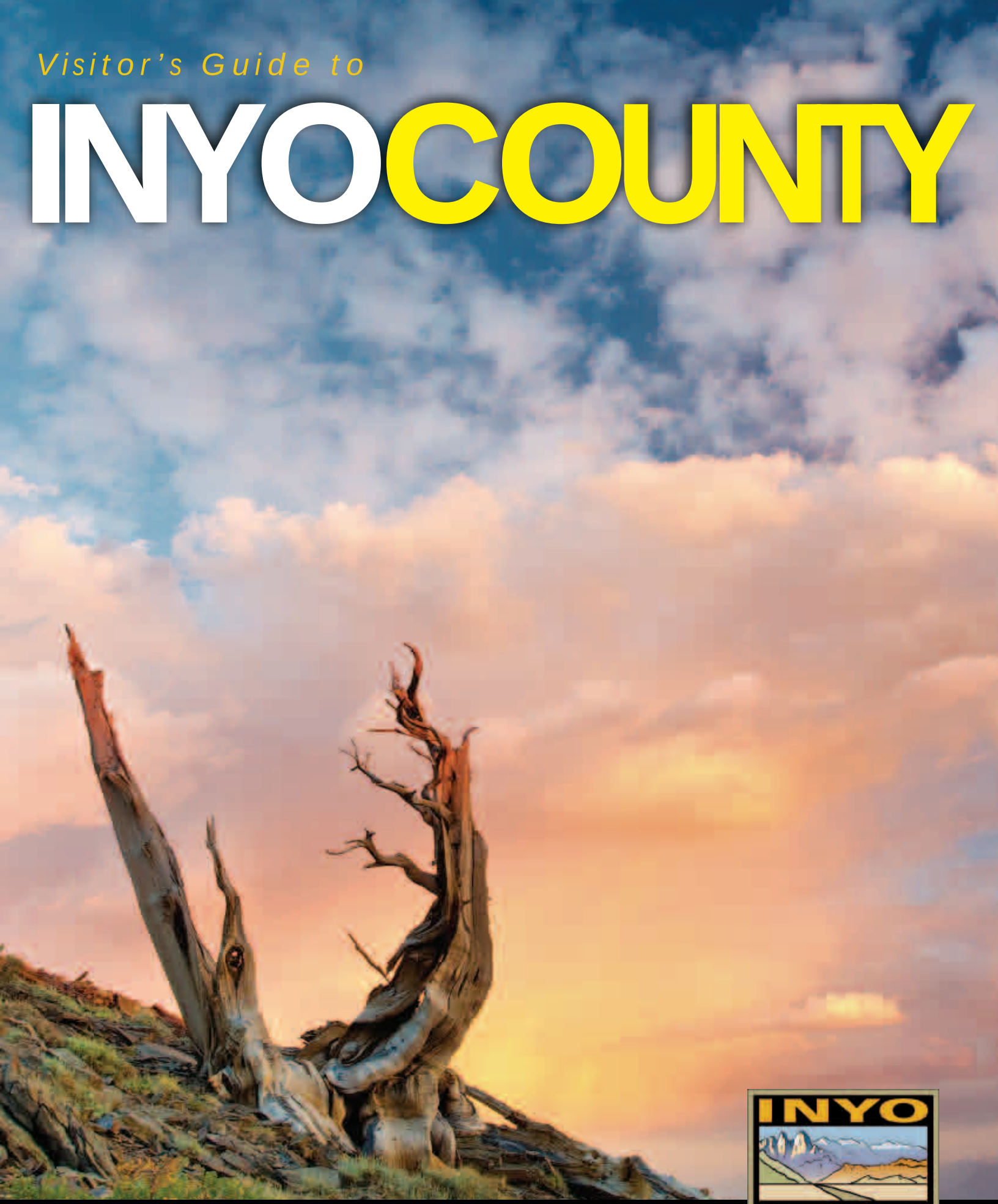
Visitor's Guide to

INYO COUNTY



FOURTH EDITION

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Visitor's Guide to

INYO COUNTY

FOURTH EDITION

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INYO COUNTY

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF INYO COUNTY

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PO Box 397
Independence, California 93526
(760) 878-0084
www.independence-ca.com

Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce
120 South Main Street
P.O. Box 749
Lone Pine, California 93545
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www.lonepinechamber.org

Government Agencies:
Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
(760) 872-4881

County of Inyo
(760) 878-0366

Death Valley National Park
(760) 786-3200

Eastern Sierra Interagency Visitors Center
(760) 876-6222

Inyo National Forest-Supervisor
(760) 873-2400

Mt. Whitney Ranger Station
(760) 876-6200

White Mountain Ranger Station
(760) 873-2500

AMARGOSA CONSERVANCY

The Amargosa River is over 175 miles long and often is called the "hide and seek" river because of its inclination to travel underground, occasionally resurfacing to create lush oases surrounded by a harsh dry desert environment. These oases are

Amargosa River Canyon

Amargosa River above Willow Creek

isolated from one another, and, as a result, each one provides unique habitats for species that are found nowhere else in the world except along this desert river. Overall there are approximately fifty of these unique species such as the *Devil's Hole pupfish*, the *Speckled dace*, the *Amargosa toad*, the *Ash Meadows gumplant* and the *Amargosa niterwort*. These series of lush springs also support riparian bird species such as the *Least Bell's Vireo* and the *Southwestern Willow Flycatcher* both federally listed as endangered species. Birds listed by the state of California as Species of Special Concern such as the *Yellow Warbler*, the *Yellow- breasted Chat*, the *Vermilion Flycatcher*, and the *Virginia Warbler* are also found in the area simply because of the string of lush oases amidst the desert landscape.

