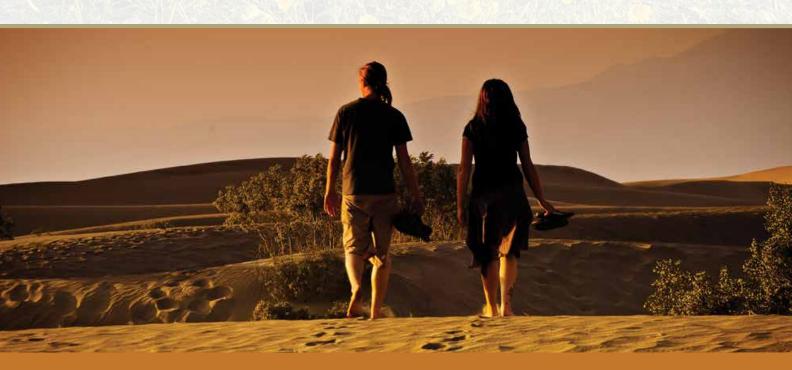


Death Valley

Sand Dunes, Canyons and Wildflowers February 28 - March 4, 2016





Itinerary

Sunday, February 28 Arrive in Las Vegas

Arrive in Las Vegas independently, and gather at 6:00 p.m. at the DoubleTree hotel for a welcome drink, introductions, and a trip orientation on the park by your study leader. Dinner will follow at the hotel. *DoubleTree Hotel (D)*

Monday, February 29 Shoreline Butte, Badwater & Harmony Borax Works

Transfer to Death Valley National Park. En route stop at Ashford Mill for the chance to see wildflowers in bloom and to witness evidence of the shoreline of the historic Lake Manly. At its zenith 22,000 years ago, the lake was over 80 miles long and over 600 feet deep, but given the changing climate, it disappeared thousands of years ago. Stretch your legs at Badwater, at 282 feet below sea level this 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 11,000 feet. After lunch at Furnace Creek, stop by the visitor center before touring Harmony Borax Works and learning about the mining history of "the white gold of Death Valley." Enjoy a welcome dinner at the Furnace Creek Inn.

Furnace Creek Resort (B,L,D)

Tuesday, March 1 Dante's View, Salt Creek & Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes

Experience Dante's View, located at 5,475 feet, and take in a stunning panorama of all 11,049 feet of Telescope Peak. Learn about the creation of the park's many alluvial fans, the product of millions of years of sporadic, yet continual, erosion. Later visit Salt Creek and learn about the amazing pupfish, endemic to Death Valley and uniquely adapted to survive in the desert's harsh environment. End the day's activities with the chance to walk among the picturesque sand dunes. After dinner enjoy the chance of some stargazing and see firsthand why Death Valley is an officially recognized "Gold Tier" Dark Sky Park. (B,L,D)

Wednesday, March 2 Titus Canyon, Scotty's Castle & Ubehebe Crater

Explore the Titus Canyon narrows and hike among the stratifications of rock marking millions of years of geological history. The opening of the canyon affords the best chance to see a chuckwalla in its natural habitat. These sizable lizards have evolved to inflate their bodies to wedge themselves in the cracks in the rock they live in so as to deter predators. Enjoy a history tour at "Scotty's Castle" - a beautiful, Spanish-colonial style mansion constructed in the 1920s. Marvel at Ubehebe Crater, site of a massive volcanic explosion that left a pit in the earth over 500 feet deep and a half a mile across. (*B,L,D*)

Thursday, March 3 Sunrise at Zabriskie Point, Golden Canyon & Sunset at Artist's Palette

Wake just before dawn and transfer to Zabriskie Point to watch as the sunlight slowly illuminates the surrounding mountains. Return to Furnace Creek for breakfast. Hike through the multi-hued walls of Golden Canyon toward the Red Cathedral with the option to continue for a longer hike back through Gower Gulch. After lunch, relax at the hotel with the option to watch the film Amargosa. A finalist for a 1999 Academy Award Nomination for Best Documentary, the film provides the backstory in preparation for the visit to the Amargosa Opera House on Friday. This evening enjoy a sunset visit to the pastel-colored volcanic ash deposits of Artist's Palette before our farewell dinner. (B,L,D)

