

*Thursday, November 17th – Friday, November 18th*

I was enjoying my time at exploring Joshua Tree but there's only so many hikes that are short enough and close enough to Twentynine Palms. On Thursday and Friday I headed back towards Amboy, driving through the desert and down the crazy maze of dirt side roads that make up Wonder Valley.



*Wonder Valley*

This will be a shorter post. I really like it out this way, but the whole place pretty much looks like desert with run down shacks scattered throughout (plus the occasional beautiful home or compound). It was a bit challenging to get around; I've ridden a fair amount of gravel and dirt roads but out here I kept having to very carefully navigate the sand.

Everybody says you should have four wheel drive, high clearance vehicles to get around here. I have a one wheel drive, low clearance scooter. And so far, that's been plenty



*Yep, same view in front or in back.*

As you can clearly (obviously!) see, the above two photographs were taken on totally different roads in different parts of Wonder Valley. Although the scooter happened to be pointed south both times.



*This house is for sale! No power, nobody around here has sewer (all septic systems) and no tap water; Wonder Valley has wells (not potable) and water tanks.*

This area is one of the last homestead areas, the land being released I think as late as the 1950's. Basically you could claim a 5 acre lot if you could build a 9×12' structure on it. So there are a ton of little shacks out here in various states of disrepair. The county started knocking some down in the past decade or two, but there are many still out here.

At one point I headed over to The Palms Restaurant. It's a bar, local meeting spot, short order kitchen and occasional live music venue when the owner and the band he's in decide to put on a show. There is no grocery store, gas station or town out this way. The few folks I spoke to were all nice, strange people living how they want to live in a part of the world that feels totally remote, yet is only two hours from Los Angeles.





*Palms Restaurant – I'm assuming this is an outdoor performance area, they also have a stage setup inside.*



*The Glass Outhouse Art Museum*

I'd have loved to explore the Glass Outhouse a bit more, they have a sculpture garden (glimpsed above) in addition to an indoor museum. I was headed back into town trying to catch a business before they closed so only took a quick photo from the parking lot.

That's all from Wonder Valley. It's a pretty crazy place and one that pulls strongly at me. It gets ferociously hot in the summer (think 120F) but in the long, mild evenings of November I found it all tremendously beautiful.