The rich riparian resources that support a wide variety of plant and animal life also attracted early man to its banks as evidenced by sleeping circles, shelter caves, geoglyphs and an abundance of mortars and pestles, scrapers, pottery shards, and projectile points. Much later explorers such as Kit Carson, John C. Fremont, and Brigham Young ventured into the area. In 1829 Antonio Armijo established the Old Spanish Trail, which brought a constant flow of visitors into the Amargosa region. Prospectors traveling west to the California gold fields heard rumors that the mountains surrounding the Amargosa river contained silver, gold, lead, copper, and zinc treasures, and by the late 1800s the area was flooded with prospectors seeking their fortune. The area continued to be an active mining district until the 1980's. In 1906 the Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad was constructed along the banks of the Amargosa to carry borax to markets from the rich borate prospects in the region. The train continued to operate for another thirty years serving as an important source of transportation for the region.

Tecopa Wetlands ACEC

Willow Creek below China Ranch

Wildflowers: Amargosa River Canyon

Although the rich resources of the Amargosa region were known and appreciated by many residents, visitors and government officials alike, the area was not given protective legal status as part of the California Desert Protection Act of 1994 as was the Death Valley National Park to the north and the Mojave Preserve to the south. Although wilderness areas were created near the Amargosa, such as the Funeral Mountain Wilderness, the Ibex Hills, the Kingston Range, and the Nopahs, the Amargosa Valley itself was again overlooked. Except for the areas of Ash Meadows and the Amargosa Canyon, the river and its oases themselves were left unprotected. Even more damaging was the fact that the river was still often seen as fragments and not as a system.

Crystal Spring: Kingston Wilderness

Wildflowers at Amargosa R. waterfall

In March 2004 a group of residents and others who were concerned about the Amargosa and its communities met to address these concerns, and after much discussion the group came to the conclusion that a locally based conservancy would be the most effective way to address these issues. By July 2005 the Amargosa Conservancy was officially incorporated and funded. By March 2006 the Conservancy had adopted a

Continued on Page 4

Thank you Representative Buck McKeon for helping protect the Amargosa River as a Wild & Scenic River included in the National Conservation Lands, and Senator Dianne Feinstein for continuing to work to protect this amazing place.

Come visit the California Outback to see what makes people from around the world fall in love with this wild and diverse corner of Inyo County.

amargosaconservancy.org

Conservation Lands Foundation

conservationlands.org

Death Valley Chamber of Commerce

deathvalleyoktambor.org

Paid for by the Amargosa Conservancy

Tecopa Wetlands (ACEC) Area of Critical Environmental Concern

Continued from Page 3

simple but meaningful mission statement of "protecting the land, water and beauty of the Amargosa."

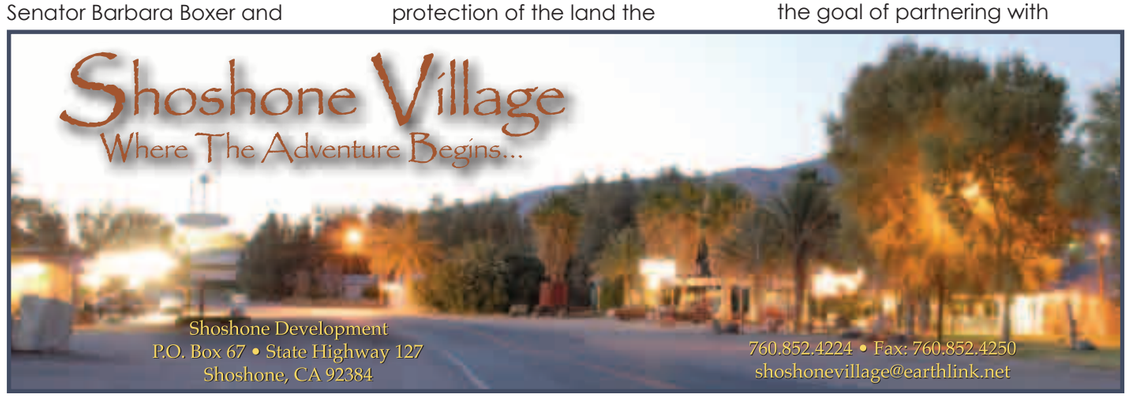
One of the concerns of the Amargosa Conservancy was to continue to pursue legal protection of the rich resources of the Amargosa basin. After several years of advocacy and working with national organizations that recognized the cultural significance and fragility of the Amargosa the Omnibus Public Lands Act sponsored by Representative Howard McKeon, Senator Barbara Boxer and Senator Dianne Feinstein was signed into law in March 2009. This bill designates the Amargosa as a Wild and Scenic River and, therefore, includes the river in the National Conservation Lands, a group of spectacular and culturally important landscapes administrated by the Bureau of Land Management which encompasses a system of national monuments, national conservation areas, historical trails, wild and scenic rivers and wilderness areas throughout the nation.

In addition to pursuing legal protection of the land the Amargosa Conservancy has made progress toward realizing its mission statement in other areas as well. The organization has collaborated with community and government agencies on such issues as water monitoring and land use. The Amargosa Conservancy also has partnered with the Bureau of Land Management, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and several other organizations to control tamarisks along the Amargosa River. Because of the efforts of this partnership hundreds of acres of tamarisk have been removed in riparian habitat along the river saving from 150 to 350 gallons of water a day per tree that the invasive tamarisks would have sucked up. This water now remains in the river as seeps, pools and streams. In addition the Amargosa Conservancy has acquired 160 acres located at the headwaters of Willow Creek, which flows into the Amargosa River in Amargosa Canyon. Old Tecopa, a historical site in the area, also is located on this property.

