

SAMPLE ITINERARY

DEATH VALLEY 4-DAY GETAWAY

CALIFORNIA'S DRAMATIC DESERT



BIKING | Casual Hotels

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STRAIGHT *talk*

We want to make sure you're on the right trip and that you have the best experience possible. Every trip is unique and this one is no exception.

CLIMATE

Death Valley is a land of extremes. At times, weather conditions (like high winds or even the occasional rainstorm) may warrant unexpected changes to our itinerary. In this event, alternate activities will be planned that you're sure to enjoy.

ACCOMMODATIONS & SERVICE STANDARDS

The Inn at Death Valley received a multimillion-dollar renovation in 2018. It is a grand historical treasure and by far the best place to stay in the Death Valley area. While its location within Death Valley National Park makes it an ideal base for exploring the valley's many sights, it is also subject to park regulations and oversight. Similar to many national park lodges, service at The Inn at Death Valley can seem slow and casual compared to the high standards of hospitality found on other Backroads trips.



DAY 1

On the first day of the trip, meet your Trip Leaders at 7:30 a.m. just outside next to the valet area of the Westin Las Vegas Hotel & Spa, located at 160 East Flamingo Road in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Alternatively, you can meet the group at 10:30 a.m. at The Inn at Death Valley (760-786-2345) located on California 190 in Death Valley, California. Let your Trip Consultant know in advance if you plan to meet the group at the Westin Las Vegas or The Inn at Death Valley so they can inform your Trip Leaders.

Please arrive dressed in your biking clothes and bring your luggage and a daypack with your rain gear and anything else you may want for today's ride (your luggage will be transported to our first night's accommodations).

Alternatively, you can bring your biking clothes in your daypack and change at the hotel before the ride.

SHUTTLE TO DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

2 Hours

BIKING OPTIONS:

Badwater Direct Route: 17 Miles* (500' elevation gain)

Badwater Out-&-Back: 34 Miles (1,300')

**with shuttle*

Welcome to the Mojave Desert! After meeting we shuttle to a lush desert oasis and our home for the week, The Inn at Death Valley. An iconic Old Hollywood getaway since 1927, the elegant and luxurious Spanish Mission-style resort completed an extensive multimillion-dollar renovation in 2018.

We dig into a gourmet picnic lunch before your Trip Leaders fit your bike and give a brief talk on biking techniques and safety. Then you're off on a ride to Badwater, enjoying smooth terrain with some gradual downhills and short steep inclines thrown in. According to legend, Badwater, the lowest point in the United States, was inadvertently named by an early surveyor who wrote "bad water" on the map when his mule refused to drink here. (You can't blame the mule—the water supposedly tastes like a concentrated dose of Epsom salts!)

Although Badwater initially appears to be downright inhospitable, a closer look reveals a thriving ecosystem. Keep an eye out for salt lovers such as pickleweed and the iodine bush, as well as the valley's indigenous soft-bodied saltwater snail. For a change of pace, forgo part of today's route to play a round of golf at the lowest course in the world—214 feet below sea level! (Golf is not included in the trip price.) Back on your bike, ride through the valley to return to The Inn at Death Valley. Notice the Great Salt Flats shimmering in the distance—the mesmerizing mirage makes it appear as if you've reached the ocean's shore.

Your ride is framed by the magnificent Panamint Range to the west and the Black Mountains to the east. Furnace Creek is a natural oasis where 50 freshwater springs provide water for drinking, showers, irrigation and even the swimming pool at the hotel. After settling into your room, gather for a welcome reception before a delicious dinner at the on-site restaurant.

Lodging: The Inn at Death Valley

DAY 2

BIKING OPTIONS:

Mesquite Sand Dunes Route: 24 Miles* (600' elevation gain)

Mesquite Sand Dunes Out-&-Back: 48 Miles (1,300')

**with shuttle*

After breakfast, ride to the Harmony Borax Works. Once the central feature of the Death Valley area, the historic plant employed 40 men and produced 3 tons of borax daily while it was in operation. After passing the Borax Works, continue pedaling toward the Grapevine Range. Just past Devil's Cornfield, you can hop off your bike to explore the Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes, one of the largest sand dune networks in the United States.

