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Odyssey Productions
Pacific Studios Exhibit Design
Death Valley National Park

Furnace Creek Visitor Center Orientation Interactive Map

"Individual Locations"

Final Text

Furnace Creek Visitor Center Orientation Interactive Map

"Individual Locations"

Attract screen:

Ten artful and engaging Death Valley images will rotate on the screen. The directive "Touch Screen to Explore" will fade in and out, moving around the screen.

When the screen is touched, the program begins.

Screen Left: A map of Death Valley appears on the left two-thirds of the screen. Dots highlight the selected 24 site/locations. When touched, the map zooms into the area. Each site/location has an adjacent "Information" icon.

Screen Right: A menu appears on the right one-third of the screen, listing the site/locations in alphabetical order, each accompanied by a thumbnail image. The menu also offers the option of "Half Day Excursions" and "Full Day Excursions."

Touching either an Information icon on the map or a thumbnail/location on the menu directs the visitor to a screen that shows a 30-second silent video and a paragraph of text highlighting the selection.

#1. Aguerberry Point

Distance From Furnace Creek Visitor Center

46 miles /74 kilometers

56 miles / 90 kilometers (per Bing Maps)

Road Conditions

paved road, gravel road last 6 mi. / 9.7 km.

Elevation

6,433 feet

Approximate Drive time to Aguerberry Point

1 hour, 5 minutes

Aguereberry Point in the Panamint Mountains offers a spectacular and diverse vista from a high vantagepoint.

The perspective includes the golden west side of Death Valley, the green oasis of Furnace Creek and the white salt flats of Badwater Basin.

The point is named for prospector and gold miner Pete Aguerberry. Along the gravel road approaching the point are a number of structures from his Eureka Mine and the remains of his mining camp.

At the site are cabins from 1941 and 1945, plus Pete's original 1907 two-room cabin, still containing a gas stove and refrigerator. He took visitors on a tour of what he called "The Great View" of Death Valley.

The point is the best place to photograph the valley in late afternoon with the sun at your back. The high elevation also means cooler temperatures on a hot day.

#2 Artist's Drive

Distance From Furnace Creek Visitor Center

9.5 miles / 15 kilometers

Road Conditions

paved road; vehicles restricted to 25 ft. (7.7 m) long

Elevation

TBD

Approximate Drive time to Artist's Drive

15 minutes, plus ½ hour to drive the 9-mile road

Artist's Drive is a scenic one-way, 9-mile excursion off Badwater Drive. As it curves and climbs along the mountain front, the narrow route loops through steep alluvial fans and canyons in multi-hued hills of reds, yellows, browns, and purples.

Along the way, a turnout known as Artist's Palette overlooks a stretch of hillside composed of curved bands of vividly-colored pink, white and green clayish rock.

Ample parking allows for taking photographs – especially capturing the beauty of the late afternoon light -- or exploring on foot.

One of the most colorful parts of Death Valley National Park, the rock formations have yielded diatoms and microscopic plants indicative of environments from 10 to 30 million years ago.

The drive crosses several steep dry gullies, bends sharply, and dips up and down, roller-coaster-like, resulting in a top speed of only 15 mph.

#3 Badwater

Distance from Furnace Creek Visitor Center

17.6 miles / 28.3 kilometers (one way)

Road Conditions

paved road

Elevation

282 feet/ 85.5 meters below sea level

Approximate Driving Time to Badwater

35 minutes

Badwater Salt Flats is the lowest point in North America, at 282 feet (85.5 meters) *below* sea level. Mountains surround the flats, including a stunning view of 11,049 feet (3,368 m) Telescope Peak.

An easy stroll over a boardwalk and path leads out to a surreal landscape of vast salt flats—a shimmering crust of salt crystals, and pressure ridges formed where thick plates of salt crack and rise.

The crystals can look and sound like snow under your feet.

A shallow, salty pool is the remnant of an ancient 100-mile (1.60 km) long lake. Plant and animal life in the pool include soldier fly larvae and bronze water beetles. Ditch grass and salt-tolerant pickleweed are found along the shore.

Below sea level and without shade, the flats can get exceedingly hot in summer.

#4 Dante's View

Distance From Furnace Creek Visitor Center

25 miles, 40 kilometers

Road Conditions

paved road; vehicles restricted to 25 ft. (7.7 m) long

Elevation

5,475 feet / 1,669 meters

Approximate Drive time to Dante's View

45 minutes

Dante's View has been described as the most breathtaking overlook in the park. Nearly 6,000 feet above Death Valley, the mountaintop vista reveals a grand perspective of more than 200 square miles.

The difference in elevation visible – from the high point of Telescope Peak at 11,049 ft. (17,780 m.) to the low point of Badwater Salt Flats at -282 ft. (-85.5 m.) – is a staggering 11,331 ft. (3,455 m). It is the greatest topographic relief in the lower 48 states.

From here, there is a sense of the expansiveness of Death Valley and a

spectacular look at its remarkable scenery.

The viewpoint was named by officials of the Pacific Coast Borax Company, reportedly inspired by the scorching valley's comparison to purgatory in Dante's *Inferno*.

The elevation provides a cooler respite on hot days and the point is especially popular at sunrise.

#5 Darwin Falls

Distance From Furnace Creek Visitor Center

60 miles / 96 kilometers

Road Conditions

paved; gravel road last 2.5 mi. (4 km)

Elevation

TBD feet / TBD meters

Approximate Drive time to Darwin Falls

1 hour, 15 minutes

Darwin Falls is a seemingly miraculous oasis in the desert – a year-round waterfall. The upper and lower falls combined plunge 80 ft. (24 m), making this the highest waterfall in the park. The flowing water is fed by springs from an underground watercourse.

Surrounded by thickets of willow trees and brilliant green moss, the falls converge in a small pool. (Swimming not permitted.)

The water and surprising greenery attract wildlife that would not ordinarily appear in the desert. In springtime, the area rings with the song of migrating birds.

There is no formal trail, but the falls can be reached by a mostly-level one-mile hike that involves some rock scrambling and several stream crossings.

The falls are named for Dr. Darwin French, the explorer who discovered them.

#6 Devil's Golf Course

Distance From Furnace Creek Visitor Center

13 miles / 21 kilometers (10 miles according to google maps)

Road Conditions

paved, gravel road last 1.3 mi. (.75 km)

Elevation

TBD

Approximate Drive time to Devil's Golf Course

23 minutes

Devil's Golf Course is an immense area of rock salt, eroded by wind and rain into intricate and amazing jagged spires. Its name originated from the notion that only the devil could play golf on such rough terrain.

The hard, salt-encrusted pinnacles are as high as two feet and so sharp that they can cut through shoe leather. Imagine the early settlers in covered wagons crossing this unforgiving landscape during the 1849 California gold rush.

These unique shapes were formed when salt crystals – mostly the same sodium chloride as table salt – rose from the valley's underlying bed of mud.

Continually eroding by wind and rain, the salty spires grow very slowly, perhaps only an inch in 35 years.

For those who venture out and bend down to listen, fascinating popping and pinging sounds can be heard emanating from the salt crystals.

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To see the complete script, contact me at matrazzo@msn.com
