

NPCA TRAVEL



The Travel Program of the National Parks Conservation Association

NOV. 15–21, 2021

GREAT DESERTS OF THE WEST

DEATH VALLEY

& JOSHUA TREE

EXPLORE



MESMERIZING DESERT OASIS WITH EXPANSIVE NIGHT SKIES AT ONE OF THE BEST STARGAZING SPOTS IN AMERICA

FIVE PARK UNITS, TWO OF WHICH NPCA HELPED ESTABLISH

PLUS

Learn how NPCA & our partners are protecting the important ecosystem of the Mojave Desert.

JOSHUA TREES,
Joshua Tree
National Park

Great Deserts of the West: Death Valley & Joshua Tree

 **Activity level: Moderate**

AVAILABLE DATES: November 15–21, 2021 | Min/Max: 8/9

7 days/6 nights | **NPCA Member Price:** \$3,990 per person double occupancy & \$675 single supplement for The Ranch at Death Valley; \$4,510 per person double occupancy & \$1,215 single supplement for The Death Valley Oasis Inn

Arrive/Depart: Arrivals to Palm Springs, California; Departures from Las Vegas, Nevada

Reservations: Please contact Jared Dial, NPCA's Travel Program Manager, at 1.800.628.7275 or email the Travel Program at travel@npca.org.

Deposit: \$100 per person due at registration

Inclusions: Accommodations as noted in the itinerary, meals as noted (B-breakfast, L-lunch, D-dinner), all gratuities, ground transportation, sightseeing and excursions as listed, guest speakers, a variety of trail snacks, bottled water on the bus, technical day hiking backpack and trekking poles (if needed)

Exclusions: Airfare to Palm Springs/from Las Vegas, luggage charges, travel insurance, alcohol and personal expenses.

Explore the best of Death Valley and Joshua Tree on this carefully orchestrated itinerary led by an NPCA expert and naturalist guides. These amazing Southern California national parks offer incredible fall trekking across diverse and mesmerizing landscapes. Experience two large desert parks that NPCA helped to establish, Sand to Snow and Mojave Trails National Monuments, with a behind-the-scenes look at how NPCA works with local partners to protect these valuable places. Have a formidable visit at Manzanar National Historic Site, an off-the-beaten-path park that preserves one of 10 American incarceration camps where more than 120,000 Japanese Americans were held for years against their will during World War II. Throughout the trip, you'll discover a plethora of desert phenomena, including lush oases, vast sand dunes, towering granite monoliths, salt flats, badlands, alpine peaks and more! Keep a sharp eye out for desert wildlife with opportunities to see desert bighorn sheep, desert cottontail rabbits, roadrunners, desert reptiles, coyotes and snakes. This tour offers a cornucopia of experiences in America's stunning Mojave Desert with an inside look at the various threats this ecosystem faces and how NPCA helps to protect it. Each night we'll retire to comfortable accommodations that put us close to the action.

ITINERARY

DAY Palm Springs Welcome Reception

1 Arrive in Palm Springs, California, where you will meet with the group at the hotel at 5:00 p.m. for a **welcome reception, orientation and dinner** with your guides and NPCA host. Learn about some of the key NPCA initiatives related to the itinerary and prepare for a week of hiking, learning and adventure! Guests are responsible for local transportation to the hotel. **Courtyard Marriott Palm Springs (D)**

DAY Sand to Snow National Monument

2 Today, we depart from Palm Springs and head to **Sand to Snow National Monument**, which NPCA helped to establish in 2016. This national monument gets its name from the area's extreme elevation change—from the sand of the Sonoran Desert to the peak of San Geronio Mountain, a difference of about 10,000 feet. Sand to Snow is home to the most botanically diverse mountains in the contiguous United States and provides a critical water source for many of Joshua Tree National Park's desert bighorn sheep. We'll enjoy a short hike in the monument and then continue on to **Joshua Tree National Park** for check-in and dinner. **29 Palms Hotel (B, L, D)**

HIGHLIGHTS

- Journey through the famed Maze at the Wonderland of Rocks at Joshua Tree National Park
- Hike through a labyrinth of golden colored hills and winding narrow canyons at Death Valley National Park
- Explore some of the most botanically diverse mountains in the United States at Sand to Snow National Monument
- Tour Manzanar Nat'l Historic Site, a World War II Japanese incarceration camp, with National Park Service staff



I think of the California Desert as a
rainforest with no rain: it's one of the
ecologically richest places on earth.
And our national parks and monuments
preserve the best of the best.

