



## Trip Summary

# Hiking in Joshua Tree National Park

### TRIP AT-A-GLANCE

Dates: March 20 - 25, 2011  
Location: Joshua Tree National Park, CA  
Cost: \$ \*865  
Rating: 2  
Activities: hiking, camping  
Meeting Place: Palm Springs airport (PSP) or Indian Cove Campground  
Arrive: PSP before 1pm on March 20 or 3pm at our campsite  
Depart: 1 pm at the airport March 25; make flights for after 2:15pm

\* Deduct 5% off the trip fee if one of the first 5 to register (by 12/20/10) and 3% of the entire trip fee when the balance is paid by check.

### TRIP COSTS

#### WHAT'S INCLUDED

- experienced guides including a professional geologist
- five nights camping
- all meals from dinner Sunday to breakfast the following Friday
- Desert Palms spa fee and Palm Springs aerial tram
- all group gear, including tents
- Transportation during the trip, including to/from Palm Springs airport

#### WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Alcoholic beverages
- Guide gratuities
- Air travel to/from PSP airport

### Trip Highlights

- Hiking in a unique landscape at the perfect time of year
- Exploring Joshua Tree's diverse human and natural history
- Learning about the geology from a local geologist
- Enjoying springtime camping and sumptuous meals
- Gazing at a brilliant nighttime sky

### Trip Overview

Joshua Tree offers outstanding and unique hiking opportunities. The Serrano Indians first made an effort to scratch a living from this forbidding landscape, followed by determined (some would say foolhardy) ranchers and miners. Only remnants of these efforts remain, but fortunately one is a wealth of hiking trails. During our five days here, we'll hike trails that lead to evidence of the park's colorful human history and to astounding geologic formations, and we'll stop to marvel at the flora and fauna that demonstrate the diverse adaptations that allow life to flourish here. We'll be accompanied by a local geologist who can answer all the questions that are raised by this unique geology. And after our full days of hiking, we'll sit around the campfire, enjoying wonderful meals and watching the dancing shadows on the surrounding rocks.

### Our Itinerary

The following itinerary may be adjusted because of weather, availability of ranger talks, group wishes, etc. Whatever it ends up being, it will be fabulous hiking!

**Sunday:** Our trip starts today in Palm Springs, CA. We pick you up at the airport (PSP) at 1 pm and drive up to Joshua Tree National Park. We will drive to Indian Cove Campground, our home for the next five days. After getting settled there will be time to explore the Nature Trail that leaves from the campground or to walk around this totally beautiful and unique area. This whole area is very popular with rock climbers because of the huge granite domes that have been eroded into many different shapes. The camping here is spectacular, surrounded by huge outcroppings of rocks and a roof of brilliant stars. After getting ourselves organized,

## CANCELLATION POLICY

In the unfortunate event that you must cancel your trip, your refund will be determined by the following formula:

Days Prior to Trip	Refund
90 + days	All but \$50
90 – 61 days	50% of deposit
60 – 30 days	50% of trip fee
29 days or less	No refund

Adventures in Good Company reserves the right to cancel or alter a trip due to unforeseen weather, unsafe conditions, low registrations or other circumstances.

On the rare occasion when Adventures in Good Company must cancel a trip, all payments received to date will be refunded, including the non-refundable portion of your deposit.

Adventures in Good Company is not responsible for expenses incurred in preparation for any canceled trips, including airplane tickets.

## TIPPING GUIDELINES

Tipping at the end of the trip is optional. If you feel your guide(s) did an outstanding job and would like to reward them for their efforts, a suggested rule of thumb is US 7 to \$12 per person, per day. Oftentimes, trip members organize a group envelope (this makes it anonymous) and present it at the last shared meal.

## Our Itinerary Continued

we enjoy the first of many delicious meals. Those of us coming from the East will undoubtedly be ready for an early bed while others of us might choose to visit around the campfire and/or watch for shooting stars. (D)

**Monday:** After a hearty breakfast we will drive over to the Visitor Center outside 29 Palms, the best place to buy books about the area. The garden around the Center will introduce you to the desert plants and the short Nature Walk elucidates the human as well as the natural history of the area. A short drive brings us to the 49 Palms Oasis hike. If you have never seen a real desert oasis before, it will give you a whole new appreciation of how important water is in the desert. The three-mile out and back hike over rolling terrain follows an old Indian trail, with views of the town and the huge marine base stretching out in the distance (B, L, D).

**Tuesday:** We spend today in the main part of the park, a short drive away. We start with climbing Ryan Mountain, a 5500-foot mountain in the center of the park composed of some of the oldest rock here. This three-mile hike gains about 1000 feet in elevation as it gradually winds its way through pinyon-juniper habitat to a summit that is known for spectacular panoramic views, including the snow-capped San Bernardino Mountains. After a picnic lunch we will do the Barker Dam Loop. This flat trail encircles the only lake in the park and is home to birds and other wildlife (Bighorn sheep have been sighted here but we will be very lucky if we see them). Along the way we pass some petroglyphs that were unfortunately touched up when a movie crew wanted to make them show up more clearly. (B, L, D).

**Wednesday:** We will take a break from the desert today to explore a completely different environment: the high (sometimes still snow-capped) mountains outside of Palm Springs. We take the rotating tram up to the top, marvel at the phenomenal views, and hike a bit in the cooler weather there. After a visit a local spa to enjoy the hot springs and a hot shower, we will eat dinner at a local restaurant on the way back to the campground. (B, L, D)

**Thursday:** We return to the central part of the park today for further exploration of the area natural and human history as we hike to Lost Horse Mine, the best-preserved old mining operation in the park. The trail is an old mining road that gradually climbs 300 feet over two miles through juniper, nolina, and yucca. You could easily choose to spend several hours here examining the site in detail, including ruins of old buildings, mine shafts, a large wooden 10-stamp mill and an old winch that was used to lower miners and their equipment into the mines. Alternatively, if you want to hike further, another .7 miles and 400 feet elevation climb will get you to the top of 5,313 foot Lost Horse Mountain. Your reward for this effort is a 360 degree view of

## Our Itinerary Continued

surrounding basins and peaks. After retracing our steps we return to our campsite or visit any last sights we still want to see. (B, L, D).

**Friday:** Our morning hike is right in the Indian Cove area, Rattlesnake Canyon. We hike up the Canyon at least as far as the waterfall area (0.5 miles) where a small seasonal creek leaps over rocks and forms small pools. It is a lovely place to end our five days of exploring the area. We return to our campsite in time to change clothes for the trip home and we will have you back to the Palm Springs Airport by 1 pm (B).

## Packing List

### PACKING AND SLEEPING GEAR

- sleeping bag: warm to 20 F
- sleeping pad: "closed cell" foam pad, Thermarest self-inflating pad, or Ridge Rest pad
- day pack: large enough to carry raingear, water, sunscreen, etc. (1,500-2,500 cu. in.)
- ground sheet: 4' x 8' thick plastic or nylon, for sleeping under the stars if you choose

### CLOTHING \*\* The climate at Joshua Tree is variable. The temperature can range from 30-90 degrees F.

- 1 pair lightweight long underwear top and bottoms: silk, wool or synthetic (capilene, MTS, Ibex)
- 1 pair wool or fleece pants
- 1 medium-weight top layer: wool shirt/pull-over or synthetic equivalent ("mid-weight" Capilene, MTS, Thermastat, or Polartec). Many women also pack a warm vest since the temperature changes quite frequently
- 1 mid-weight fleece jacket
- 1 pair casual, comfortable pants and top to wear on our evening out on the town (also to wear around camp if you like)
- 1-2 pair shorts
- 2-3 T-shirts (one can be a tank top)
- 1 lightweight long-sleeved shirt for protection from the sun (button up is ideal)
- 2-3 pair socks (at least one pair should be a heavyweight wool or cotton/Lycra blend such as Ultimax or Coolmax)
- 1 wide-brimmed hat for protection from the sun
- 1 wool or fleece hat
- 1 pair gloves: wool, Capilene, or Polartec
- 1 rain parka and rain pants: coated nylon or a **waterproof/breathable** fabric like Gore-tex
- underwear
- swimsuit

### FOOTWEAR

- 1 pair lightweight hiking boots or trail shoes
- 1 pair sandals (such as Tevas, Keens, Chacos, Crocs) for wearing around camp

### TOILETRIES

- medium sized pak-towel, biodegradable soap, toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, etc.
- skin lotion, **plenty of sunscreen**, lip protection with sunscreen (SPF of at least 15)
- personal "patch kit": bandaids, safety pins, Compeed blister bandaids and moleskin, ibuprofen, personal medications, if any. **Individuals allergic to insect bites must bring an epi-pen.** Please consult your physician.

### ESSENTIALS

- sunglasses plus retention strap: 100% UV blocking
- bowl, mug and eating utensils
- 2 one-liter water bottles
- headlamp or flashlight with extra bulb and batteries

### OPTIONAL

- deck of cards
- wet wipes
- bandana
- camera and film/extra memory card
- book, notebook, journal
- favorite snack and gatorade powder
- stuff sacks for organizing gear
- Crazy Creek Chair (recommended)
- pen and small notepad for taking notes

## Notes on the Packing List

**Daypacks:** We recommend a daypack with space for all of your items. Before you leave home check to be sure that your daypack is comfortable to wear all day. Having a daypack with a hip belt and padded shoulder straps will provide for much more comfortable hiking.

**Footwear:** Well-fitting, sturdy boots are very important to your safety and enjoyment. If you plan to buy new boots, break them in by wearing them around town and taking some short hikes *before* your trip. For general trekking, lightweight cordura or leather boots work well. Leather boots may be waterproofed in various simple ways, and cordura boots will be waterproof if they are lined with Gore-Tex. If you have weak ankles or are recovering from an ankle injury, get good quality boots that come above the ankle– you'll find that this will give you more support in uneven or slippery terrain.

**Personal First Aid Kit:** Small first aid kit with familiar medicine you might need for personal use. Like: blister or foot remedies such as, moleskin, gelskin, blister bandages or similar. The amount and kind you bring will depend on your tendency to blister but many people get blisters on hiking tours. Other suggestions: remedies for respiratory ailments? Stomach ailments? Sore muscles or joints? We will have a first aid kit too, but if you already know what works for you it's better to have it with you than experiment on a trip.

**Clothing:** Layering is the most practical and efficient method of insulating the body. Several layers of varied weight materials provide better insulation than one thick layer of clothing. Also, adding or subtracting layers allows you to adjust to the temperature at your particular level of activity. For this trip you probably will use your long underwear as the base layer, your sun shirt as a second layer, and your midweight shirt or vest as a third layer. If it gets cold you can use your fleece jacket, rain jacket, warm hat and/or gloves as needed.

**Rain Gear:** You will need a parka or jacket made of a coated nylon or a waterproof/breathable fabric like Gore-tex, HellyTech, Membrane, H2No, or Ultrex. **Be sure it keeps water out.** Before making this important purchase, be sure that it fits you properly. It should be large enough to fit over all your layers. In particular, the hood needs to be effective. It should shield your face from the rain and turn with your head. Movement of your arms must not interfere with the hood. Put on your daypack; can you still raise your arms? Lastly, the wind/rain pants. They should be comfortable, allow enough room for your layers, and permit free movement of your legs (for example, can you crouch comfortably?). Partial or full-length leg zippers are useful for easily putting your pants on over your boots.

**Hydration:** It is very important to your safety and enjoyment to have an *independent* ability for accessing your water. As you are hiking you will need water to be accessible in order to drink frequently. One method is to have a water bottle attached to your waist strap. Another option is to use a **HYDRATION SYSTEM** such as CamelBak, Platypus, and Gregory bladder bags which are simply a collapsible water bag with a hose attachment that you drink from. These fit inside your pack with the hose positioned over your shoulder where you can access your water without the use of your hands. Some models are designed to attach to the outside of your pack. Bladder bags can hold 40-100oz. of water.

Items on your packing list can be purchased through a number of outdoor outfitters including:

Recreational Equip. Inc (REI)  
800-426-4840  
www.rei.com

Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS)  
603-924-7231  
www.ems.com

Sierra Trading Post  
800-713-4534  
www.SierraTradingPost.com

Also check out the websites on the Affiliate page of our website (under Resources)

## Additional Trip Preparations

### HELPFUL WEBSITES

<http://www.nps.gov/jotr/index.htm>

The national parks web site – a great place to start learning about this unique desert park

<http://www.joshuatree.org/>

The official non-profit cooperating Association for **Joshua Tree National Park**

<http://3dparks.wr.usgs.gov/joshuatree/>

For geologic maps and information about the Joshua Tree National Park. A 3D tour of the geology of the park

### WEATHER

Weather this time of year in the desert is extremely variable. We've been there when it's snowing and when it's over 90 degrees, and often had both kinds of weather on the same trip! Bring everything on the packing list and you'll be fine.

### EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

The closest phone is at the Indian Cove Campground Ranger's Station: 760/362-4367. The station is staffed during normal working hours. The 24-hour Park Dispatcher is 909/383-5651, and the Park Headquarters is 760/367-5541.

These numbers should only be used in true emergencies.

Otherwise you can plan to call in on the day we go down to the Spa (Thursday). Cell phone reception is very limited within the Park. Leave the Adventures in Good Company Office number as well (877/439-4042) and we will do our best to get in contact with you.

### CONDITIONING

Being physically prepared will assure that you have the energy to do everything you choose to. If you already walk regularly (meaning 3 to 4 times a week for at least 30 minutes), the single most important additional preparation you can make is to spend time hiking with your daypack on and loaded with water and gear for the day, preferably somewhere there are hills. Consider taking your daypack to the nearest park after work twice a week and walk up and down hills. Start about 4 to 6 weeks before the trip with an hour and work up to two.

If you don't exercise regularly now, we advise you to start an exercise program at least three months before your trip. For example, you might start walking 3 or 4 times a week for half an hour, at a pace that is fast enough to make you breathe deeply. Hills are good for this. Gradually add time until you are comfortable hiking for two hours. Other options are working out at a health club on a stairmaster or treadmill, aerobics classes, cross country skiing or any activity that makes you breathe harder. The key is to exercise at a pace that makes you breathe faster than usual, but not so fast that you can't carry on a conversation. Two months before the trip also incorporate day hikes as suggested above.

### RECOMMENDED PRE-TRIP READING

**Joshua Tree: The Complete Guide: Joshua Tree National Park** by James Kaiser. Stunning photographs showcase the area's unusual geology, and chapters on history and wildlife describe the delicately balanced ecosystems. A guide to desert wildflowers is also included, and trail maps are provided for more than 20 of the best hikes in the park.

**Joshua Tree: Desolation Tango** by Deanne Stillman. With crisp and impassioned narrative she takes the reader through the park's wonders, including a talking cactus, mysterious petroglyphs, and rocks in the shape of the late New York Yankees manager Billy Martin. Stunning photographs by Galen Hunt further accentuate the gorgeous landscape,

**Mining History and Geology of Joshua Tree National park: San Bernadino and Riverside Counties, California** by Margaret Eggers. Discover the captivating mining history and the unique geology that created the landscape of Joshua Tree National Park

**Introduction to California Desert Wildflowers** by Philip A. Munz. First published forty years ago, this easy-to-use, portable, and comprehensive field guide has now been thoroughly updated and revised throughout. Utilizes a combination of both line drawings and colored photographs.

## Getting There

### OUR TRAVEL AGENT

If you need assistance with making your travel plans, call Sara Schuitemaker at Scan East West Travel. Her toll-free number is 800-727-2157 and her email is [sara@scaneastwest.com](mailto:sara@scaneastwest.com).

### TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend travel insurance. We know that women never want to cancel their trips, and the reasons for doing so are always excellent. Occasionally it's a sudden illness; even more frequently it's the illness of someone they care about. Trip insurance at least minimizes the disappointment and expense during what is often a difficult time. In addition insurance covers the cost of lost baggage; medical expenses during your trip, including emergencies, repatriation, and evacuation; and trip delay. If you decide to purchase insurance, you can secure a policy through your own insurance company or enroll with the company we use, Travelex Insurance. Call 1-800-228-9792 or visit [www.travelexinsurance.com](http://www.travelexinsurance.com). The location code is 20-0016.

### TRAVEL

Palm Springs (PSP) airport is serviced currently served by these airlines and connects non-stop through many hub cities:

- [ALLEGIANT AIR](#)
- [ALASKA](#)
- [US AIRWAYS](#)
- [AMERICAN](#)
- [DELTA/DELTA CONNECTION](#)
- [HORIZON AIR](#)
- [SUN COUNTRY \(SEASONAL\)](#)
- [UNITED/ UNITED EXPRESS](#)
- [WESTJET \(SEASONAL\)](#)

We will be meeting at 1pm to drive to Joshua Tree. Please do not arrive on a flight later than 12:30pm on March 20<sup>th</sup>. You can plan to fly out after 2:30pm on March 25<sup>th</sup>.

### LODGING

Depending on your connections, you may be able to fly into PSP the morning of the trip. If not, here are some possible lodging options. Prices were current at the time, but may have changed, and do not include taxes. AAA rates may be lower. Let us know if you're interested in finding someone on the trip to share a room with and we'll try to hook you up.

If you have a gambling spirit, the cheapest way to find a hotel room is to go through Priceline ([www.priceline.com](http://www.priceline.com)). When you have a choice of area, choose the airport area. All, or almost all, of the hotels in this area offer an airport shuttle. Our guides have stayed at very nice places for \$25 or \$30 a night, a bit more with service fees and taxes but still a bargain).

If you prefer to know what you're getting into, the following are a sample of the possibilities:

#### Holiday Inn

1800 East Palm Canyon Drive  
Palm Springs, CA 92264  
Phone: (760) 340-4303  
Avg Price: \$125-\$150

Amenities include: airport shuttle, fitness center, swimming pool, restaurant and resort.

## Getting There Continued

### **Marriott Courtyard**

1300 Tahquitz Canyon Way

Palm Springs, CA 92262

Toll-Free: (800) 321-2211

Phone: (760) 322-6100

Avg price: \$101-\$201

This hotel offers an oasis in the Desert with views of the San Jacinto peaks; free amenities that include airport shuttle, parking, business center, high speed Internet, heated outdoor pool, whirlpool, fitness center, in-room refrigerators

### **Hotel California**

424 E Palm Canyon Drive

Palm Springs, CA 92264

Toll-Free: (800) 642-7079

Phone: (760) 322-8855

Avg price: \$109-\$149

Quiet and quaint boutique hotel. Amenities include airport shuttle, hot tub and heated pool, internet and in-room kitchen with microwave and coffee maker.