Refuel with lunch before enjoying a scenic spin back to the hotel. This afternoon you'll have time to explore the property or relax in the unique spring-fed swimming pool. Other options include working out in the air-conditioned poolside fitness center or treating yourself to a massage or wellness treatment. (Spa treatments are not included in the trip price. Advance reservations are recommended.)

Dinner tonight is at your leisure. Later, perhaps take the opportunity to check out the night sky. Death Valley is designated by the International Dark Sky Association as the largest Dark Sky National Park in the country.



DAY 3

SHUTTLE TO RHYOLITE 1 Hour

RHYOLITE GHOST TOWN VISIT 30 Minutes

BIKING OPTIONS:

Hell's Gate Route: 27 Miles (1,000' elevation gain)

Rhyolite to Furnace Creek Route: 39 Miles (1,300')

This morning we shuttle to the historic ghost town of Rhyolite—named after the silica-rich volcanic rock in the landscape. Prospectors rushed to get rich by mining the seemingly plentiful mineral deposits in the early 1900s. New buildings sprung up everywhere including hotels, two electric plants and a three-story structure with the hefty price tag of \$90,000. After only a few years, however, the area was mined clean of any valuable ore. By 1916 light and power to the town were turned off. We explore what remains of this once-prosperous town: the shell of a train station, casino and several homes dotting the landscape. Enjoy the eerie quiet as you imagine it during the time of its peak population when over 4,000 people lived here.

Next, we hop on our bikes to ascend Daylight Pass, where we reach our highest point of the trip at 4,400 feet. After the climb, we stop for lunch before embarking on a long descent back into Death Valley with sweeping views of the Panamint Range and Salt Creek—this ride is often a favorite of the trip!

The afternoon is yours to explore the visitor center, take a dip in the pool or enjoy a cold drink as you watch the sun set from the hotel patio. Back at the hotel this evening, we regroup for a celebratory farewell meal.

Lodging: The Inn at Death Valley

DAY 4

ZABRISKIE POINT HIKE 2.9 Miles (900' elevation gain)

Today we head out to an iconic setting for a hike through the badlands of Death Valley to Zabriskie Point. Surrounded by tall sandstone walls, walk through a maze of multicolored rock. You'll pass under 823-foot Manly Beacon, named for William Manly, who led his stranded emigrant party safely out of Death Valley in 1849. Take in the amazing Panamint Range, including Telescope Peak, and the badlands' yellow sandstone. If you look to the south, you'll see ancient lava flows in the Black Mountains.

After the morning hike, there's time for a quick shower at the hotel before we have lunch and shuttle back to Las Vegas, where our trip ends. See "Arriving and Departing" for end-of-trip logistics.

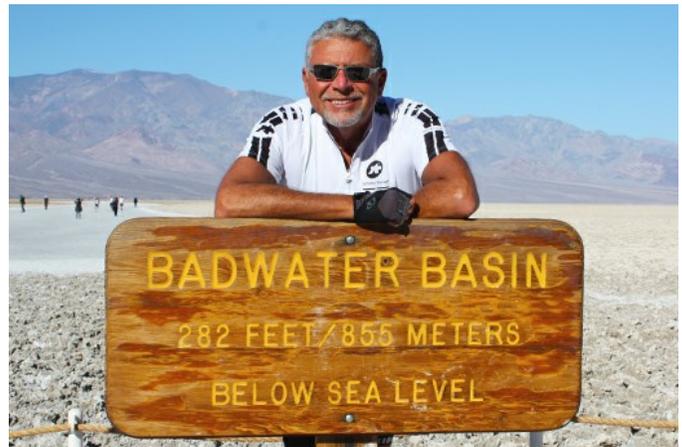


SHIFT GEARS

Our trips are designed to be flexible, giving you the freedom to experience the best of the region the way YOU want. Feel like you're ready to go, go, go? We can show you the way! Want some downtime or prefer to head out on your own? No problem!

Your Trip Leaders will make sure to tell you the best days to take time for yourself (if you want it) without feeling like you're missing out.

So feel free to shift gears and make it your day!



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