

Dry Deserts

Deserts are hot. Well most of them are. Some deserts can be cold. So what makes a desert anyway?



A desert is an area of land that gets very little rainfall each year. In order to be a desert, an area must get less than 10 inches (25 centimeters) of precipitation each year. This can be in the form of rain, but also might be snow, sleet, or hail.



Most of the famous deserts are sandy and hot. For example, the Atacama Desert is sometimes called the driest place on Earth. Located in Chile and Peru, it can sometimes go decades without any rain at all.



Another famous desert is the Mojave Desert in the United States. Death Valley is a part of this desert. It is so hot that some people call it the hottest place on Earth.



The Sahara Desert is the largest sandy desert in the world. It stretches across many countries in Northern Africa. It has many sand dunes and is full of interesting animals.



Have you ever heard of the Patagonian Desert? It is in Argentina and is one of the least studied deserts in the world. This place is a sandy-stony desert.



The Arabian desert is pretty special. The center is called Rub 'al-Khali which means the Empty Quarter. It has the largest unbroken stretch of sand.



The Thar Desert is between India and Pakistan. This desert has more people living in it than any other desert in the world. They dig deep under the ground so they can get their water.



If you like dinosaurs then you'll love the Gobi Desert. It is in China and Mongolia. Home to the largest amount of dinosaur fossils in the world, we have learned so much about the past thanks to this desert.



If you like to learn about history, the Namib Desert is one of the oldest deserts in the world. It stretches across Namibia, Angola, and South Africa. There are beautiful sand dunes and some amazing animals.



The Great Victoria Desert is in Australia. This desert has salt lakes and lots of thunder. Much of Australia is not lived in by people because of the desert conditions.



The Taklamakan Desert is in China and is a colder desert. There are wild camels here. People used to cross this desert as part of the Silk Road, a famous way that people traded things between Europe and Asia.



Europe has deserts too. The Oltenian Sahara is the largest desert in Europe. It is in Romania. This desert is getting bigger because of trees being cut down and too much farming.



Photo by Tarciso Leão

Finally, the largest desert in the world is a polar desert. Home to penguins and freezing temperatures, Antarctica is the biggest desert on the planet.



Though deserts might seem empty, there is so much to learn about these interesting places. What else do you want to know about these dry areas?

