

GHOST TOWNS

Abandoned places preserve a snapshot of how life once was, although their tendency to crumble makes them an eerie place to visit...

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BODIE

Location: Mono County, California, USA
Time zone: UTC+8 Currency: US dollar

Bodie, a former gold mining town in the Eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains, is California's most famous ghost town. Founded in 1859, it was a bustling town by 1880, full of gunfights, gambling, and girls galore, with two churches compared to 65 saloons!

Its decline began in 1882, although people lived there until the 1940s. Bodie became a State Historic Park in 1962, and the town preserves buildings as they are; it doesn't restore them. This "state of arrested decay" adds to Bodie's eerie quality.

The town still has 100 structures standing, including the Bodie Jail, where John Wayne was photographed. But beware the Bodie Curse! Taking anything from the town - even a stone - will curse you with bad luck until you return the item. Some people think that Bodie's ghosts stand guard over the town, and people see and hear various spectres in both the remaining houses and Bodie Cemetery.

**"SOME THINK THAT
BODIE'S GHOSTS STAND
GUARD OVER THE TOWN"**

Image source: Wikipedia Commons/King of Hearts



LA NORIA

Location: Atacama Desert, Tarapacá Region, Chile
Time zone: UTC-5 Currency: Chilean peso

La Noria was a saltpeter mining town founded in 1826, although the discovery of a synthetic version during WWI led to the town's downfall and tough times for the residents. Only crumbling ruins remain, though visitors have seen ghosts and shadows throughout the ruins, hearing footsteps and voices in empty streets.

The cemetery overlooking La Noria is creepy since many exposed coffins are broken open, revealing their occupants. Bones lie scattered among the graves, and mine shafts pose an extra danger to the unwary. Don't linger after dark; one local legend says the dead leave their graves after sunset and travel to La Noria, angry about their disturbed rest.

It is difficult to find the town, and the only road leading to it is unreliable, unless you have an off-road vehicle. Take plenty of supplies, water, and a compass, since the Atacama Desert can be dangerous for the unprepared.



PRIPYAT

Location: Kyiv Oblast, Ukraine Time zone: UTC+2 Currency: Hryvnia

Pripyat lies 62 miles away from Kyiv in the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone, made infamous in 1986 when Reactor No. 4, at the nearby Chernobyl nuclear plant, exploded. The city was only founded in 1970, but it was abandoned after the inhabitants were evacuated, and nature has reclaimed vast swathes of it.

You can only enter Pripyat on a licensed Chernobyl tour. Guides are essential to keep you safe and they follow the strict guidelines regarding exposure to radiation (although the level in the areas open to tours is less than you'd get having an X-ray).

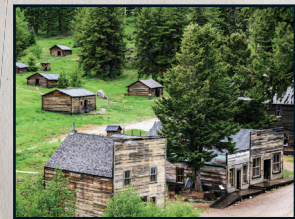
The amusement park is Pripyat's most iconic spot, although the abandoned swimming pools and football stadium also offer unique photographic opportunities. The basement of the abandoned infirmary is highly radioactive thanks to the firefighter uniforms stored there, but the hospital is worth seeing...though perhaps from outside.



GARNET

Location: Drummond, Montana, USA
Time zone: UTC-7
Currency: US dollar

Garnet, a gold and garnet mining town, was established in 1895. It had a newspaper office, a drug store, hotels, and a school. By 1912, many mines had run dry and a fire destroyed half of the town. People moved back in the 1930s when gold prices increased, but WWII prompted residents to abandon the town in 1940. The Bureau of Land Management maintains the remaining buildings, making it Montana's best preserved ghost town. Many people believe Kelly's Saloon is haunted, with people hearing laughter and music when the town is empty in winter, and footsteps and doors closing inside the Wells Hotel raise questions.



LAKE SHAWNEE AMUSEMENT PARK

Location: Princeton, West Virginia, USA
Time zone: UTC-5
Currency: US dollar

Closed since 1988, six deaths on the premises gave the park a reputation of being cursed. The land was also the site of the Lake Shawnee massacre, where three children died. Paranormal investigators claim to have heard children laughing while the swings move on their own in the empty park.



Image source: Getty/Alamy