

Sde Boker

Kibbutz Sde Boker is the realization of the dream envisioned by David Ben Gurion, Israel's first prime minister and defence minister, who loved the Negev and its expanses and wanted to settle the desert and make it bloom. The kibbutz, built in the northern Negev mountains, was established in 1952 by a group of discharged soldiers and attracted the public's attention when Ben Gurion moved to Sde Boker to live there with his wife Paula.

Ben Gurion's vision has indeed been realized and today the Negev is a blossoming region, dotted with many communities and thriving farms. Sde Boker has retained Ben Gurion's heritage. The hut in which he lived from the day he moved there until his death in 1973 is preserved exactly as it was when he lived there. The area around the hut has been developed and expanded for the benefit of visitors, including a display of Ben Gurion's famous statements and photographs of the early days of the kibbutz. The hut also houses the Ben Gurion archive, which is actually his private library, containing over 5,000 books about all the things he loved. The adjacent hut, where his bodyguards lived, has been turned into a museum devoted to Ben Gurion's special relationship with the Negev. South of the kibbutz there is a campus named after Ben Gurion, which houses a desert research institute, a Ben Gurion heritage institute, a field school and a guest house, a high school where youth from all over the country study nature from nature itself, a reptile farm and a desert sculpture museum. The nearby Ben Gurion memorial site, where David and Paula Ben Gurion are buried, offers a beautiful view of the Nakhal Tsin rift.

Kibbutz Sde Boker has several sources of income: a vineyard and boutique winery, an inn and restaurant, art gallery and souvenir shop, and agricultural crops. Sde Boker is the starting point for many wonderful tours to fascinating Negev sites, such the Ein Ovdat (Avdat) National Park, whose features include the Nakhal Tsin canyons and springs, waterfalls, plentiful plant and animal life, the archaeological site of the Nabatean city of Avdat, the Ein Eikev spring that flows year round and a Bedouin hospitality site.

Weather

Average temperatures in January: 13 C (56 F) high, 2 C (35 F) low.

Precipitations: typically dry.

Dress code: casual.