But one of the greatest successes of the Amargosa Conservancy has been the continuing progress toward the goal of partnering with organizations in the Death Valley and the Amargosa communities to support economic sustainability that protects the land, water and beauty of the Amargosa. Through a program of talks, field trips and other events, the Amargosa Conservancy has been able to encourage tourism, which supports the economy without destroying the land. In fact it is the special beauty of the land that is creating our economic base. We invite you to visit the beautiful Amargosa basin, a crown jewel in the Mojave Desert.

Willow Creek

Amargosa River Canyon



THE MANY FACES OF LONE PINE

Lone Pine wears many faces for the tourist and resident alike. For some it is the High Sierra with hiking, fishing, biking and other outdoor recreational opportunities. For others it is the high desert with what writer Mary Austin called "the twenty mile shadows." She meant the Sierra Nevada mountain shadows cast across the valley near sunset on the face of the Inyo Mountains to the east.

For still other history enthusiasts, it is the site of the great earthquake of 1872 that one March morning dropped the valley floor some twenty-five feet and flattened most of the adobe town. By two years later it had rebuilt itself of wood this time and the annual July 4th celebration in the town Plaza near the Carl's Jr. and Spainhower Park was bigger than ever. The town had spunk then and has it now still.

Four historic cemeteries encapsulate much of the history of the town. Just ask about them at the Mt. Whitney Cemetery Office or at the Chamber. Lone Pine is still a working cowboy and ranching town. Everywhere you turn you'll find cowboys, and horses and if you just happen along at the right times of year one of the long trail drives when Anchor and Kemp and others take the cattle up or out of the mountains as they have for more than a century.

For the environmentally inclined, the Owens Valley and Lone Pine are the sites of one of the great water deportation schemes with the building of the Los Angeles Aqueduct and the draining of the water from the area and the Owens Lake south of town. Now the water has been returned to Owens River and the riparian habitat is coming

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The mountains above

The Valley below

The Beverly and Jim Rogers Museum of Lone Pine Film History

Hollywood's favorite movie location since 1920 and California's newest Film Museum

760.876.9909

For Information about Museum Upcoming Events visit our website
www.lonepinefilmhistorymuseum.org

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Mt Whitney MilkyWay

Continued from Page 6

back to life. A gigantic and expensive project is underway out on the lakebed to reduce the dust blowing off of it. It is a monumental task and that and much more can be viewed from the Interagency Visitors Center south of town at the junction of highways 395 and 136.

Finally for many, Lone Pine is the background against which John Wayne, Hopalong Cassidy, Gene Autry, Roy Rogers and many others fought and won the west. The Alabama Hills are still one of the most sought after locations for filming, for both feature movies and even more car commercials. Besides westerns, there have been science fiction films like Star Trek, Tremors and Iron Man, and film noir such as High Sierra, I Died A Thousand Times and Woman Trap. There have even been cinematic romances where the guy kissed the girl or at least the horse at the end of the last reel. Visit the Lone Pine Film History Museum right on South Main Street and see the fifteen minute orientation film to catch up on many more titles. Tour the Alabama Hills just a few miles west of town with the self guided tour available at the Museum and the Chamber.

Breakfast at the Whitney Portal Store at over 8000 feet is exhilarating, but be careful when you order the "big" pancake that you are very hungry. There are lots of restaurants and accommodations in town with something for every price range and taste. Lone Pine is also an artist or photographer's heaven with mighty face of the Sierra Nevada, often snow capped much of the year, the shadows on the rocks of the Alabama Hills and the wide open spaces east towards Death Valley. Lone Pine is the gateway to that low desert site of beauty, mystery and natural wonder. The Lone Pine Chamber has a photography contest each year with prizes.

There is the Lone Pine Film Festival Columbus Day weekend each October, which celebrates the film history of Lone Pine, Death Valley and the Eastern Sierra with celebrities, screenings, tours, concerts and much more. Be sure to get on the mailing list at the Film Museum. Speaking of Museums there is also the little but mighty New Coso Heritage Society Museum, which has a collection of historic artifacts that include many from the Darwin mining area.

The Owens Lake is historically a significant factor in the economic development of the area. While access to the lake is carefully controlled at the moment, a gigantic dust mitigation project is underway and there are roads that circle the lake (395, 190, 136) and can be used to see both the project and some of the natural resources of the lake. Pick up a map of the birding trail at the Chamber of Commerce,

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which will lead you to some very interesting places to see the many species of birds now using the lake.

Another wonderful map available for self-guided exploring is the Self Guided tour of movie locations in the Alabama Hills. You can pick it up at the Film History Museum, Interagency Visitors Center or at the Chamber. It also has GPS coordinates for the technologically adept. You will find locations where several classic films worked, and the guide has photos from the movies that will aid you in your search.

While closed in the winter, Horseshoe Meadow Road that takes you up to the Inyo Wilderness with camping and horseback riding opportunities is a magnificent excursion. You find the start about three miles up on Whitney Portal Road. You travel on switchbacks rising over the valley, and the difference in elevation is greater than that at the Grand Canyon.

Finally, you can take the Cerro Gordo Road that rises to 8300 feet elevation and the famous Cerro Gordo Ghost Town where the greatest bullion strike in California was made in the 1850's. The road is best traveled in a high clearance vehicle with four-wheel drive. Check first on road conditions and access before taking the road.

There are many faces to Lone Pine and when you visit here, you may just discover another face altogether new for Lone Pine awaits you with beauty, mystery and history of our country. Oh, and it's a great place to just do nothing but relax and catch up on your life.

Inside The Beverly & Jim Rogers Film Museum

TAKING MT. WHITNEY FOR GRANITE

The Adventures of Panamint Gil

June 1, 2011

Doug Thompson tries to discourage me from hauling so much stuff up the mountain but I am a hiking hoarder.

