



Death Valley Ghost Towns: As They Appear Today

Robert C. Jones

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Death Valley has a fascinating mining history. Miners first passed through here in 1849 during the California gold rush, not realizing that there were vast deposits of gold and borax just waiting to be taken out of the mountains and Valley floor. By the late 19th century though, large scale gold and borax mining operations were in full swing. In the 20th century, talc mining would join borax as the two most important minerals mined in the Death Valley area. The most common extant ruins in Death Valley include mill ruins, metal or stone mine buildings, mine openings, and metal water towers. There are few mercantile or residential structures remaining (Rhyolite and Aguerberry Camp being two exceptions). The ghost towns and mining camps within and near Death Valley are probably in better shape than most because of the preservative affect of the extremely dry climate, and the protection offered by Death Valley being a National Park (and, earlier, a National Monument). The best-preserved towns are post-1950s company mining camps (Ibex Springs, Broken Pick, Warm Springs, Keystone Mine, etc.) The vast majority of the photos in this book were taken in the 21st century. Thus, this book focuses primarily on what there is to see in the Death Valley ghost towns today, with a bit of the history of the sites included along the way. This 2013 edition adds three more sites to the 2010 book, as well as 7 maps. The book contains over 100 photos.

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