is true desert hiking. Come mentally prepared but don't worry about snakes, scorpions, spiders and all those other denizens of the dry lands. The chances are you will never encounter them and if you do they are probably more concerned with having as little to do with you as possible.

In the desert water is our biggest concern and need. We will need to carry enough for the day and our campsites are limited by water. Water is life!

Equipment List for Death Valley Exploring

This trip is car camping and staying at a campground so you do not have to pay attention to details the way you might need to for overnight backpacking. So be comfortable.

Essentials

- ❑ Footwear. Please bring sturdy hiking boots that you have broken in, or trail shoes that you have worn heavy packs with. The main difference between trail runners and boots is foot support vs. blisters. If your feet blister notoriously please consider wearing a trail runner. If you have weak ankles or need additional foot support please wear boots. Your feet are your transportation and can make the difference between surviving and thriving on any trip.
- ❑ Camp Shoes for around camp. Sanuk sandals, Crocs, or light tennis shoes are all appropriate. The camp shoes will make hanging out in camp more comfortable, and lessen the impact we leave on the sites. Open toed flip flops are not acceptable.
- ❑ Internal Frame Packs. A 20liter day pack will suffice.
- ❑ Sleeping Bag. Death Valley is generally warm but we will be at 4,000 feet or so. Highs average in the 60s and lows in the low 40s. If you are cold at night a sleeping bag liner can add significant warmth with minimal additional weight.
- ❑ Sleeping pad. A 3/4 length Ultralight inflatable pad paired with a foam pad is our favorite combination. If bringing an inflatable pad also bring a repair kit to fix leaks. The desert is prickly so take care of your equipment

Clothing

- ❑ 3 pairs of socks. Blister prevention is crucial so the clean third pair for camp is excellent preventative care. A mid-weight, non-cotton sock is ideal, such as a Smartwool or Darn Tough hiking specific sock. Please do not bring low-cut ankle socks as they can lead to rubbing on the heel.
- ❑ 1 mid-weight long-sleeve top. Capilene, Merino or other synthetic.
- ❑ 1 pair of long-johns or tights. Capilene, Merino or other synthetic. .
- ❑ 1 warm shirt. Synchilla or 200 weight works well.
- ❑ 1 warm jacket for the evenings.
- ❑ Waterproof Jacket and Pants - Lightweight and non-bulky. Side zips on the pants should be long enough to slide on over boots. Jacket must have a hood. If the forecast is clear we will leave this behind.
- ❑ 1 pair of hiking pants. Convertible pants that can these to shorts can also be nice to have on the trail.
- ❑ 1 long-sleeve sun shirt. We recommend a "hoody" style though anything that covers your arms and is synthetic is great.
- ❑ 1 short-sleeve T-shirt. Synthetic, not cotton, so it can dry quickly and wick sweat from your body on sweaty, but windy, days.
- ❑ 1 lightweight pair of polypropylene or similar gloves.

- ❑ 1 warm hat/beanie. Synthetics are less itchy than wool.
- ❑ Sunhat. Better to cover up than just rely upon sunscreen.

Etc.

- ❑ Sun glasses. Good quality. If using prescription lenses consider a backup pair.
- ❑ Water carrying system with a capacity of 3 liters A combination of a bottle and hydration system works well. We recommend a 2 liter bladder for daily trail use but also bringing a 1-2 liter metal bottle since bladders can develop leaks and water supply during the day is critical.
- ❑ Headlamp. With a spare set of batteries.
- ❑ Eating and drinking equipment.
- ❑ Swiss army style knife. No giant "multi-tools" tools!
- ❑ Personal toiletries including toothbrush, toothpaste (travel sized), baby wipes and floss.
- ❑ Hand sanitizer- a personal travel size bottle.
- ❑ Toilet paper! You will be required to carry your used toilet paper out. The used toilet paper will go in a paper bag, which then goes in a ziplock, which you carry in your pack.
- ❑ Sunscreen and lip screen. SPF 30+. A 1oz. bottle will be enough. Make sure the lip screen actually contains a sunscreen.
- ❑ Basic first aid supplies such as ibuprofen, moleskin, and tape. Your guides will have extensive first aid kits so please don't go overboard with your personal kits. If you tend to take NSAID's regularly please bring your own, or if your feet require constant blister attention please bring tape and moleskin.
- ❑ Camera/phone camera.
- ❑ Trekking poles. These are not essential, but can be handy on the trail. It is your choice, but they do save wear on the knees.
- ❑ Reading material, journal or Kindle.
- ❑ Ear plugs. Handy to block flapping tents and campground noise.

Food

- ❑ We include meals from dinner on Day 0 when we meet through lunch on Day 3. Bring your own snack items like cliff bars, power bars, or gorp concoctions for all days. Also bring your favorite hot drinks (tea, hot chocolate, cider etc.). A days worth for most people would be 2 bars, 3 ounces of gorp, and perhaps a candy bar. Don't over do it.

Shared Equipment Provided by SMC

- ❑ Shelter. We will provide lightweight tents. If you have your favorite, by all means bring it, but we do want to pair people up where possible to reduce weight. Or just do as the guide does and sleep outside under the stars
- ❑ Car camping equipment stoves, kitchen and cookware.