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STARGAZING

# 7 Best Places for Stargazing in California's Low Desert

by [Chris Clarke](#) on November 1, 2013 11:10 AM



Caltech's observatory on Palomar Mountain |  
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There's a lot of nighttime light in California's low desert, which covers all of Imperial and most of Riverside counties, and an eastern sliver of San Diego County. A string of brightly lit cities from Palm Springs to Mexicali drive back the night sky across a swath of desert 125 miles long.

But there's still quite a bit of darkness available here, especially in its remote eastern parts. Here are seven of our favorite low desert spots to contemplate your local portion of the universe, ranging from comfortable resort towns to ghost towns to remote, primitive campsites.

### **1. Borrego Springs, San Diego County**

We've already noted this official Dark Sky Community in our [San Diego County stargazing guide](#), but we just can't leave it unmentioned here. [Borrego Springs](#) is a great gateway to the state's largest state park, Anza-Borrego, and its residents and [businesses](#) have enthusiastically taken on the task of keeping night lighting to a minimum to preserve Anza-Borrego's night-time environment. As a result, Borrego Springs is almost alone among these Low Desert stargazing sites in offering local amenities like lodging and restaurants. Local businesses here just don't have the impact on night skies as their counterparts in less lighting conscious communities.