



Death Valley

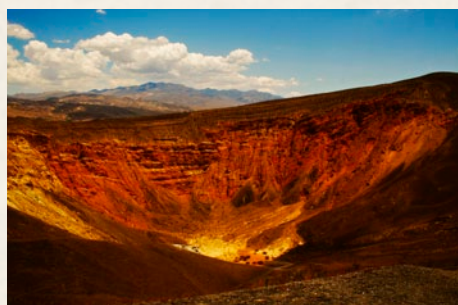
March 12-16, 2012





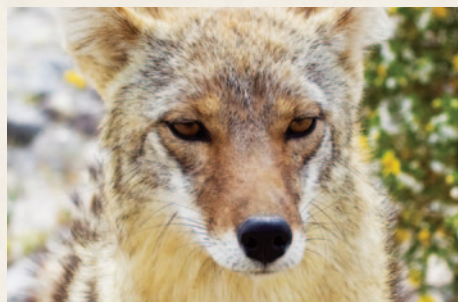
Monday, March 12th Amargosa Opera House and Salt Creek

Meet at Las Vegas airport by 10:00 a.m. and transfer to Death Valley National Park. En route visit the Amargosa Opera House, the passionate creation of a dancer and artist Marta Becket. Arrive at Furnace Creek, and meet up with travelers who have driven to the park. Visit Salt Creek and learn about the amazing pupfish, endemic to Death Valley and uniquely adapted to survive in the desert's harsh environment. Enjoy a welcome reception and dinner at the Furnace Creek Inn. (L,D)



Tuesday, March 13th Badwater and Golden Canyon

At 282 feet below sea level, Badwater Salt Flat is the lowest place in the Western Hemisphere and the eighth lowest place on Earth! The dramatic depth is enhanced by the backdrop of the Panamint Range rising over 11,000ft. Learn about the creation of the park's many alluvial fans, the product of millions of years of sporadic yet constant erosion. Hike through the multi-hued walls of Golden Canyon toward the Red Cathedral, lit by the afternoon sun. (B,L,D)



Wednesday, March 14th Ubehebe Crater, Scotty's Castle, Mosaic Canyon and Dunes

Marvel at Ubehebe Crater, site of a massive volcanic explosion leaving



a pit in the earth over 500 feet deep and a half a mile across. Visit Death Valley Ranch or "Scotty's Castle" a beautiful, yet highly controversial, Spanish-colonial style mansion constructed in the 1920s. Explore Mosaic Canyon and hike to the water-polished stratifications of Noonday Dolomite marking millions of years of geological history. (B,L,D)

Thursday, March 15th Harmony Borax Works, Dante's View and Artist's Palette

Tour Harmony Borax Works and learn about the mining history of borax, or "white gold." Experience Dante's View located at 5,475 ft, and take in a stunning panorama of all 11,049 feet of Telescope Peak. This afternoon relax in the spring-fed waters of the hotel pool, before we visit the pastel-colored Artist's Palette. Enjoy a farewell dinner at the Furnace Creek Inn. (B,L,D)

Friday, 16th Zabriskie Point and Rhyolite Ghost Town

Wake before dawn and depart for sunrise at Zabriskie Point and watch the sunlight illuminate the Badlands and Manly Beacon. Return to Las Vegas for flights home. En route, stop at the ghost town of Rhyolite, NV and pass by the controversial Yucca Mountain on the Nevada Test Site. Please book your flights for 5:30 p.m. or later. (B,L)

photo (pg1 top-bottom) by National Parks Service, John Bruckman / Flickr (pg2) Wikimedia Commons, arno gourdol / Flickr, CaptSpaulding / Flickr, ken-ich / Flickr, NPS, JakobSoderstrom / Flickr (pg3) NPS, Frank Ackerman, IceNineJon / Flickr, NPS, (pg4) IceNineJon / Flickr

Explore this magnificent land of extremes with study leader and guide Frank Ackerman, a former Death Valley National Park Ranger. Learn about the dramatic geology, the remarkably hardy flora and fauna, and the controversial issues surrounding Death Valley. Mid-March is a great time to visit and we have an excellent chance of witnessing the vibrant spring wildflower bloom.

Study Leader



Study Leader, **Frank Ackerman** is a retired National Park Service Ranger who worked in Death Valley for four years. His 30-year career included posts at the Grand Canyon and Voyageurs National Parks, and he served as the Chief of Interpretation for Cape Cod National Seashore. Frank helped create an award-winning interpretative program as part of a joint venture between Amtrak and the National Park Service to provide educational commentary on select passenger trains in the Northeast. Most recently he has been living in Carson City, Nevada and working as Curator of Education at the Nevada State Railroad Museum. Frank is excited to teach you about the spectacular desert flora and fauna, and the geology and human history of Death Valley. He also will discuss the controversial decisions regarding the preservation of the park and the impact of those today.

Did You Know?

- Death Valley is home to more than 1,000 species of plants and more than 50 of those are endemics, found nowhere else in the world.
- Death Valley is the largest national park and has the lowest point in Western Hemisphere (282 feet below sea level) and claims the second hottest temperature ever recorded (134 degrees in 1931!)
- The highest mountain in Death Valley National Park is 11,049 foot Telescope Peak. The vertical drop from the peak to the Badwater Basin is twice the depth of Grand Canyon.

What to Expect

Average temperatures in March range from 53-80°. Our transportation around the park is by mini-vans. Travelers should be in active good health to participate in this trip. While walks are not too strenuous, they are over uneven terrain and may require the use of hands and feet to climb over obstructions. Our longest hike is about 2 miles, with approximately 500 feet in elevation gain. Most all walks are "out and back" so participants can go as far as they like, and then wait for the group to return. For those that would like more active hiking, we can help arrange that during your free time.

The Furnace Creek Ranch

The Furnace Creek Resort is situated in a lush oasis surrounded by the vast and arid desert of Death Valley National Park, California. The resort has two properties – the Ranch and the Inn. We have reserved deluxe rooms at the Ranch, which has been welcoming guests since 1933. The property has a gift shop, saloon, a spring-fed swimming pool, tennis courts, a children's playground and the National Park Service Visitor's Center is just a stone's throw away. One mile away is the 4-diamond Furnace Creek Inn. Upgrades to the Inn are available.



Terms and Conditions

Cost*

\$1,995 per person, based on double occupancy

\$2,425 per person, based on single occupancy

We are staying in deluxe rooms at the Furnace Creek Ranch. If you would like to upgrade to the Furnace Creek Inn, the supplemental charges are:

\$495 per person, double \$990 per person, single

*This based on a minimum of 8 travelers. The maximum number of travelers is 25.

Deposit and Payments

To make a reservation, a deposit of \$500 per person is required by check or credit card. Please mail your check (payable to "Black Sheep Adventures") or charge instructions, with your completed reservation form to the address on the reservation form. You may also fax in your reservation form or call our office or call (415)597-6720. Final payment is due no later than January 12, 2012. If you want to pay your final payment by check there is a 2% "payment by check" discount.

Deposits, Cancellations and Refunds

Your deposit and payments are refundable, less the following cancel fees:

If cancellation occurs:	Minimum per person fee:
91+ days prior to departure	\$200 per person
61-90 days prior to departure	25% of per person trip cost
31-60 days prior to departure	50% of per person trip cost
0-30 days prior to departure	No refund

Responsibility

The Commonwealth Club of California and our ground operators and suppliers act only as agents for the travelers with respect to transportation and arrangements, and exercise every care possible in doing so. However, we can assume no liability for injury, damage, loss, accident, delay or irregularity in connection with the service of any automobile, motorcoach, or any other conveyance used in carrying out this program or for the acts or defaults of any company or person engaged in conveying the passenger or in carrying out the arrangements of the program. We cannot accept any responsibility for losses or additional expenses due to delay or changes in air or other services, sickness, weather, strike, war, quarantine, force majeure or other causes beyond our control. All such losses or expenses will have to be borne by the passenger as tour rates provide arrangements only for the time stated. We reserve the right to make such alterations to this published itinerary as may be deemed necessary. The right is reserved to cancel any program prior to departure in which case the entire payment will be refunded without further obligation on our part. No refund will be made for an unused portion of any tour unless arrangements are made in sufficient time to avoid penalties. The Commonwealth Club of California accepts no liability for any carrier's cancellation penalty incurred by the purchase of a nonrefundable ticket in connection with the tour. California Seller of Travel Program Registration #2096889-40

Included

- 4 nights at the Furnace Creek Ranch
- Daily breakfast (4) at the hotel, 5 lunches and 4 dinners
- Welcome reception dinner with beer and wine
- Round-trip transfers from Las Vegas Airport to Death Valley National Park
- Tours, entrances, and events as specified in the itinerary
- Mini-bus transportation for all excursions
- Gratuities for hotel staff, restaurant staff, drivers and for all group activities
- Joining us all week will be expert guide Frank Ackerman
- Services of a professional Tour Manager

- Club Host to assist you throughout the program (with a minimum of 12 travelers)
- The camaraderie of the Club's travelers

Not Included

- Air transportation to and from Las Vegas, Nevada.
- Meals and beverages other than those specified as included
- Optional excursions and other activities done independently
- Trip-cancellation/interruption and baggage insurance
- Personal items such as e-mail, telephone and fax calls, souvenirs, laundry and gratuities for non-group services

Reservation Form

Death Valley – March 12-16, 2012



Phone: (415) 597-6720
Fax: (415) 597-6729

Personal Information

Traveler 1:

Last Name: _____

Address: _____

Daytime Phone (_____) _____

Traveler 2:

Last Name: _____

First Name: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Email Address: _____

First Name: _____

Single Travelers Only

I plan to share accommodations with _____

I wish to have single accommodations. I'd like to know about possible roommates. I am a smoker / nonsmoker.

Payment

Here is my deposit of \$ _____ (\$500 per person) for _____ place(s).

Enclosed is my check (make payable to Blacksheep Adventures).

Charge my deposit to my Visa MasterCard American Express

Card Number: _____ Expires: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Mail completed form to: Commonwealth Club Travel, 595 Market St., 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105

I/We have read the Terms and Conditions and agree to them. Signature: _____