The backpack, like me, is 50 lbs overweight and besides, I'm almost 70 years old in need of my comforts. Folks carrying jerky and a filter bottle of water seem concerned when they see me approaching the dreaded steps like an impersonation of Tim Conway as a little old man from the Carol Burnette Show. First the right foot is extended and then the left until I finally surrender and go down backward hugging the bank. I tell them I am completing the Muir Trail.

My pace quickens when I hear the generator of the Mt. Whitney Store and I prepare to sink my teeth into a patty melt. It's worth the hike on a moonlit night watching hikers descend the mountain wearing their headlamps, looking like some kind of new age spiritual procession or waking up in the woods expecting to hear Disney cartoon animals singing "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah". Everyone is so friendly because we are members of a very special club –even if you only go as far as Trail Camp. I managed the Whitney Portal family campground one season and it inspired me to try hiking again. The National Recreation Trail is my favorite hike anywhere because of that reward of a patty melt at the end with real French fries. That's what I'm talkin' about.

They don't call me Gilbear for nothin'. Get in my way and I will redesign your car. Cheers!

SO YOU WANT TO TRY A PACK TRIP?

In today's busy world of freeways, high-rises, busy work schedules, and hectic commitments, it's good to know there are exceptions and opportunities to leave behind the stress. The best way to do that is a visit to our national Wilderness areas – by pack train. Public lands available for all to visit, wilderness is primitive by nature and only accessible by horse and mule or by foot.

A great way to enjoy the scenic beauty of the mountain wilderness is by horseback (or in Eastern California – Muleback!) It's a lot of fun, far easier than you think! Miles of trails wind through shady forest, mountain meadow, flowering slopes, by streams, lakes and waterfalls. Riding in a good saddle on a well-trained horse or mule is not difficult at all. Folks who have never ridden before soon find it is not only easy and safe but also turns out to be the thrill of a lifetime!

The peaks of the Sierra are as stunning as any in Colorado, Wyoming or Europe. And, right here in California! You can have these peaks as a backdrop for your camp – whether alongside a stream or lake, a meadow or a forest. The fishing is unspoiled and the country is uncrowded.

A pack trip is a wonderful outing for children. Kids of all ages will revel in catching a fish, hiking alongside a waterfall, counting stars or cooking in the outdoors. Your family will find things of interest that can never be realized in the city.

Let one of our Eastern Sierra Packers plan your summer pack trip today!

There are many options:

Take a spot trip: a spot trip requires no special equipment or expertise. On a spot trip you furnish all your own equipment and food, the packer is just a means of transportation. You will ride by horseback with your wrangler into your campsite, while your camping gear and provisions are packed on mules. After unloading, your packer and stock will return to the pack station leaving you to spend your days as you choose. Sightseeing, catching a wily Golden Trout in a high mountain lake, or relaxing in camp. On a predetermined date, the packer and livestock will return to take you and your gear back to the Pack Station. Longer spot trips will require the packer to spend the night nearby before packing you out.

The spot trip is one of the most economical vacations you can take. While in the highcountry you will have grand Sierra days to fish, hike, explore, climb, take pictures or video, paint, read, watch for wildlife, look at the wildflowers or just relax.

You like to walk but don't want to carry your gear? Hikers and backpackers who often may need a 'boost' into the Sierra highcountry enjoy a dunnage pack. If acclimation to the high altitude is a concern, don't shoulder your heavy pack, let the pack mules carry it! The packer will bring your gear to the designated site, while you hike to meet him. You can arrange a dunnage trip for one-way service or round trip. Many use this as a means to reach their first night destination, and then travel on once the most difficult climb is out of the way! Many Scout and youth groups have used this kind of a trip since it is an ideal way to travel. On the dunnage trip it is still possible for one or more of the members of your party to ride if that is desired.

Another excellent pack trip vacation

Or try a Full-Service trip: This is a favorite of the first time visitor or those who desire more service. It's not necessary to shop or pack your kitchen gear, just come with your personal gear. Your meals are cooked for you and the camping equipment is furnished. The stock and packer are available for daily excursions or for a move to another campsite. All you need to bring is your personal gear including sleeping bag, fishing gear, camera, etc. There is ample time to relax and enjoy your surroundings.

What's a Continuous hire or Traveling trip? On this trip, the stock and packer remain with you for the duration of your trip. You can choose to make a central camp and take daily trips from there, or using an itinerary approved by the appropriate Government agencies, you can move your camp along that route. Usually the party brings their own equipment. This is the case with many Sierra Club type

Continued on Page 14

A packer leading mules over the Sierra crest in the John Muir Wilderness

A packer keeps a close eye on his pack string of mules

Continued on Page 13
trips, or organized outing groups. You will feed the packer – so be sure to pack extra food! The Pack Station will also pack feed for the livestock on this trip. It is possible to arrange a full service for your traveling trip as well. Some Pack Stations have pre-arranged itineraries where you can join others for the trip.

Only have a few days while you're visiting the Eastern Sierra? Most Pack Stations offer a range of alternatives, from a 1-hour group ride to an all day guided trail ride. You'll see spectacular country all while riding your trusty trail mount! Reservations are usually required for these rides, so call ahead!

Take a High Sierra Pack Trip Vacation today!

Members: Eastern High Sierra Packers Association:

Agnew Meadows Pack Station
800 292 7758
Bishop Pack Outfit
760 873 4785
Cottonwood Pack Station
760 878 2015
Frontier Pack Train
760 873 7971
Glacier Pack Train
760 938 2538
Mammoth Lakes Pack Station
888 475 8747
McGee Creek Pack Station
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Minarets Pack Station
559 868 3405
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"Classy" the mule takes another young rider into the high country

Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce 2nd Annual Amateur Photo "Shootout Contest" Winners!

