



Origen Museum Overview

The Origen Museum is the largest and most exhibit-filled building at the Springs Preserve, so there is plenty of area to be covered that will be both educational and interesting for the students. Upon entrance into the building, the group will find themselves in the donor gallery where there are items dedicated to all those who helped make our facility and everything we do here possible. Typically, we do not have the students explore this area because these exhibits are not intended to be played with, but are very tempting for kids to climb all over.

Off to the right is the movie *Miracle in the Mojave* in the Big Springs Theater, which is a must see and tends to be a good introduction to the tour as it gives a brief overview of the Springs as well as a history of the area. The movie plays every 12 minutes on the hour and lasts approximately eight minutes; there is a timer above the entrance to the movie that can be used as a reference. This space has also been used for animal shows such as "Wild Things at the Springs" or "Venom!."

Once the group exits the movie and returns back to the donor gallery, there are three separate openings that lead to the three parts of the Origen Museum: Natural Mojave, People of the Springs, and a traveling exhibit space. There is also a large art exhibit right outside of the Big Springs Theater. The groups are free to go into any of these areas to explore, but it tends to make the most sense to begin in the Natural Mojave and follow through to eventually make it to the other two areas.

The Natural Mojave is through the opening farthest to the right and begins right in front of our spring mound representation. The spring mound represents the real spring mound that we have on site and displays all sorts of animals and plants that would make the mound their home because it is close to water. On the backside of the spring mound you are able to go inside of it to watch a movie about archaeology and why the spring mound is helpful. Also, on either side of the spring mound there are interactive exhibits, including a digging exhibit displaying erosion, a short clip about permeability, exhibits on mountain formation, touch screens showing the different areas in Southern Nevada, a night-vision screen, and a fossil digging exhibit.

Just beyond the spring mound is a hallway with several other exhibits and important stopping points. Along the left wall are cases with different living desert insects, arachnids, and reptiles including a western banded gecko, giant vinegaroon, desert night snake, bark scorpion, brown recluse spider, and black widow spiders. Across from these animals is the flash flood exhibit where visitors watch a short film. They stand in the middle of a canyon to be surprised when 5,000 gallons of water rushes down the canyon and underneath the platform they stand on, putting them right in the middle of a flash flood. Upon exiting the flash flood, there is a pair of single-person bathrooms in a hallway directly across from the flash flood, and off to the right are interactive games about pollination. Past those games is a room that has an exhibit on organisms living in our soil and then two doors leading out to our live animal exhibits.

Outside, behind Origen is where the live animals are located, with information accompanying each and every animal. The animals outdoors include rough harvester ants, Gila monsters, a desert tarantula, a botta's pocket gopher, a desert hairy scorpion, bats, a Merriam kangaroo rat, desert tortoises, thistledown velvet ants, seven different species of lizards, cottontail rabbits, a gray fox, a sidewinder snake, a tiger whiptail lizard, and a pinacate beetle.

Once you explore the animals, if you travel to the left past the rabbit habitat, there is a small sandbox with children's toys within it. Off to the right is our replicated Native American Village essentially leading you into the People of the Springs section. The village displays irrigation systems and the crops they grew as well as different types of homes they lived in, wickiups and a pit house. Over along the far side of the outdoor area is a children's play area where they are able to build "their own city" to display how the first settlers to arrive here had to build Las Vegas from scratch.

If you follow along back behind the sandbox, there is a door to enter back into the building. Inside of that door you are now in the People of the Springs section. Again, there are the bathrooms off to your left. On your right is our train car that discusses the railroad running between Salt Lake City, Utah and Los Angeles, California with Las Vegas at the center. There is plenty of information provided on the train about the first settlers in Las Vegas and the things they brought along with them. Just beyond the train is the land auction, portraying how the land was divided up once Las Vegas was being built. Along the opposite wall are several short clips about different people of Las Vegas' history. Further in is archaeology row, a

representation of an old Puebloan site displaying artifacts and tools. On the opposite side of archaeology row is an 11 minute movie on the construction and importance of the Hoover Dam. Just outside of the movie is a display of tubes portraying our water usage here in Las Vegas by population each decade. Next is a blue, circular room with facts about water usage and water conservation along the wall. The blue room leads into the traveling exhibit space, which is a room dedicated to temporary exhibits that provide a fresh new experience at the Springs, changing every few months. This space has previously housed the exhibits "In the Dark" and " Exploring Trees Inside and Out," and it will continue to be home for fun, interactive exhibits through which for visitors can learn. The exit of the traveling exhibit space leads right back out into the donor gallery, where the tour first began. The exit from the Origen building leads back onto the rest of our grounds where you are welcome to visit the rest of our facility which includes hiking trails, a nature exchange trading center, a library, a sustainability gallery, and much, much more!