Welcome to Ridgecrest!

Ridgecrest and China Lake

Located in the middle of the Indian Wells Valley between four different mountain ranges, this small city called Ridgecrest is home to about 30,000 people and is a centralized hub for many unique desert tourist destinations. Lying on a dry basin called Crumville, which was settled in 1912, this town became the bedroom community for China Lake Naval Ordnance Test Station, which was established in 1943. Now called NAWS, (Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake, formerly shortened to NAWTS), this weapons development and testing site is an integral part of United States Defense.

This map is a guide to many of the hundreds of possibilities for exploring the desert and mountain adventures located within a couple of hours of Ridgecrest. For more ideas be sure to stop at the Ridgecrest Area Visitor Center, which is located at 643 N. China Lake Blvd. Suite C.

To the north:
Beverly & Jim Rogers Lone Pine Film History Museum

If you’re a movie buff with an interest in film history, the Lone Pine Film History Museum is a must-see on your list. Since the 1920s, the Alabama Hills, just west of Lone Pine, has been a favorite movie set for many films and TV episodes including Gunga Din, North by Northwest, and Bonanza. Ten more recently the museum opened and is currently the Only Smallest Town with a Movie Museum.

The museum is open Monday-Wednesday 10-6, Thursday-Saturday 10-7, Sunday 10-4. Closed Christmas Day and New Year’s Day. Admission is $5 for adults and children under 12 get in free. To discover more about the Lone Pine Film History Museum please go to www.lonepinefilmhistorymuseum.org.

Located in Lone Pine, this destination is approximately 70 miles north on Highway 395. (OHV), and tourists traveling along U.S. Highway 395, this location is a fun day trip back into the past. Days travel here are.

To the east:
Badwater/Death Valley National Park

Badwater is a very unique landscape and is the lowest point in North America at 282 feet below sea level. It often becomes a shallow lake after heavy rains. Death Valley is one of the most unique and well-traveled tourist areas in California. Here you can see beautiful volcanic canyons, sand dunes, the lowest point in the United States, and other small hot springs and geysers. There are many designated areas where visitors can drive and hike. Visit http://www.nps.gov/deva/index.htm for more information.

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U.S. Naval Museum of Ammunition and Technology

Explore the history of weapons development for the United States Navy at this museum located on the Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake.

Located at One Pearl Harbor Way, China Lake, CA. Operating hours are Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., closed Sundays and selected holidays. Special tours can be arranged by calling the museum at 760-939-5300 during regular business hours. U.S. citizens can pick up guest passes at the main gate Visitors Center, www.chinolakemuseum.org.

Red Rock Canyon State Park

Red Rock Canyon State Park is located on Highway 14 just 37 miles south of Ridgecrest, this unusual red sandstone canyon stands out against the subtle color of the surrounding desert.

Take a hike, have a picnic, see a sunset or sunrise in this picturesque location. The visitor center is open daily, and there are camping spaces available. To learn more about Red Rock Canyon go to: www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=581

The Ramond District

The Ramond District is an authentic mining town with a general store, saloons, a museum of mining history and other small boutiques and galleries. A lunch stop for ATW Highway Vehicle traffic (OHV), and tourists traveling along U.S. 395, this location is a fun day trip back into turn of the century desert mining camps. One mile off Highway 395 about 23 miles south of Ridgecrest. (Open daily on the weekends). For museum information: www.ramonddistrictmuseum.com.

Maturango Museum

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