Alex Polini
First Place
2010

Linda Guariglio
Third Place
2010

Steve Baldwin
Second Place
2010

BISHOP: A BEAUTIFUL SMALL TOWN

The City of Bishop is located at the northern end of Inyo County in the beautiful Owens Valley where Highway 395 meets U.S. Route 6. While Bishop has the largest population and is the only incorporated city in Inyo County, it definitely maintains a friendly home-town atmosphere. Just under 4,000 people reside within the 1.8 square miles of the city limits and another 5,000 or so live in the outlying areas.

A few years ago, well known author Tom Stienstra surveyed fellow members of the Outdoor Writers Association of California and determined that Bishop is California's #1 City to live for Outdoor Recreation Enthusiasts.

"Bishop was No. 1 on most ballots and in the top 10 of most writers taking the survey," writes Stienstra. "They highlighted trout fishing at lakes and streams, great hiking, horseback riding and exploring near Bishop Pass, backpacking into the John Muir Wilderness, tracking Sierra bighorn sheep and mule deer, and four-season mountain weather, complete with sensational fall colors from aspens, yet without much snow."

"A beautiful small-town atmosphere surrounded by public lands," stated Bill Karr, editor of Western Outdoor News. Columnist and senior research editor Kathie Morgan is quoted as simply remarking, "Breathtaking scenery."

Bishop is a terrific place to call "home" while exploring the Eastern Sierra. Lodging establishments abound, with about 800 rooms ranging from quite luxurious to rustic cabins. Campgrounds operated by USFS, Inyo County and private owners are also abundant in the area. In Bishop, you'll find great restaurants to suit any taste, including American Fare, Mexican Cuisine, plus Chinese, Thai and Japanese delicacies.

Bishop Pastures

Highway 395 is Bishop's Main Street, featuring several art galleries and unique retail shops. To truly enjoy Bishop, you really must take a side trip off Main Street. Try Line Street (aka Highway 168). To the East on Line Street, you'll cross the Owens River and to the West, you'll find the glorious mountains, lakes and streams of Bishop Creek Canyon. In the summer months, Lake Sabrina, South Lake and North Lake offer world-class trout fishing. In the fall, the Aspens and Cottonwoods turn fiery colors of yellow, orange and red. Photography buffs from around the world visit the canyon in hopes of capturing just a shot or two of the splendor.

South Lake Sunrise

In the center of town, be sure to visit the Bishop City Park with several acres of beautifully maintained grass, shade trees and flowers – a great place to picnic! The Bishop City Park features a public swimming pool, skate & bike park, tennis courts, baseball fields, and a picture-perfect duck pond.

The Millpond Recreation Area is just a few miles north-west of town and offers camping, baseball fields, playgrounds and much, much more. Pleasant Valley Reservoir and the Lower Owens River offer fantastic year-round trout fishing. The Bishop

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Owens River

Majestic View of the Mountains West of Bishop

i'm lovin' it

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"We're not in the food business; we're in the people business. We just happen to sell hamburgers."
—Ray Kroc

Continued from Page 17

Country Club is a challenging 18-hole course with breathtaking views, plus full service pro shop, restaurant & bar. If you're feeling lucky, be sure to visit the Paiute Palace Casino, just a few miles north-west of downtown on Highway 395.

Other Bishop "must sees" include Downtown Murals, Keough's Hot Springs, the Buttermilks, and Laws Railroad Museum & Historical Site, located just 4.8 miles north of Bishop off Highway 6. Many Owens Valley residents arrived here on the "Slim Princess" (a wood-burning engine) train after the railroad was completed in 1910. The depot was a connecting line between the valley and the outside world: the train hauled cattle, produce and passengers north to the gold fields of Bodie, Aurora, Tonopah and Goldfield. The railroad was initially built to aid the construction of the City of Los Angeles' Aqueduct. Today the original depot functions as a visitor center and museum.

Bishop is home to several big annual events including: Blake

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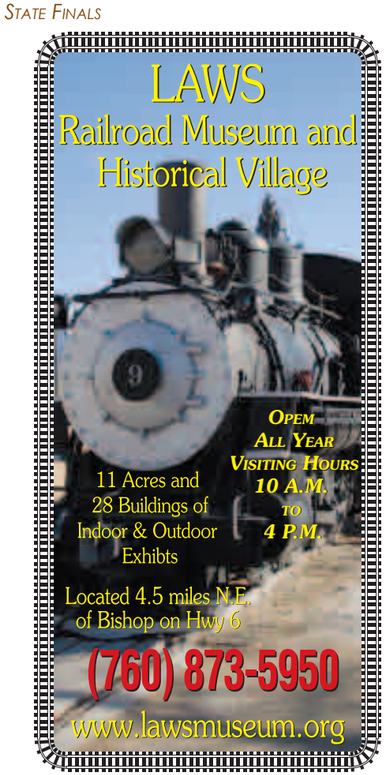
Ride'em Cowboy

California High School Rodeo State Finals at Tri-County Fairgrounds

Barrel Racing at the California High School Rodeo State Finals



Autumn Colors

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Jones Trout Derby (March), Mule Days Celebration (Memorial Day), California High School Rodeo State Finals Championship (June), Eastern Sierra Tri-County Fair (Labor Day), Millpond Music Festival (September), Fall Colors Car Show (October) and more.

The Bishop Area Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau is conveniently located at the City Park in the A-frame Building. The visitor center is open daily, year-round and staffed by friendly & knowledgeable folks. Whether you are in the area for just an hour, a day or a week, be sure to stop in for free maps & brochures to help you make the most of your Eastern Sierra adventure. Visit online at www.bishopvisitor.com or call toll free 1-888-395-3952.

