

WHITE DESERT

NATIONAL PARK

White Desert National Park is in the Western Desert region of Egypt. It is a large nature reserve in Egypt about 30 kilometres north the depression el-Farafra. The sanctuary is one of the most extraordinary areas in the western desert and ranges roughly from Crystal Mountain in the north to Table Mountain et-Tebaldi in the south (about 50 kilometres) and from the Hidden Valley (Hidden Valley) in the west over 100 kilometres to the east into the here nameless desert. Two further buffer areas with an area of 971 square kilometres have been identified to the west and south.



HISTORY

The White Desert area was declared a protected area in 2002. The landscape is characterised by limestone and chalk cliffs. The desert was formed from the remains of microscopic sea creatures that lived here around 80 million years ago. After the disappearance of the sea, winds formed the present rocks. Depending on the composition or hardness of the rocks and their sequence of layers, bizarre structures such as mushrooms, tower-like or finger-like structures were formed over time. With a little imagination you can see dogs, camels and other creatures in them.

There are now around 50,000 tourists who travel here from el-Farafra or el-Bahriya every year. Trips over Christmas and Easter are particularly popular. Christmas - of course, because then they are white, but without the snow.

Of course, the crowds of tourists make various protective measures necessary. With funds from the Italian government and the Egyptian Ministry of the Environment, slopes have been laid out and camping sites have been designated for overnight stays.

LANDSCAPE



Unlike what you may be thinking, this part of the world is not dry. There are three important springs in the national park: ‘Ain Chadra (‘Ain el-Wādī), ‘Ain es-Serw and ‘Ain el-Maqfa.

These springs provide vegetation with palm trees, tamarisk and acacia. And if you have some time and luck, you can also observe gazelles, desert foxes, small rodents, geckos and much more.

HIGHLIGHTS

The majority of people who visit the national park are taken back by the white sands and the white sand rock formations which are unique compared to the more traditional shades of red and orange sands blanketed across the rest of the Sahara Desert..

➤ Crystal Mountain

Crystal Mountain is also called Crystal Rock. This is the most iconic rock formation in the national park. Although not as tall or big as Delicate Arch in Arches National Park, it gives you a similar type of sensation.

The good news is that this featured attraction is easily accessible right off the side of the main road. It is about 15 miles (24 km) north of Naqb As Sillim.

➤ Great Sand Sea

The Great Sand Sea is a portion of the Sahara Desert that lies between Egypt and Libya. This portion of the desert covers an area of 27,799.36 square miles (72,000 sq km). It is renowned for the abundant rolling sea of sand dunes that cover approximately three-quarters of the area.



The Great Sand Sea extends well beyond the national park boundaries which only serve as an introduction into this magnificent presentation of nature. However, there are opportunities to discover and explore the White Desert as part of an explorative adventure that travels deeper into the Great Sand Sea providing a more thorough discovery of the splendor of the Sarah Desert.