

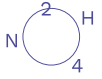
a guide to
JOSHUA TREE



and other
Desert Cities

Joshua Tree

by Elise Fahey



About the author

The author is a painter, living and working in Southern California since 2014. She completed an M.F.A. at the École supérieure d'art des Pyrénées in 2012, France.

Dear visitors,

Joshua Trees (*Yucca Brevifolia*) are native to the Mojave Desert and live abundantly in its Southern tip. A place of brutal weather with long distances and home to a few cities. There are no buses or train stops, driving is the most direct way to reach Joshua Tree. During your ride, be sure to have with you basic sound equipment. Click on each chapter title for there is as much to read as there is to listen.

Sincerely,
Elise

JOSHUA TREE and other Desert Cities

Afar -Map-

This trip unfolds from Los Angeles on 130 miles (209 km) of freeways. A two-hour drive with potential stops. For instance, from the 210 E exit at Claremont Colleges to see **Prometheus**, a mural by José Clemente Orozco and the collection of Native American Art at Pomona College Museum of Art. Outside the museum, the Skyspace **Dividing the Light** of former student James Turrell requires a bit more planning as the lighting program works only at sunrise and sunset times.

For those driving on the 10 E only, take exit 41-Kellogg Dr towards Cal Poly Pomona to view the **CLA Building** by Antoine Predock, maestro architect based in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The sharpest angle of the triangular plan points towards Mount Baldy in the San Gabriel Mountains.

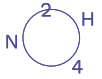
Next exit for everyone is Calimesa Blvd, not only because it is half way to Joshua Tree but, most importantly, for a taste of **Village Bread Artisan Bakery** goods. Genuine bakers making fermented breads and buttery pastries from regional grains and traditional methods. Preferably order ahead or arrive early as they often sell out.

From Calimesa, instead of rushing back on the interstate 10, be tempted by a 40-minute scenic loop into the apple orchards and farms of the San Gorgonio Pass. Head North to connect with Oak Glen Rd and continue driving East towards Cherry Valley. Pick a tavern for a fresh cup of cider or stretch at the **Oak Glen Preserve**. End this loop with the 1884 **Highland Springs Resort** for its organic lavender fields and olive orchard. Their 123 Farm shops sell mists and balms made on site to prevent your skin from drying up in the High Desert.



Joshua Tree

by Elise Fahey



Ooze Out And Away, Onewh -Map-

Wait, another important halt is the **Malki Museum** on the Morongo Reservation in Banning. Learn about the culture and lives of Southern California Native Americans and look through a rich but modest collection of pottery, baskets, tools and books about the Cahuilla, Chemehuevi and many other Indian tribes from the Inland Empire and Mojave Desert.

After passing the Cabazon Outlet and Morongo Casino Tower, a first gathering of windmills will announce to keep left and follow the sign for “other Desert Cities”, leaving Palm Springs to the South. Shortly before the junction with our California State Route 62 hides the **Whitewater Preserve**. But keep right and don't miss the turn off to the 62.

Desert Hot Spring to the right deserves some attention. Return on a separate day to perhaps tour the **Cabot's Museum Pueblo**, a historic Hopi-style house self-built by a homesteader in the early 1920s. He is known to have discovered two natural hot and cold springs giving the name to « Miracle Hill ». Across the street, push hard on the metal gate to quietly step in the **Miracle Manor Retreat** designed by noted artist April Greiman and architect Michael Rotondi in 2007.

Today's remodeled Hotel Lautner used to be, in 1947, the **Desert Hot Springs Motel** when architect John Lautner conceived it with a vibrant reference to Frank Lloyd Wright's Taliesin West in Arizona. The Lautner Compound is now transformed into an inaccessible elite vacation rental surrounded by tall fences.

Exploring the historical «Spa Zone» of DHS can turn out short without the time for luxurious treatments or inexpensive hot spring tubs with chlorine. Palm Springs, 20 minutes down N Indian Canyon Dr, also harbors numerous modernist architectural landmarks such as Richard Neutra's **Kaufmann Desert House** and the **Frey House II** by Albert Frey. Standing near one another against the San Jacinto Mountains, the **Palm Springs Art Museum** as well as the **Architecture and Design Center** both display modern to contemporary international artworks. Enjoy Jim Dine's *Twin '6 Hearts* in the Sculpture Garden while having a drink at the museum cafe.