Friday, March 4 Amargosa Opera House, Ash Meadows & Devil's Hole

After breakfast in the park, visit the Amargosa Opera House, the passionate creation of a dancer and artist, Marta Becket. Transfer to the visitor center at Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge to learn of the plight of the pupfish and get a glimpse of Devil's Hole. After lunch, return to Las Vegas for flights home. Please book your return flights for 6:00 pm or later. (*B,L*)











Online: commonwealthclub.org/travel

Phone: 415.597.6720 Email: travel@commonwealthclub.org

What to Expect

Average temperatures during this time range from 53-80°. Our transportation around the park is by 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 who would like more active hiking, we can help arrange that during your free time.



The Furnace Creek Ranch

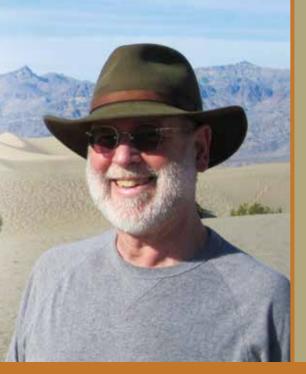
The Furnace Creek Resort is situated in a lush oasis surrounded by the vast and arid desert of Death Valley National Park, California. The resort has two properties – the Ranch and the Inn. We have reserved deluxe rooms at the Ranch, which has been welcoming guests since 1933. The property has a gift 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.





Study Leader, Frank Ackerman

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. Frank is excited to teach you about the spectacular desert flora and fauna, and the geology and human history of Death Valley.



Trip Details

Dates.

February 28–March 4, 2016

Group Size:

Minimum 8, maximum 18 (not including staff)

Cost:

\$2,995 per person, double occupancy \$3,495 per person, 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: \$600 per person, double occupancy \$975 single occupancy, added to single rate above

Included:

I night at the DoubleTree, Las Vegas; 4 nights at the Furnace Creek Ranch; daily breakfast (5) at the hotel, 5 lunches and 5 dinners; welcome and farewell dinners 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 and restaurant staff; 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 15 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; gratuities to tour manager and drivers; 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.

Online: commonwealthclub.org/travel Phone: 415.597.6720 Email: travel@commonwealthclub.org







RESERVATION FORM

February 28-March 4, 2016 Fax: 415.597.6729

NAME 1		
NAME 2		
ADDRESS CITY/STAT:	F/7IP	
GIT/olivi.	L) 211	
HOME PHONE CELL		
E-MAIL ADDRESS		
SINGLE TRAVELERS ONLY:		
If this is a reservation for one person, please indicate: I plan to share	accommodations with	
OR I wish to have single accommodations. OR I'd like to know	about possible roommates.	I am a smoker / nonsmoker. (circle one)
PAYMENT:		
Here is my deposit of \$ (\$500 per person) for place(s) Pl	ease upgrade me/us to the	Furnace Creek Inn.
Enclosed is my check (make payable to Black Sheep Adventures, Inc)). OR	
Charge my deposit to my Visa MasterCard AM	EX Discover	
CARD#	EXPIRES	SECURITY CODE
AUTHORIZED CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE		DATE
I/We have read the Terms and Conditions for this program and agree	ee to them.	
SIGNATURE PLEASE RETURN THIS FORM ALOI Commonwealth		SIT TO:

555 Post Street San Francisco, CA 94102 You may also fax the form to 415.597.6729

DEPOSIT & PAYMENTS:

by check or credit card. Please mail your check (payable to "Black Sheep Adventures, Inc") 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 December 28, 2015. If you want to pay your final payment by check there is a \$50 "payment by check" discount.

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

RESPONSIBILITY: