

MAY 14 - TO AND THROUGH DEATH VALLEY, CA

How can I describe the drive today? Exciting? We'll see.

We left Tuttle Creek campground early this morning and turned Alfie east towards Death Valley. At the Visitor's Centre yesterday, on display was a relief model of the area that clearly indicated two mountain ranges in front of Death Valley. On the model, they seemed reasonable. In real life, considerably higher!

We drove past Owens Lake. Many years ago this lake's water was diverted to serve the Los Angeles area. When the lake dried up, the dust caused considerable problems. Long story short, the city of LA finally admitted responsibility and now irrigates a lot of the remaining lake bed so that dust cannot be a problem again.

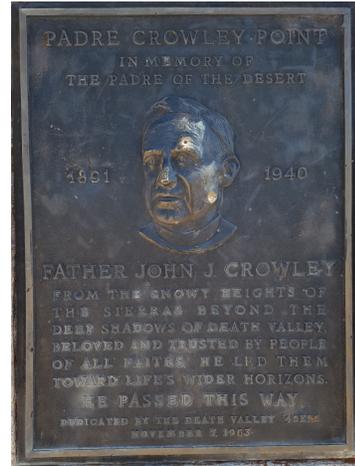


On the way we passed many of what looked like stunted palm trees. There they were just standing out there in the desert. Turns out they are Joshua trees (*Yucca brevifolia*).

We drove into Death Valley National Park and continued our climb.



We climbed to the Father Crowley Vista Point at 4,247' and pulled into the parking area.



Then began the first descent into Panamint Springs, 2,336' lower down the mountain, where we stopped for coffee.



Looking out from our comfortable chairs outside the General Store, we saw where we were headed. Tell me this is not where we are going!



Too bad, it is!

After cresting Towne Pass (4,956'),



we began a 12-mile descent: the first 5 miles were at 8%. We made a pit stop at Emigrant,



followed by a 5-mile, 6% descent then a 2-mile, 4% grade. Today has certainly been a day of ups and downs!

By lunchtime, we arrived at Stovepipe Wells at SEA level!

We decided we both deserved suitable refreshment. I had an Arrogant Bastard and Jen had a Downtown Brown with our lunches.



Death Valley Lodging Company CA Highway 190 Death Valley, CA 92328 (760) 786-2387 deathvalleylodgingco.com	
Emp: 5766-Joe B	Ck #: 29
05/14/2017 01:13 PM	Table: P4 Guests: 2
1 ARROGANT BASTARD	6.00
1 DOWNTOWN BROWN	5.50
1 PRICKLY PEAR HOUSE SALAD	6.50
1 SIDE OF GRILLED CHICKEN	4.00
1 CHILI-CHEDDAR FRIES	7.95



Twenty-five miles later we pulled into Furnace Creek (elevation: **-190'**). We checked out the campground but were not impressed. Almost all of the sites were in the blazing 36C sunshine. Unserviced sites are \$16 while full hookups are \$31. It was still very windy so we decided to keep on trucking.



We climbed out of Death Valley - I think we got to about 3,000' then we descended into Death Valley Junction (2,041').



We turned south heading for Shoshone. We were getting low on gas and we knew there was a gas station there. As we drove into town, we passed the Shoshone RV Park. Hey, there are trees! We gassed up and headed back to the RV park for the night.

Tomorrow we head towards Laughlin, NV. See you there.