CHRIS CLARKE, NPCA RUTH HAMMETT
DESERT ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR

DAY Joshua Tree National Park

3 Today, we explore the wonders of Joshua Tree National Park. This popular park is best known for its namesake yucca plant, but its landscape is dominated by enormous, intricately shaped granite rock formations. After a delightful breakfast, our first hike today will loop us through **Barker Dam**. This valley is rich with petroglyphs and lush with plant life thanks to the precious reservoir created by the dam. It also carries with it the tall tales from the days of gold mining and cattlemen. We'll then embark on a journey into another portion of the famed **Maze at the Wonderland of Rocks**. This trail will weave us through a jungle of spires, granite monoliths and impressive rock formations, opening up to tantalize us with breathtaking views of the park. Get an in-depth look at how NPCA addresses the compromised air quality and diminished views in the park, mostly due to the agriculture industry in the San Joaquin Valley—one of the most polluted areas in the nation. *29 Palms Hotel (B, L, D)*

DAY Mojave Trails National Monument

4 After breakfast this morning, we'll say goodbye to Joshua Tree and move on to **Mojave Trails National Monument**. Mojave Trails connects Joshua Tree National Park to Mojave National Preserve, creating a large natural corridor and living landscape. We will stop for a hike at **Bonanza Springs** and discover firsthand the important role NPCA played in preventing the development of the **Cadiz pipeline**, a water-mining project advocates prevented from being built across this fragile desert landscape. We'll also meet with NPCA's local partners in the park to learn about wildlife conservation efforts and the protection of endangered species such as the desert tortoise. Then we'll continue on our journey to **Death Valley National Park** for check-in and dinner. *Death Valley Oasis Inn or The Ranch at Death Valley (B, L, D)*

DAY Death Valley National Park

5 After a quick stop at the **Furnace Creek Visitor Center**, we'll head to the trailhead of **Golden Canyon and Gower Gulch**, a classic Death Valley hiking loop that takes us deep into a labyrinth of golden-colored hills and winding narrow canyons that make up the **Badlands of the Amargosa Mountains**. After a hilltop lunch with panoramic views, we'll hike down into the water-carved Gower Gulch, spilling out onto a slanted desert landscape at the edge of Death Valley itself. This evening, we will take a drive after dinner to the **Badwater Basin** for expansive night-sky viewing. Death Valley offers some of the best stargazing in America and is designated a **Gold Tier Dark Sky Park**, the darkest possible rating. *Death Valley Oasis Inn or The Ranch at Death Valley (B, L, D)*



MANZANAR NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE, California

DAY 6 Death Valley and Manzanar National Historic Site

Getting an early start today, we'll enjoy sunrise at the **Mesquite Sand Dunes**. After breakfast and ample photography opportunities, we'll continue west and hike to **Darwin Falls**, a mesmerizing Death Valley oasis situated at a higher elevation in the park. After Darwin Falls, we'll make our way to **Manzanar National Historic Site** for a cultural tour of this fascinating World War II Japanese incarceration camp. Sue Kunitomi Embrey, a woman who was incarcerated at the camp during the war, helped plan annual pilgrimages to Manzanar and spearheaded a campaign to designate it as a national historic site. NPCA and National Park Service staff will help the group imagine what life was like behind the barbed wire fences of this camp and discuss the lives of Embrey and others who ensure these stories continue to be told for generations to come. After the tour of Manzanar, the group will eventually make its way back to our Death Valley lodging, eating dinner en route or back at the ranch, depending on timing. **Death Valley Oasis Inn or The Ranch at Death Valley (B, L, D)**

DAY 7 Sunrise in Death Valley and Afternoon Departures

Sunrise at **Zabriskie Point** before departures to Las Vegas, NV for an airport transfer to McCarran International Airport (LAS). **(B, L)**

Please Note: We always do everything in our power to follow the set itinerary, however it can change occasionally based on temporary access restrictions, weather, lodging/campground availability, guest ability/injury, natural events like fires and flooding, and other potential causes.

Travel Insurance: To protect yourself from the loss of deposit and cancellation fees, you are encouraged to purchase travel insurance. If you need assistance, NPCA recommends contacting Travel Insurance Services; confirmation packets will include details.