Joshua Tree

by Elise Fahey



Through the Hill -Map-

Stay on Highway 62 for now and pass through the Little San Bernardino Mountains to arrive at Morongo Valley with its peaceful **Big Morongo Canyon Preserve** and relaxed old fashioned **Morongo Valley Cafe**. Up again and you will enter old town Yucca Valley. Locate the couple blocs of antiques and thrift stores at the turn off to Pioneertown Rd. Visiting the small 1940s Western-movie stage set of Pioneertown pairs well with a meal at the celebrated **Pappy & Harriet's**, most famous for convivial mesquite grill barbecue and music. For serious hiking come back well equipped and accompanied to the **Pioneertown Mountains Preserve**. 10-minute drive to Pioneertown



Another major intersection of the 62 (also called Twentynine Palms Highway) is Old Women Spring Rd (or Highway 247). It leads to Landers (famed for it's 1992 massive earthquake) where George Van Tassel landed in 1947 at **Giant Rock** and later built his magnetic white dome,

the **Integratron**. Nowadays, the wooden cupola structure serves to experience “sound baths” by appointment only. In 2016, at the sacred Giant Rock area, French filmmaker Pierre Bismuth shot his *Where is Rocky II?*, a **10 year desert hunt for Ed Ruscha's missing boulder**. Look around but don't miss an afternoon bite or dinner at hip **La Copine** in Flamingo Heights. A 30 minute-drive to Giant Rock, 20 min to the Integratron and 10 min to La Copine

Back at the same intersection, every Saturday morning, meet with **High Desert Test Sites** at the **Sky Village Swap Meet & Crystal Cave**. This non-profit, artist run organization has published with **A-Z West** a “collaborative collection of information about local sites of interest”. To expand this modest booklet, refer to their *Desert Destination Log*.

Still at this crossroad, notice the sign for **Black Rock Canyon Campground** up Joshua Lane, a first hint of the approaching Joshua Tree National Park. This larger campground allows anyone to reserve a site during the crowded winter season. Several trails with less foot traffic will ease your thirst for moderate hikes throughout the West end of the park. Bring lots of water, always. 10 to 15 minute-drive to Black Rock

Joshua Tree

by Elise Fahey



Wind In Lonely Fences -Map-

The miles-long strip malls of Yucca Valley slowly vanishes into vast desert lots and long skinny sandy roads. **The Joshua Tree Retreat Center** built by Frank Lloyd Wright and his son Lloyd Wright in 1946 welcomes visitors to accommodation, meditation paths and massages. Enter this Institute of Mentalphysics to simply visit the grounds.

Recently, the local quarterly editorial **Desert Oracle “The Voice of the Desert”** has published a handful of fanzines compiling obscure Mojave Desert stories. The editor Ken Layne is now broadcasting a weekly radio program of more spooky voices.

Soon reach the three blocks of cafes and shops in downtown Joshua Tree. On Saturday mornings, the tents of the **Certified Farmers Market** will fill the main parking lot between **Joshua Health Foods** and **Joshua Tree Art Gallery** with some local treats. Try for instance delicious dates from **Flying Disc Ranch**, coffee beans roasted everyday across the street at the **Joshua Tree Coffee Company** and truly fresh eggs from **Sage Mountain Beef**. From this main stretch, at the corner of 29 Palms Hwy and Park Blvd, different itineraries are possible. Directly to the right is the way to the West Entrance of JTNP, the busiest in high season but the closest to all the “first come first serve” campsites.

If in no hurry, keep driving straight ahead on Hwy 62 towards the town of Twentynine Palms (15 miles / 24 km) while including the following visits.

Directions to the **Noah Purifoy Foundation** are necessary to avoid getting stuck in thick soft sand while wandering up dirt roads. From either the **Crossroad Café & Tavern** or the **Joshua Tree Saloon**, continue East on 62 and quickly turn left on Sunburst Ave. After 3 miles (4.8 km) make a right on Golden St followed by a left on paved Border Ave for 1 mile (1.6 km). Right on Aberdeen Dr, left on Center Ave and a final right on Blair Ln. 10 minutes

This Outdoor Desert Art Museum of Assemblage Sculpture was created and inhabited by artist Noah Purifoy during the last fifteen years of his life from 1989 to 2004. Ed Ruscha, who also has a studio near Pioneertown, donated much of the land to Noah for him to expand his “earth piece”. Since 2004, a gatekeeper silently watches over the site while the desert wind rattles the art structures to sculpt at its own pace.

