



STOKES CASTLE - AUSTIN



Rating: Roadside Attraction

Length: 1 hour

Maps: None Needed.

Season: Any

Waypoints:

Stokes Castle

11S 493122mE 4371550mN

N39° 29' 37" W117° 04' 48"

Hype

Austin, Nevada was founded in the 1860's when silver was found nearby. This was the first such discovery in the area, and though not terribly productive, spurred development and a mining boom in the region. When visiting Austin today, it is hard to imagine that the sleepy town of less than 200 was a thriving mining city with over 10,000 people in and surrounding Austin.

Steeped in history, one of the more interesting attractions in Austin today is Stokes Castle. This three story stone tower was built by Anson Phelps Stokes, a mine developer, railroad magnate, and banker. Stokes, seemingly wanting the ultimate status symbol and summer home, began construction in 1896, and completed construction in 1897. He modeled the tower after architecture he had seen in his travels in the Campagna of Italy. It definitely feels a bit out of place in Nevada.

Surprisingly, given the time, effort, and money put into the tower, Stokes only used the tower a few times in 1897 and 1898 before selling his mining interests and leaving Austin permanently.

Tags: *roadside, access: paved*

Trailhead

The castle is just off of US-50 in Austin, NV. On the west side of town, a signed road for Stoke's Castle reaches the castle in 0.5 miles. The road is gravel, but passable by all vehicles.

Route

It is impressive to walk around the perimeter of the tower. The blocks that make up the construction are hand hewn granite. The stones were placed with hand winches that held the blocks until they could be wedged and mortared in. It is impressive construction.

The floor plan was kitchen and dining room on the first floor, living room on the second floor, and two bedrooms on the top floor. Each floor was heated by a fireplace, and the top two floor had balconies. It must have been a grand palace back in its time!