



# Golden Canyon/Gower Gulch



## Death Valley National Park

**Always carry water**, even in winter. One liter per person per hour is a good rule of thumb, but more water is needed in hot temperatures.

**Avoid hiking in canyons during heavy rains** because of flash flood danger.

**Watch your step.** Biological soil crust also known as cryptobiotic soil is a living groundcover. To avoid damaging these living crusts and causing unsightly scars on the soft badlands, please stay either on main trails or in drainage bottoms.

**Hiking at low elevations when it is hot** is not recommended. If you must, plan for an early morning hike when it is coolest.

**Do not remove** any natural or cultural features from the park.

## Hiking trails

### Golden Canyon Trail

One mile to upper Golden Canyon, plus ¼ mile to explore Red Cathedral.

The hike into Golden Canyon is one of the most popular in Death Valley. Hikers enter through rocky narrows into a hidden area of colorful badlands capped by the fluted headwall of Red Cathedral and towering Manly Beacon. Watch for ripple marks in the tilted strata, a hint of the ancient lakebed that was the source of the badland's geologic deposits. From the Golden Canyon trailhead, follow the gravel wash on a gradual but steady uphill grade. Return the way you came, or continue on the Gower Gulch Loop.

### Gower Gulch Loop

4-mile loop hike that begins and ends at the Golden Canyon trailhead.

For a more adventurous hike, take the side trail at the signed junction in upper Golden Canyon. The trail steeply climbs 350 feet to a divide just below the cliff-face of Manly Beacon, where the view over the badlands is a worthy goal in itself.

From the divide, hike down to another signed junction. You have the option at this point to complete the Gower Gulch Loop (4 miles total) or extend it by continuing another mile to Zabriskie Point.

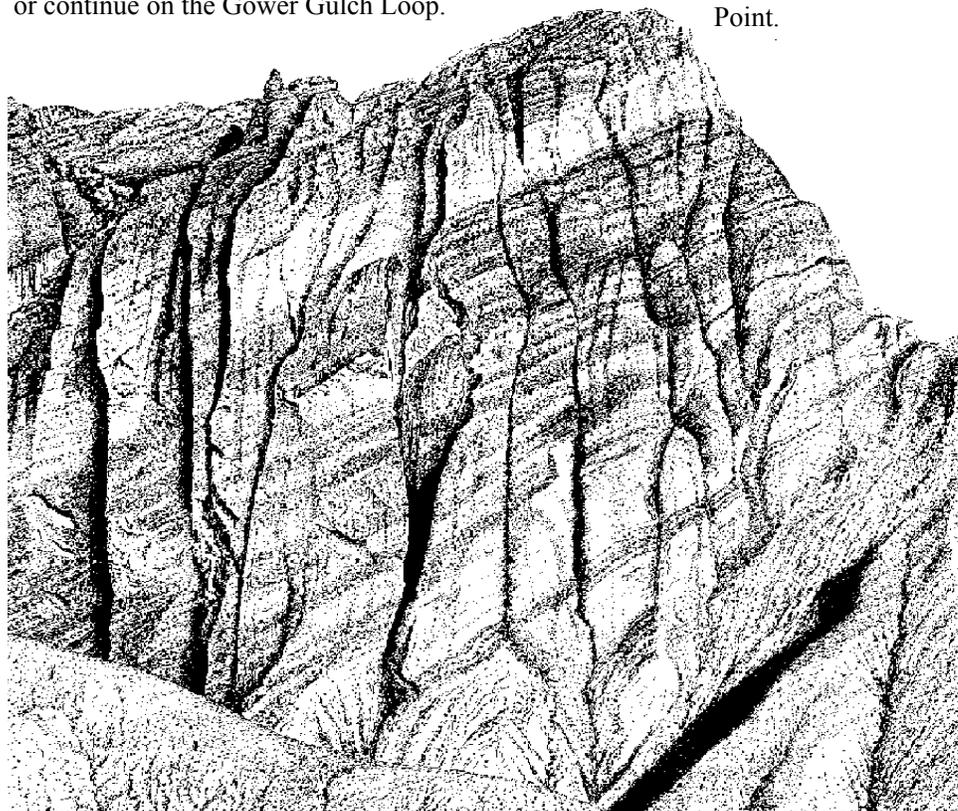
To complete the Loop, turn right at the signed junction and walk ¼ mile down to join Gower Gulch. Darker colored gravel in the wash bottom is a good indication you've joined the main drainage of Gower Gulch.

There is no formal trail here, just follow the wash down toward the valley for 1¼ miles. Some rock scrambling is required to climb down small drop-offs. A final 25-foot dry fall at the mouth of Gower Gulch may be easily passed by following a narrow path to the right. From the canyon mouth, a path heads north along the base of the hills for ¾ mile back to the Golden Canyon trailhead.