For more open land art installation, descend Center Ave straight back to 29 Palms Hwy and cross over to discover **Planar Pavilions** by artist Andrea Zittel. A-Z West was established right on the premises by Zittel herself in 2000. There are a

Joshua Tree

by Elise Fahey



couple of ways to visit her residence and studio complex: by **booking** in advance a 2-hour tour or by applying to a week residency at the **Wagon Station Encampment** open twice a year. A mere 15 to 20 minute-drive from Purifoy to Zittel

A close neighbor is artist Eva Soltes, founder of the **Harrison House Music, Arts & Ecology**, a residency and performance program in an intimate straw bale retreat completed by composer Lou Harrison one year before his death in 2003. And further up Mt Shasta Ave, a peculiar home designed for artists **Beverly Doolittle** and her husband in the 1990s emerges entangled in the boulders.

Less than 10 minutes

A Child In A Sylvan Field -Map-

Indian Cove is another wide campground where you can book a space among the unique towers of monzogranite. The trailhead for the long Boy Scout Trail starts or ends



here as it connects to the main part of the park. It is preferable to plan a winter backpacking trip to attack this 18-mile round trip hike (29 km).

Next national park related feature is the **Fortynine Palms Oasis Trail**, a 3-mile (4.8 km) out-and-back venture to a cluster of California fan palms. This sheltered oasis thrives from unexpected natural spring water, which highlights the canyon with a generous amount of shade and coolness for a rest and snack.

Roughly 1 ½ to 2-hour hike

Twentynine Palms is known as one of the largest Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center. Originally, it is named after the **Oasis of Mara** where the indigenous Serrano people settled in California thousands of years ago. In 1928, the **29 Palms Inn** was built on the oasis, which offers nights in colorful Adobe bungalows and dinners at the joined restaurant. The North Entrance to JTNP is nearby, pass the Oasis Visitor Center heading South on Utah Trail.

On the left, the intriguing **Geodesic Dome** is also known to be home and **Desert Art Studio** of figurative painter Chuck Caplinger. The architect Buckminster Fuller invented this design in the late 1940s, which gained instant success and became a fad throughout the country. Time to enter the park but also consider the following optional desert detour.

Joshua Tree

by Elise Fahey



Abandoned Cities -Map-

Pushing East to Wonder Valley is looking back into a time where owning 5 acres (2 hectares) of sand to the sweat of building a house and cultivating the land in the middle of the Mojave Desert was possible. Many of those **homestead cabins** bloomed in the mid 20th century and the last of them are hauntingly present.

15 minutes away

A solitary road alongside the Sheep Hole Mountains will slowly cut into the neat and mysterious tranches of salt carved out of **Bristol Dry Lake**. A lonely long polychrome freight train often moves into the majestic white surface while a striking black mount named **Amboy Crater** appears in the distance. Arrive at Amboy and meander around the surviving buildings of this once booming Route 66 landmark. North lays the **Mojave National Preserve** and East goes to Arizona. Let's backtrack to enter Joshua Tree National Park. 2-hour round trip to Amboy or half a day if hiking to the Crater



Sun At 6 Windows -Map-

At each kiosque, a ranger will collect a **fee** and hand a map plus a newspaper with additional information and policies. From the Twentynine Palms North Entrance to the Joshua Tree West Entrance count on a smooth 40-minute drive to various “exhibitions”, “nature trails”, and “picnic areas” that narrate botanical, geological and human changes. From the early Pinto Culture to the Spanish immigrants displacing Cahuilla, Chemehuevi and Serrano natives into Christian missions, a glimpse of 80 years of mining and cattle grazing can be seen when walking to the Lost Horse Mine and Barker Dam.

Campgrounds' size will narrow down into more private alcoves at Ryan and Hidden Valley therefore more challenging to obtain. The strenuous 1.5 mile-climb (2.4 km) to the peak of Ryan Mountain is short but rewarding. An immense parallel climbing world with thousands of routes has been developed at least since 1936 when the park was first designated U.S. National Monument. Boulderling, hiking or other strenuous sports are best practiced from October through April when temperatures can still be **extreme**, both hot and cold. There is no water access inside the park so carry gallons.

Joshua Tree

by Elise Fahey



From the West Station and 1 mile down Quail Springs Rd towards the town of Joshua Tree, contemplate the three-colored **Monument House** built from 1989 to 1990 by Los Angeles-based architect Josh Schweitzer. This attractive private residence is remembered to be on the front cover of Architectural Records magazine the year it was completed. Get the most beautiful view of this “orange-mallow-gazebo” and the desert while staying at one of the three **Shelter** rentals facing The Monument. Also called the Schweitzer House, it is neighbor to a 2000-2001 Rotondi House another private residence on Turtle Rd near Desert Shadows. And across from the rusty metal sheets of the **Joshua Tree House**, shines a **Flying Cloud Airstream** with pool available for rent.

There, at the top of Turtle Rd, look in the distance towards the main road where up against the hill, sits a train car, the **Joshua Tree Southern Railroad Museum**, a fenced-off property that can be toured by appointment.

Back on Quail Springs Rd towards downtown Joshua Tree, another JTNP Visitor Center providing naturalists’ expertise can bring great guidance and knowledge about any specimen living in the two distinct deserts that specifically meet in the heart of the park, the Mojave and the Colorado.

The Dream of the Girl at the Lonely Desert Café -Map-

Tomorrow, let us return into the park to meet with the Colorado Desert left behind at the Cottonwood Spring intersection. The Pinto Basin Rd gradually drops into the Southern part of JTNP and will eventually reconnect with Interstate 10. Along the way, notice a glowing Cholla Garden, the springing Ocotillo Patch and several washes of delicate Smoke Trees. Once at the Cottonwood Visitor Center, find a more challenging 7-mile (11 km) out-and-back trail into the secluded **Lost Palms Oasis**. 1 hour and 15 minutes-drive from West to South Entrance; all day hike for the LP Oasis

For a closer view of the fauna and flora that inhabit this arid mountainous landscape, extend the ride to **The Living Desert Zoo & Gardens** in Palm Desert. Since the 70s, the site has been collecting wildlife native to North America and Africa as well as California Plein Air Art. Another branch of the **Palm Springs Art Museum** is located in Palm Desert not too far from **Imago Galleries**. 50 minute-ride on I-10; need a half or full day

Straight North, 25 minutes away, a lush cooling refuge awaits. It will heal any frustrations, especially if unable to hike the two oases in JTNP. The spectacular **Thousand Palms Oasis**

Joshua Tree

by Elise Fahey



of the Coachella Valley Preserve arises at the foot of the Indio Hills. This desert wetland is fed by natural springs seeping out of the famous California San Andreas Fault.

Another refreshing expedition is a flight to the summit of Mount San Jacinto with the **Palm Springs Aerial Tramway**. Further away in Southern California, others may want to investigate the **Salton Sea, Salvation Mountain** or even **Anza-Borrego Desert State Park**. A day trip or longer road trip while listening to the following pieces.

Sandtrader

Turn on the Moon

Jane 17

Coyote

All titles were composed by **Harold Budd**. I selected them –with his permission– for you to listen to when en route to Joshua Tree and other Desert Cities. A very special thanks to him who allowed me to become a desert rat.



Afar --: The Serpent (in Quicksilver), 1981

Ooze Out And Away, Onehow --: The Moon and the Melodies (with Cocteau Twins), 1986

Through the Hill --: Through the Hill (with Andy Partridge), 1994

Wind in Lonely Fences --: Ambient 2: The Plateaux of Mirror (with Brian Eno), 1980

A Child In A Sylvan Field --: By the Dawn's Early Light, 1991

Abandoned Cities --: Abandoned Cities, 1984

Sun At 6 Windows --: In the Mist, 2011

The Dream of the Girl at the Lonely Desert Café --: Bandits of Stature, 2012

Sandtrader --: Lovely Thunder, 1986

Turn On the Moon --: Before the Day Breaks (with Robin Guthrie), 2007

Jane 17 --: Jane 12-21, 2014

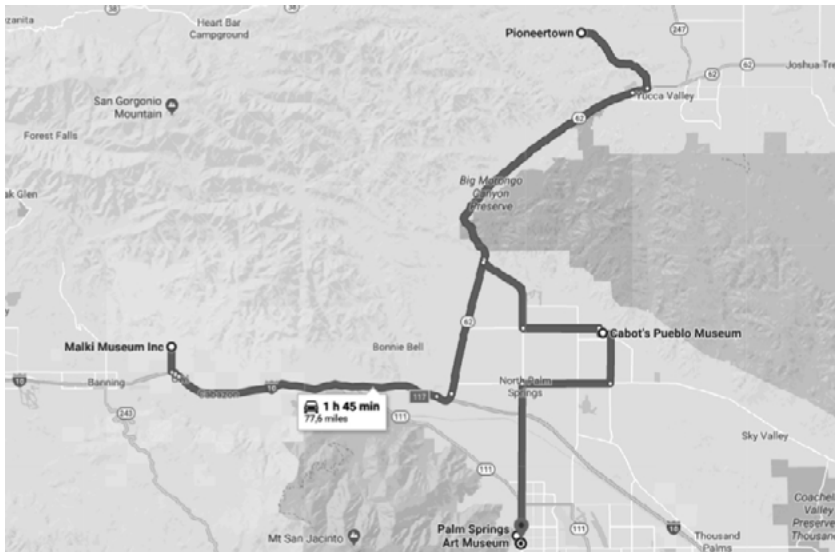
Coyote -- : The White Arcades, 1988

Maps Index

Afar



Ooze Out And Away, Onewow



Through the Hill



Wind in Lonely Fences



Index

Architecture

Architecture and Design Center.....	p.4
Beverly Doolittle House.....	p.7
CLA Building.....	p.3
Desert Hot Springs Motel	p.4
Frey House II	p.4
Geodesic Dome.....	p.7
Kaufmann Desert House.....	p.4
Monument House.....	p.9
The Joshua Tree Retreat Center.....	p.6

Art & Culture

A-Z West.....	p.5
Cabot's Museum Pueblo.....	p.4
Clemente Orozco (Prometheus).....	p.3
Desert Art Studio.....	p.7
Harrison House Music, Arts & Ecology.....	p.7
High Desert Test Sites.....	p.5
Imago Galleries.....	p.10
James Turrell (Dividing the Light).....	p.3
Joshua Tree Art Gallery.....	p.6
Malki Museum.....	p.4
Noah Purifoy Foundation.....	p.6
Palm Springs Art Museum.....	p.4
Palm Springs Art Museum in Palm Desert.....	p.10
Pomona College Museum of Art.....	p.3

Places of interest

Desert Oracle «The Voice of the Desert».....	p.6
Ghost towns.....	p.8
Integratron.....	p.5
Joshua Tree Southern Railroad Museum.....	p.9
Palm Springs Aerial Tramway.....	p.10
Salvation Mountain.....	p.10
Sky Village Swap Meet & Crystal Cave.....	p.5
The Living Desert Zoo & Gardens.....	p.10

Food

29 Palms Inn Restaurant.....	p.7
Certified Farmers Market.....	p.6
Crossroad Café & Tavern.....	p.6
Flying Disc Ranch.....	p.6
High Desert Test Kitchen.....	p.5
Joshua Health Foods.....	p.6
Joshua Tree Coffee Company.....	p.6
Joshua Tree Saloon.....	p.6
La Copine.....	p.5
Morongo Valley Cafe.....	p.5

Pappy & Harriet's.....	p.5
Sage Mountain Beef.....	p.6
Village Bread Artisan Bakery.....	p.3

Nature

Amboy Crater.....	p.8
Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.....	p.10
Big Morongo Canyon Preserve.....	p.5
Bristol Dry Lake.....	p.8
Fortynine Palms Oasis Trail.....	p.7
Giant Rock.....	p.5
Joshua Tree National Park.....	p.8
Lost Palm Oasis.....	p.9
Mojave National Preserve.....	p.8
Mount San Jacinto.....	p.10
Oak Glen Preserve.....	p.3
Oasis of Mara.....	p.7
Pioneertown Mountains Preserve.....	p.5
Salton Sea.....	p.10
Thousand Palms Oasis.....	p.10
Whitewater Preserve.....	p.4

Places to Sleep

29 Palms Inn.....	p.7
A-Z West Station Wagon Encampment.....	p.7
A-Z Wonder Valley Experimental Living Cabins.....	p.6
Black Rock Canyon Campground.....	p.5
Flying Cloud Airstream.....	p.9
Hidden Valley & Ryan Campgrounds.....	p.8
Highland Springs Resort.....	p.3
Hotel Lautner.....	p.4
Indian Cove.....	p.7
Miracle Manor Retreat.....	p.4
Shelter.....	p.9
The Joshua Tree Retreat Center.....	p.6