Traveler Responsibility: Travelers are responsible for choosing an NPCA trip consistent with their ability, fitness, and overall health. All travelers are required to complete and return their **registration form, personal information form, flight form, and waiver** before being allowed to participate in a trip. Travelers also are responsible for reading and understanding all pre-departure materials and bringing the appropriate clothing and gear as suggested.

Trip Cancellation Policy: Cancellation notice must be submitted in writing and is effective upon date of receipt.

September 15, 2021	Until 90 days prior to trip start	89 - 60 days prior	59-30 days prior	< 30 days prior
Payment due	Deposit is 100% refundable less \$100 per person admin fee	Refund less \$100 per person	Refund less 50% of trip cost per person	No refund

LODGING

Find comfort and relaxation in each of the hotel properties we carefully selected for your NPCA trip.



Courtyard Marriott Palm Springs: Savor the Southern California lifestyle along with unbeatable convenience at this hotel in Coachella Valley. The property is only a five-minute drive from the airport.



29 Palms Inn: On a 70-acre property near Joshua Tree National Park, this historic, eclectic, clean and comfortable lodge offers a unique, charming lodging experience up close and personal with nature. After our hikes you can relax by the pool, in the organic garden, or in one of several hammocks and soak up the beauty of the desert.



Death Valley Oasis Inn: An elegant hideaway since 1927, the historic Inn at Death Valley is a AAA-rated four-diamond resort that still pampers every guest. Set against the hillside, the exclusive and private resort looks out over the valley toward the Panamint Mountains. Natural springs run right through the hotel and lush palm trees and flowering bougainvillea adorn the grounds. Completely renovated, the inn features brand new casitas, a spring-fed pool and classic California-desert style.



The Ranch at Death Valley: The sprawling, 3-diamond hotel has been part of a \$100 million renaissance and is the energetic center of activity in Death Valley. Set along Highway 190 next to the National Park Service Visitor Center, you can enjoy a classic town square with towering date palms and mission California architecture.

COVID19 SAFETY PROTOCOLS

NPCA is always committed to providing high quality tours that ensure the well-being and safety of our members and supporters. Each of our travel partners have developed robust safety protocols to protect the health of our guests, staff, and the communities we visit. As conditions and guidelines continue to evolve, our travel partners are committed to easing concerns and creating flexible options for those interested in rescheduling or booking new travel. NPCA advises all individuals to follow the guidance of public health experts at the Centers for Disease Control and the World Health Organization in protecting themselves and their communities from the coronavirus. Specific guidelines such as health screenings and social distancing will be determined based on the trip's date of departure and group size. Please contact us for details.



Why Travel with NPCA?

SAFETY AND FLEXIBILITY

Your health and safety is our top priority. NPCA has worked with each of our travel partners to develop safety measures for our 2021 trips in response to the global pandemic.

EXPERT TRIP LEADERS

Every trip will be led by an NPCA staff expert and naturalist guide. We are teaming up with experienced tour operators to give you exclusive insights into your national parks.

SMALL-SIZED GROUPS

Group size on each of our land trips is limited to no more than 16 people to maximize your interactions with experts, enhance wildlife viewing and boost educational opportunities throughout your experience.

CONVENIENT TRAVEL

Everything is included in your tour, including meals, accommodations, snacks, interpretive guides, special speakers, transportation within the destination and all activities (unless otherwise stated).

ENVIRONMENTALLY CONSCIOUS

NPCA partners with tour operators that support cultural and natural heritage, maximize the economic benefits in the destinations we operate in and establish guidelines for managing environmental impacts.

EXCELLENT VALUE

Our tours offer members the opportunity to explore the parks without the hassle of planning or the frustrations of crowds. We handle the logistics, so you don't have to.

NPCA EXCLUSIVE COLLECTION

Starting in 2021, we will offer a handful of unique tours designed to give you exclusive experiences within the parks and special behind-the-scenes access to National Park Service staff, NPCA partners, and other local specialists. Our goal is to offer NPCA members the best itineraries in adventure and educational travel in the places we know best: America's national parks. Our custom-designed itineraries highlight NPCA's important contributions to park protection while delivering outstanding interpretive hikes and sight-seeing in national parks around the country.

NPCA is the only independent, nonpartisan organization dedicated to advocacy on behalf of the National Park System. We are 100% privately funded and we rely on donations from individuals like you. One traveler per group must be an active NPCA member to participate in an NPCA trip. An annual membership starts at \$15 per person. Please make dues payable to NPCA by check or credit card at npca.org.