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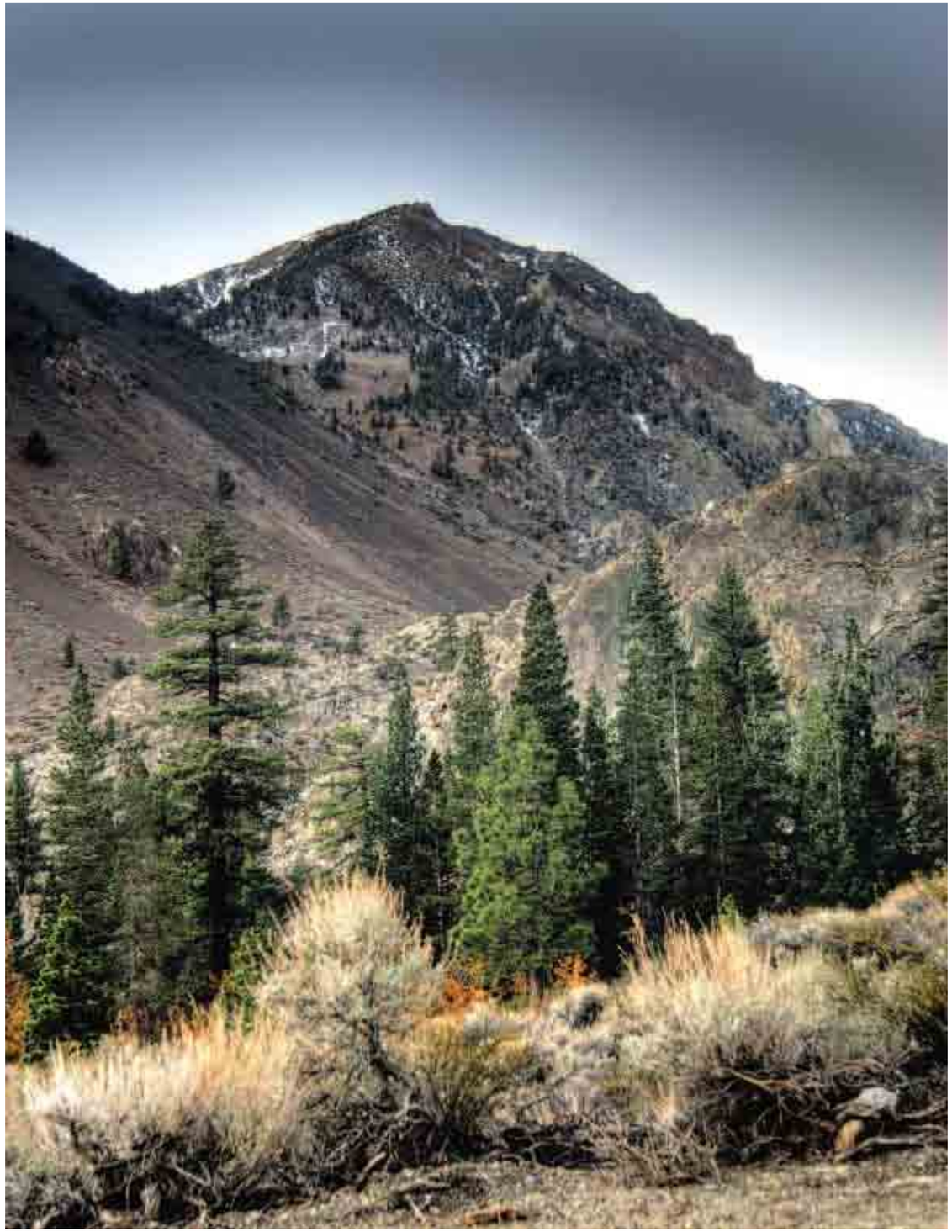

Northfork of Bishop Creek Recreation Area

DISCOVER INDEPENDENCE

INDEPENDENCE! Seems like every state has a town or city with the name. Missouri probably has the largest and most well-known of the 16 or more towns so named. Independence, California is at the heart of the very large and sparsely populated Inyo County. The county seat for most of the county's history, Independence lies at the center of the magnificent Owens Valley. Fewer than 600 residents inhabit this town that has never seen a population greater than 1500. Born during the days of the Civil War, yet the land had supported Native Americans for centuries before.

Independence has been considered by many travelers to be a place to pass by quickly on the way to greater destinations. But for those who seek surprises, adventure, culture, and history, they abound.

For example, consider the Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery just three miles north of town. The Inyo Complex fires of 2007 nearly destroyed the beautiful structure that was built in the early days of the 20th century. The flash floods of 2008 nearly removed it from its very foundation. And while the state no longer considers this to be a place to continue the very long history of raising Eastern Sierra trout, a group of residents from Independence organized and sought the help of all county residents to restore the buildings, the grounds, and even the ponds to a condition that far exceeds the imagination of the state.

Another example of the spirit of Independence is the classic celebration on Independence Day, the 4th of July. The celebration extends all day and sometimes beyond with breakfast in the park, a barbecue dinner, a parade, ice cream and pie, kids games, and of course fireworks. The entire town becomes involved and unlike so many festivities that promote only to bring in tourist dollars, the celebration in Independence welcomes all visitors to a genuinely home town experience.

Quirky as it may sound, Independence in recent years has become renowned for its Fruitcake Festival usually observed in December. "Fruitcakes are Welcome" can be seen on license plate frames and bulletin boards around the small town.

Independence features a world class museum, historic cemetery, home town atmosphere and plenty of charm. Several campgrounds and motels in the area provide the amenities needed for a true adventure to the great outdoors. "Through Hikers" on the Pacific Crest Trail have discovered that Independence is a convenient resupply town. The majestic views of the Eastern Sierra seem to beckon the adventurous. The great Winnedumah Monument on the ridge of the Inyo mountains to the east provides adventure and history of another flavor to those who wish to explore why Native Americans still treasure the pine nuts and obsidian, and why western settlers thought they could eke out a living by mining the various minerals so beautifully displayed and buried in the variety of canyons that are the Inyos.

Independence may not be attractive to everyone, but to those who wish to discover small town Americana in the populous state of California, there is no better place to poke around. Come and discover for yourself.

Mt. Whitney Fish Hatchery

The Inyo County Eastern California

Museum

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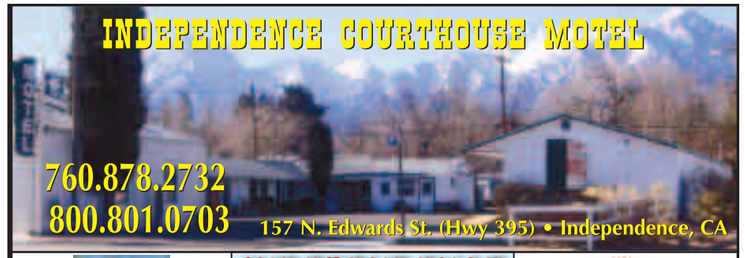
155 N. Grant Street • www.inyocounty.us/ecmuseum
On the western edge of Independence toward the Sierra Nevada from Hwy 395



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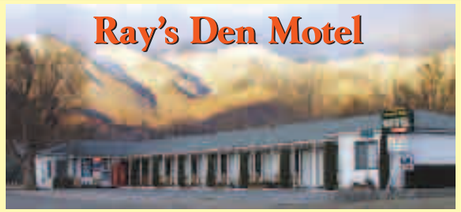


405 N. Edwards • Independence, CA

DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK

In the course of America's great westward movement during the mid 1800s, a group of pioneers found themselves stranded in a remote, unforgiving desert. Upon their rescue, one turned and exclaimed, "Goodbye, Death Valley!"

That exclamation has survived the test of time: in 1933 the area was officially designated Death Valley National Monument, and in 1994 was upgraded to a National Park.

Created when a large inland lake dried up thousands of years ago, Death Valley is the lower 48's largest National Park at 3.3 million acres, and welcomes upwards of one million visitors annually. This incredible country can be easily enjoyed by those with a sense of adventure or the need to relax and get away from it all.

Death Valley's variety is inviting. Standing guard over the Valley is the 11,049 foot Telescope Peak, a frequently snow-covered mountain just west of Badwater, which, at 282 feet below sea level, is the lowest point in North America. Some winters it snows near the valley floor, while summertime temperatures here regularly reach the 120s. The shifting sand dunes allow little to no growth, while other areas burst forth with a kaleidoscope of wildflowers.

Visitors worldwide have made Death Valley a necessary stop in their desire to experience its rarities — the heat (many visit during the summer), the boundless expanse, the awe-inspiring contrasts, and, something a lot of modern people are unaccustomed to, the peace and quiet.

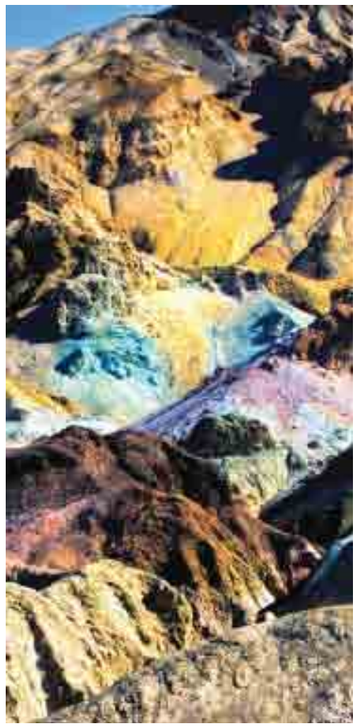
Furnace Creek Ranch and Resort is a center of activity and a springboard for further exploration. The National Park Service operates an excellent Visitor's Center here, a downscaled relief map of Death Valley, and a free, short documentary film introducing Death Valley to first-time guests. Also at the Ranch are the enjoyable and informative Borax Museum with its collection of Death Valley artifacts.

From Furnace Creek many of the Valley's natural attractions are conveniently located: nearby Harmony Borax Works, the views from Zabriskie Point and the vivid colors of Artist's Palette, salt-encrusted Devil's Golf Course, Badwater with its "bad water," Dante's View and, one of the area's most amazing attractions, Marta Becket's Amargosa Opera House.

Furnace Creek Ranch has restaurants, motel rooms, a pool, the world's lowest golf course,

