

TECH TOURISM: SILICON VALLEY AS AN ATTRACTION



Formerly the main aim of travelling was to visit ancient sites and admire monuments of extinct cultures. However, today people visit places related to the history of the future. Tech tourism is growing in popularity - especially in places like the Silicon Valley, the home of Steve Jobs, the CEO of Apple Inc.

Crist Drive, number 2066, in Los Altos, California. When the Jobs family moved to this area about 60 years ago, there was an apricot plantation and a few houses. In short, the architecture was mediocre and would have never drawn global attention, if it hadn't been for Steve Jobs and Wozniak. **These two men built a garage 40 years ago in which the first Apple computer was created.**

This marked the beginning of an age called the digital age. From then on Silicon Valley became one of its symbols and "The Valley" has gone through significant modernization as a result of this.

So what are the biggest attractions for tech tourists in Silicon Valley? Garages like the one where Jobs and Wozniak changed the world of electronics. Other than that an interesting feature is that some quarters in the Valley have been built with identical houses. Many neighborhoods consist of home-made replicas of Spanish colonial style houses in whitewashed suburbia streets, enclosed by intimidating motorway junctions.

In Downtown there is a part of history. The site was founded in 1777 and it can be proud of a cathedral as well as a chain of identical brick houses along Market Street, reminiscent of New York. Other than that, the street is full of bars, restaurants etc.

Long Valley was always an area concentrating on agriculture. Grains, vegetables, wine and fruit were its domains. But now the area is characteristic by something entirely different. Tech tourists are coming with the belief that with technology everything is easier and better. Another great tech tourism attraction of the Valley is the Computer History Museum. The museum offers a look at many rare exhibits, from prehistorian relics to the Enigma coding machine or the computer used for the first census in the United States.

Not too far away from the museum the visitors can find a place often referred to as the "birthplace of Silicon Valley". In Palo Alto on 369 Addison Avenue there is a shed with spruce green doors, built in the style of Arts & Craft. It has two floors, a porch at the entrance, a small window and crouched architecture. However, this place was the residence of Dave Packard and his wife in the late 1930s.

In the garage Packard and his business partner William Hewlett formed Hewlett-Packard (HP) in 1939, a company that initially produced devices that tested electronic audio systems. Their first customer was Walt Disney and since then Hewlett-Packard have come a long way to becoming one of the world's top producers of electronics.

The building is now owned by the company and it may be visited by appointment. Tech tourists from China, India, Germany and the United States visit the otherwise quiet street.

It can be said that the legacy of these men goes on and Silicon Valley continues developing mainly

thanks to them. In a few months, Apple will open the Infinity Loop, the new headquarters developed by British architect Norman Foster.

The closed loop will have a circumference of 1.6 kilometers and space for 13 000 people. **It is probably the first monumental building of tech society.** Therefore, soon when people arrive to the San Jose International Airport, the Infinity Loop will already be there. A giant ring seated like a spaceship in the countryside.

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