
Visitor Services Project Death Valley National Park Report Summary

- This report describes part of the results of a visitor study at Death Valley National Park during September 15-21, 1996. A total of 1,002 questionnaires were distributed. Visitors returned 805 questionnaires for an 80% response rate.
- This report profiles Death Valley visitors. A separate appendix has visitors' comments about their visit; this report and the appendix contain a comment summary.
- Fifty-one percent of the visitors were in family groups. Sixty-one percent of Death Valley visitors were in groups of two; 24% were in groups of three or four. Six percent of visitors were in guided tour groups; no visitors were in school groups. Many visitors (41%) were aged 21-35, 36% were aged 46-65 and less than 3% were aged 15 years or younger.
- Among Death Valley visitors, 69% were international visitors. They were from Germany (42%), United Kingdom (17%), Holland (9%) and 22 other countries. United States visitors were from California (23%), Nevada (9%), Florida (7%) and 39 other states.
- Most visitors (82%) were visiting Death Valley for the first time. Two-thirds of the visitors (66%) stayed less than one day; 29% stayed one to two days. Common activities at Death Valley were sightseeing (96%), photography (92%) and hiking less than two hours (42%). The most often listed reason for visiting Death Valley (96%) was to view desert scenery.
- Most visitors (89%) said the park was one of several destinations on this trip. Many visitors (82%) stopped in Las Vegas, Nevada, on their way to or from the park. Las Vegas, Nevada was also the most common starting point and destination on the days visitors arrived at and left Death Valley. Panamint Springs and Death Valley Junction were the two most commonly used entrances and exits to Death Valley.
- Visitors listed the number of nights they stayed in different types of accommodations in and outside the park. The most used type of accommodation was motels in and outside the park. One-third of visitor groups (33%) stayed in a motel for one night in the park. Many groups (82%) stayed one or more nights in motels outside the park.
- The most visited places in Death Valley were Furnace Creek (82%), Zabriskie Point (72%) and the Sand Dunes (66%). The most important features or qualities to visitors were scenic vistas, wilderness/open space and the desert experience.
- For the use, importance and quality of services and facilities, it is important to note the number of visitor groups who responded to each question. The most used services or facilities by 726 respondents were roads (86%), restrooms (81%) and the park brochure/map (80%). According to visitors, the most important services were roads (93% of 598 respondents), campgrounds (93% of 97 respondents) and park directional signs (89% of 415 respondents). The best quality services were the park brochure/map (87% of 541 respondents), visitor center (86% of 478 respondents), visitor center bookstore (86% of 165 respondents), roads (86% of 588 respondents) and museum exhibits (86% of 298 respondents).
- Outside the park, the average visitor group expenditure in the park area was \$257. The average per capita expenditure was \$119. Inside the park, the average visitor group expenditure in the park area was \$102. The average per capita expenditure was \$76.
- Most visitors (90%) rated the overall quality of services in the park as "good" or "very good." Visitors made many additional comments.

For more information about the Visitor Services Project, please contact the
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