

Top 10 Interesting Abandoned Places



Abandoned places, especially towns, townlets or industrial remains are very attractive for many people. Why? Because they show people what the world would look like if they all died out suddenly or just disappeared. Standing in the middle of a street that seems to be completely normal, with houses, gardens, sidewalks and trees, yet something appears to be missing – of course, the people – often makes one wonder What has happened to these people? Why did they leave like this? The ghost cities are scary and inspiring at the same time (many filmmakers and writers

have picked a ghost town as a location for their – mainly horror or thriller – stories) and thus definitely worth visiting. Mostly, you do not have to travel too far – especially in the Americas, a ghost town is a common thing and there are lots of them in Europe too. So you do not have to think too long about which one to visit. Tourism-Review.com brings you the top 10 must-see abandoned places. Here we go!

10. Bodie, California

Bodie is a true American ghost town. It was founded in 1876 as a small mining town and grew up to have 10,000 inhabitants as soon as 1880. It even had its own Chinatown, where a few hundreds of workers who came from China to live their American Dream found their homes. Yet the resources were not infinite and people started leaving the town soon after the turn of the century. Bodie still managed to remain permanently inhabited until the 1962, when the last few citizens left the town. In this year, it was pronounced a State Historic Park and has since been opened for tourists all year round.

9. San Zhi, Taiwan

This abandoned project can be found right on the outskirts of Taipei, Taiwan. It looks rather like an unsuccessful settlement experiment by an unknown civilisation than an “earthly” town, yet at a closer look, the unusual pod design is very practical – it is quite easy to manufacture, transport and construct and at the same time offers its inhabitants a lot of space. Originally, this place was meant to be a luxury holiday village (with river on one side and mountains on the other), yet the construction was stopped because of the lack of money as well as numerous strange accidents. Now the town is said to be haunted by the ghosts of the workers killed during the construction and the project is very unlikely to continue.

8. Varosha, Cyprus

Varosha once used to be a modern tourist destination with hotels, beaches and all that belongs to it. Yet in 1974, the Turkish invasion to this part of Cyprus stopped its development violently. The Greek inhabitants left the area, taking only the most important things of daily use with them, as they believed to be able to return to their homes soon. But this has since been but a dream to them. The Turks put a barbed wire fence around the whole area to prevent the former inhabitants as well as curious journalists from getting in and turtles and other animal species have since then been the only visitors to the once exclusive destination. Nowadays, the governments (Turkish and Greek) are working on a plan to revive Varosha and the latest news say it should be open for tourism again in 2010.

7. Gunkanjima, Japan

Hashima Island, or Gunkan-jima (the Battleship Island) belongs to the 505 uninhabited islands in the Nagasaki Prefecture of Japan but it is absolutely unique. At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, the Mitsubishi company planned to mine coal, back then a very important commodity in Japan. They built huge concrete buildings for the masses of workers to live in and the town's population began to grow rapidly, stopping at 835 people per hectare in 1959. In the following decade, coal was replaced by petroleum in Japan and many coal mines were closed, including the one on the Hashima Island which caused the workers to leave for other jobs. The whole island is now closed due to enormous safety risk (the concrete apartment buildings are falling apart) and is being renovated to create a safe tourist path.

6. Balestrino, Italy

In comparison to some of its top-10-mates, Balestrino has had one good long piece of history before it got completely abandoned. The town dates back to the 11th century, when mainly small farmers lived here thanks to the good conditions for olive trees. In about 1860, there were ca. 800 inhabitants here. Later on that century, the North-West regions of Italy were destroyed by a series of major earthquakes and those who survived did not want to stay in the area any longer. It took some 60 years till the last citizens left the beautiful town due to the geological instability in 1953.

5. Katoli's World, Taiwan

Katoli's World once used to be one of Taiwan's amusement theme parks but was left by people after a major earthquake on September 21st, 1999. Nobody died right in the park, as it was Tuesday and it was closed, yet there were thousands of victims around. The place is now left to tropical plants, animals, insects and rust and for some reason, it seems even more scary and depressive than other abandoned places - maybe it is because all the colours, pictures, roller-coasters should symbolize childhood and happiness, whereas the current state of the park symbolizes rather death and dissolution.

4. Centralia, Pennsylvania

The story of Centralia shows exactly how human stupidity and lack of concern may empty a whole town. Centralia once was a prospering coal-mining town in Pennsylvania, living its small-town life and putting its waste into a huge hole to burn it later. In 1962, the garbage burning got out of control and a massive underground coal fire began. For 46 years now, and despite all the attempts to extinguish it, the fire is still burning and some experts guess this might last for another 250 years. All inhabitants were of course evacuated, the last ones left the town in 1992, as the carbon monoxide emissions reached critical levels and deep holes began to appear all of a sudden.

3. Yashima, Japan

Yashima used to be one of Japan's tourist attractions. It had been a sacred place long ago with many pilgrims visiting it every year and it was decided to be developed into a modern resort in the 1980's, the time of flourishing economy in Japan. Six hotels and many smaller buildings were built, including an aquarium and a cable car that would transport the visitors to the Yashima plateau. But a few years later, the real estate crisis in which many small investors as well as large companies lost their savings, forced the developers to give up on the project and the plateau was left alone, with goods still lying in the shops and furniture in the hotels waiting for the guests who will never come.

2. Pripyat, Ukraine

Pripyat is a city in northern Ukraine, in the Chernobyl area to be precise. Nothing more needs to be said - before the nuclear disaster in 1986, the city had about 50,000 inhabitants, most of whom were workers from the nearby power plant. Immediately after the breakdown, the city was abandoned due to extremely high radiation and thus presented a perfect outdoor museum of the soviet way of life. But as usual in the former USSR, anything worth stealing, including e.g. the toilet seats, was stolen during the 1990's, which is remarkable considering that people were willing to risk their lives for such marginal things. The area will not be inhabitable for many years and it will take even more time before people will begin to have trust in the place again.

1. Craco, Italy

The town of Craco is first mentioned already in 1060 when it belonged to Craco's Archbishop Arnaldo. It was built like many medieval Italian cities on a rocky hilltop and some houses seem literally to grow out of it. The town had more than 2,000 inhabitants at the end of the 19th century, yet then the problems came. More than a half of all citizens moved away before the end of WWI and the trend continued until 1963, when the remaining 1,800 people were moved to a neighbour village - the main reasons being numerous earthquakes, landslides and poor farming conditions.

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