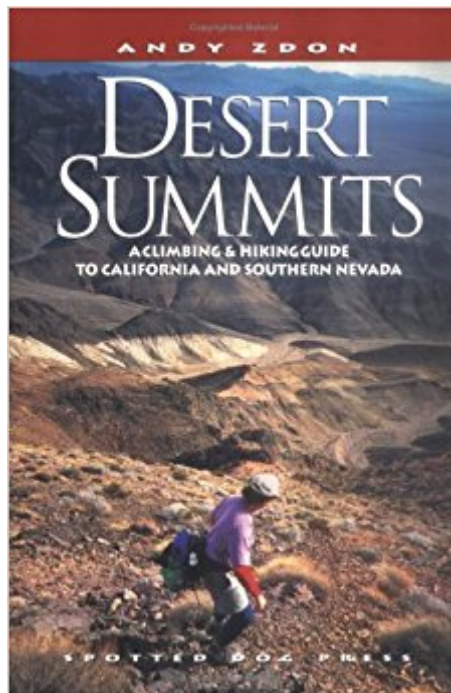




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Desert Summits: A Climbing & Hiking Guide To California And Southern Nevada (Hiking & Biking)



Synopsis

Desert Summits covers Death Valley and Joshua Tree National Parks, Mojave National Preserve, Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, Red Rock National Conservation Area, Lake Mead and Spring Mountains National Recreation Areas, Desert National Wildlife Refuge, the White-Inyo Range, and the peaks surrounding Las Vegas, Nevada including: The Excelsior Mountains, Gold Butte area, Sweetwater Mountains, Bodie Hills, Mormon Mountains, Eldorado Mountains, Silver Peak Range, Cady Mountains, and Providence Mountains. Obscure mountains include: Sleeping Beauty Mountain, Coffin Peak, Scattered Bone Peak, Saline Peak, Last Chance Mountain, Devil Peak, Corkscrew, Gold Butte, Muddy Mountains, Hamblin Mountain, Frenchman Mountain, Van Winkle Mountain (Providence), Tortoise Shell Mountain (Woods Mountains), and Old Woman Mountain.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

"An excellent guide!" -- Barbara Lilley, 2003 Recipient of the Francis Farquhar Mountaineering Award "Desert Summits" is to the desert what "High Sierra Peaks, Passes. . ." is to the Sierra!" -- Scott Bogan, San Diego "Killer book! Everything for the desert fanatic!" -- Mark Cross, San Diego

Author and professional geologist, Andy Zdon, a graduate of Northern Arizona University in Flagstaff, provides interesting anecdotes about the geology, history, and natural history of these desert mountains. Andy Zdon currently lives and works in the Owens Valley on the east side of the Sierra Nevada.

Zdon does a great job of listing hikes in the southern Nevada and California desert. The descriptions and directions he gives are highly accurate. I've done a few dozen of the hikes listed in the book (some before and some since seeing the book) and can attest that the book is highly reliable. One feature that Zdon works into his hike descriptions which I like a lot is a description of the plants in the area. For instance, in describing the Kingston Range (an area I have not yet got to explore) he tells of a yucca-like plant called the nolina and of a "relict stand of white firs" on this desert peak. Details like this make me want to get out and explore that area! (He also mentions that the hiker should keep a watch out for ticks while climbing Kingston Peak, but that's important advice too!) Another interesting area Zdon covers is the Sheep Mountains which are northeast of Las Vegas. Zdon goes beyond the typical Joshua Tree and Death Valley hikes that are covered in dozens of books and includes the lesser hiked areas in the deserts of southern Nevada and California.

Andy Zdon has done a very thorough job researching the approaches and hiking/climbing routes in this guide book. I especially liked the fact that he warns the reader against taking passenger cars up roads which he feels require 4WD capability. The inclusion of general area maps and actual photographs make the book even more useful. Descriptions are great but someone said "a picture is worth a thousand words". Included in the descriptions are such useful topics as the anticipated round trip elevation gain and hiking distance. In some instances Andy has added his personal comments regarding safety issue or things like "don't underestimate the difficulty of this hike". The personal touch gives the guide book user more of a "hands on" feel to the overall hike. I recommend Desert Summits to all of those folks who are planning to get out and hike/climb the areas described in the book. Hey, here's another "list" to get you out of the house this winter.

Although I'm waiting try the new hikes detailed in this book (I'll wait till summer passes, thanks), I have found it to be a great read on its own merits. The physical descriptions of the areas covered are detailed and evocative without being flowery; the driving and trail directions are as exact as they can be given the remoteness of some of these areas. Mr. Zdon knows these places inside and out, and he goes well beyond the obvious choices into some wild and relatively unexplored terrain. This book introduced me to some new places I want to experience, and made me realize I don't know my "familiar" spots as well as I thought. The volume is also very handsomely illustrated and produced.

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