

Favorite Places
Valley of Fires State Park
By Paul Smith, Editor

I'd like to share with you one of my newest favorite places, Valley of Fire State Park. Located 55 miles northeast of Las Vegas, it's an easy hour drive from Las Vegas to get to some of the most unique geological features you could ever expect to find. For whatever reason the park seems to get spectacular light at sunrise and sunset. I would strongly advise against visiting in the summer as the high desert heat would be a severe deterrent to hiking. Although you can get some pretty good shots from the side of the road, many hidden gems require a moderate hike. I purchased a photographer's e-guide (in PDF format) online that made finding these spots a lot easier: <http://www.synnatschke.com/e-guides/store.php> It will be the best \$10.00 investment you could make if you plan to go there.

This, taken from Aperture Academy Workshop describes Valley of Fire perfectly: <https://www.apertureacademy.com/photography-workshops-valley-of-fire.php>

"Valley of Fire looks and feels like another planet. A true photographer's playground, the Valley of Fire has a little something for everyone. Slot canyons - check! Red rock canyons and hills - check! Swirls of yellow, orange and red layered rock - check! Arches and interesting shaped rocks - check! There's even a rock that looks like an elephant! So, if photographing the beauty of the southwest is up your alley, and you want it all within a short drive to a major metropolitan airport, Valley of Fire is right for you!"

I have visited this park on 3 separate occasions, each time digging deeper to find some incredible features. As a side note, I have just returned from a 7 week photo journey to the desert southwest. It is truly unbelievable how the most popular parks have become so overcrowded, it is almost impossible to do serious photography there. Tour companies are bringing people in by the bus loads; a lot of foreign nationals who think nothing of standing in front of your lens. I do not lie. The same may happen to you at the Fire Wave at sunset, but nowhere near to the extent in other parks.

Valley of Fire is in very close proximity to the North Shore of Lake Mead. The closest town for lodging is Overton, NV. If you plan on staying there over night, I can highly recommend the North Shore Inn: <http://www.northshoreinnatlakemead.com> It is privately owned and operated and a hot breakfast is included in their rates. For a 10% discount use the following code when making your reservation: SVOP (which I discovered in the above mentioned e-guide).

There is a daily entrance fee of \$10 per vehicle per day and they do not accept any National park passes as it is a State Park. You may camp for \$20/nt.

Gallery of Valley of Fire Images



Fire Wave



Sunset



Windstone Arch



Desert Wildflowers



Pink Canyon



Fire Canyon Arch



Elephant Arch



Valley of Fire Moonrise