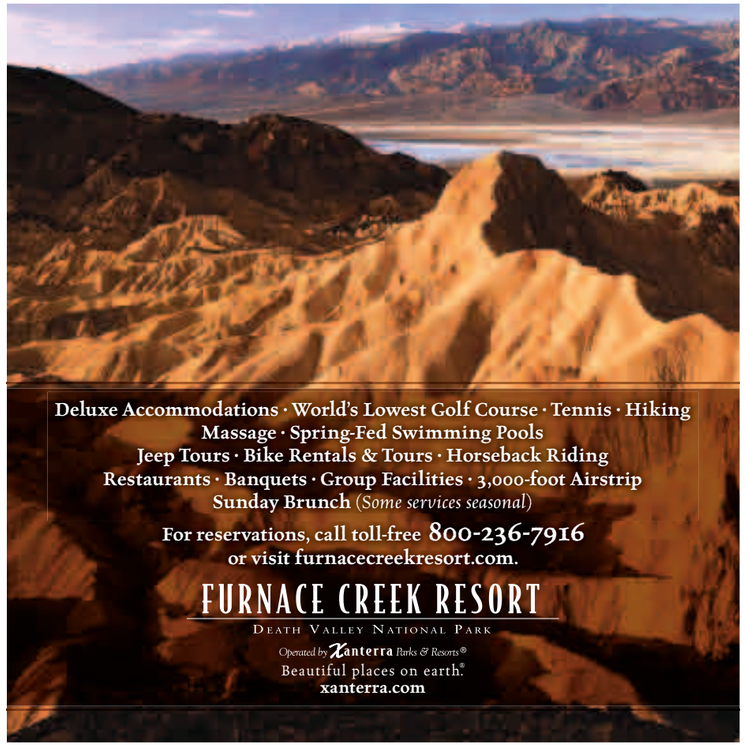
Continued on Page 27

Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes



Artist's Palette

Harmony Borax Works



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31 miles west of Stovepipe Wells Village & 48 miles east of Lone Pine, CA

Continued from Page 25

an airstrip, and camping and RV facilities. Furnace Creek Inn provides fine dining, a spring-fed pool and well-appointed rooms.

About 25 miles from Furnace Creek is Stovepipe Wells Village, offering a motel, restaurant, pool, general store with gas, and campground and RV spots.

From Stovepipe Wells you may also explore Mosaic Canyon, the Devil's Cornfield, Grotto Canyon, Wildrose Canyon with its old charcoal kilns, Titus Canyon and the ghost town of Leadfield, and the wildflowers and sweeping vistas of Daylight Pass.

At the north end of Death Valley is Scotty's Castle, a seeming mirage built in the 1920s in the style of Spanish architecture. The famous Death Valley Scotty told many tall tales here. Wealthy Chicago businessman Albert Johnson, who funded construction of the Castle, took a liking to the old "prospector" and his stories, and built him a room of his own where his trademark red neckties still hang. Scotty's Castle is not a "castle" in the usual sense of the word: it simply must be seen to be believed.

Join the million visitors that enjoy Death Valley each year!!

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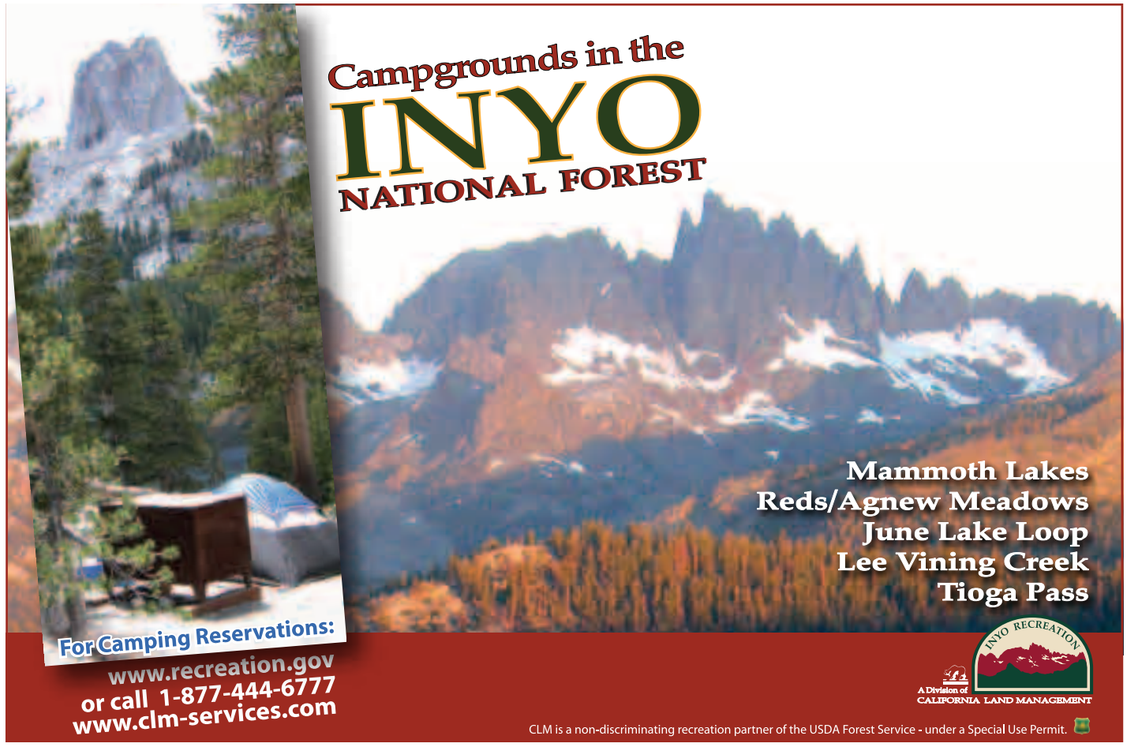
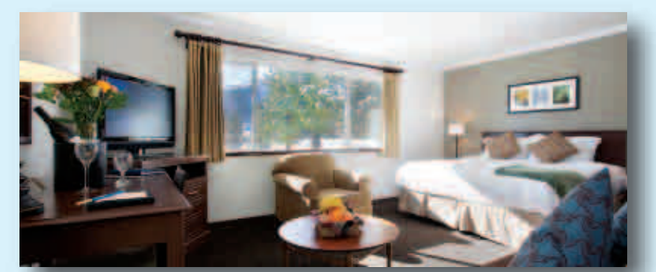


Mammoth's Boutique Hotel Experience

The Mammoth Creek INN



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