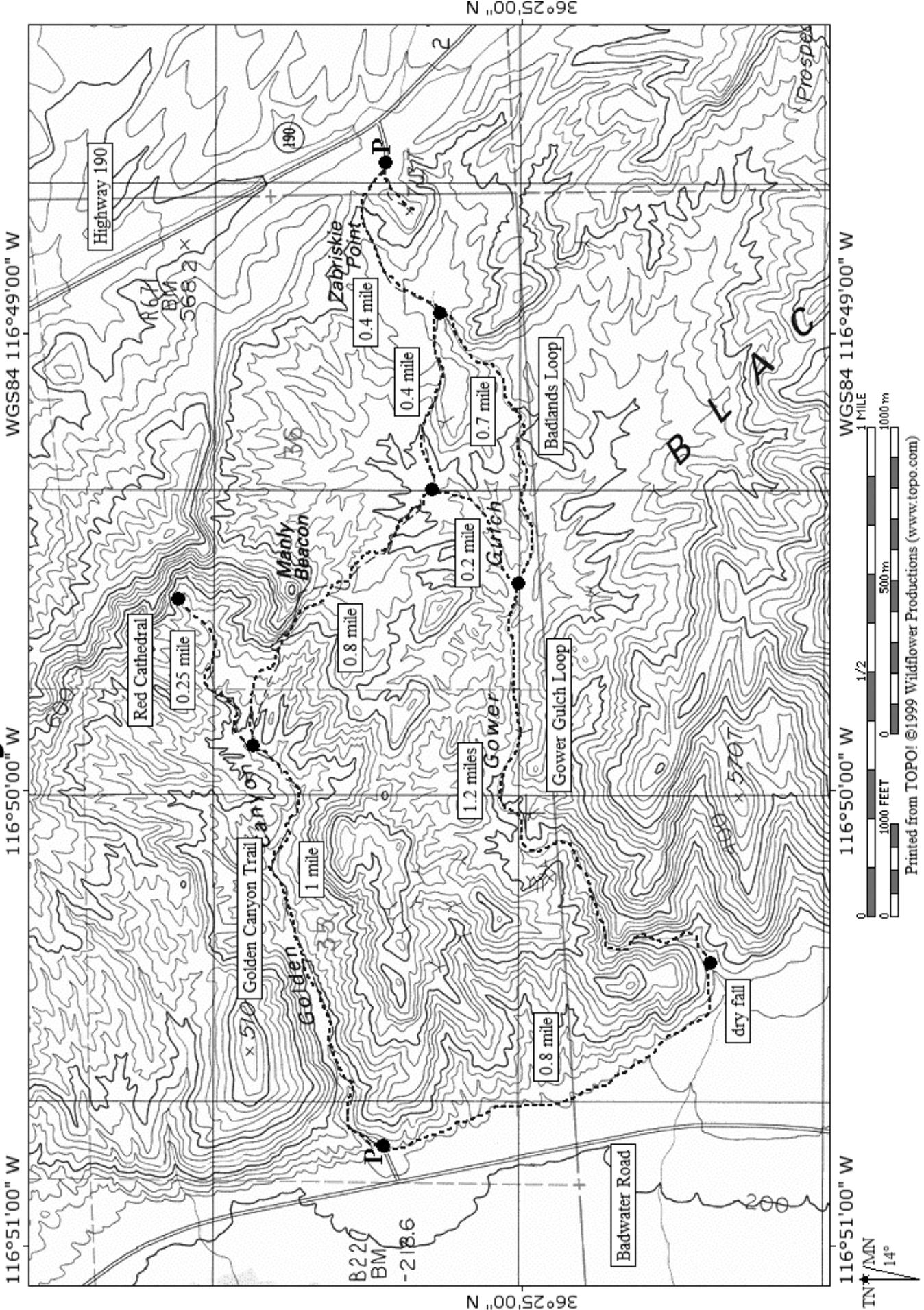
### Badlands Loop

2½ mile loop from Zabriskie Point trailhead

From the trailhead at Zabriskie Point, you can descend into the badlands and hike a shorter loop through the eroded clay hills as seen from the viewpoint. At the orientation sign in the Zabriskie Point parking area, follow the trail a short distance north to a cut in the hills and down an old road ½ mile to the marked junction. Take a right and climb over hills toward Manly Beacon, following the loop the recommended counter-clockwise direction. At the next signed junction turn left and down to Gower Gulch. Follow the wash back up to the first junction and return to the trailhead.



# Golden Canyon - Gower Gulch



116°51'00" W

116°50'00" W

WGS84 116°49'00" W

36°25'00" N

116°51'00" W

116°50'00" W

WGS84 116°49'00" W

TN  
14°



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