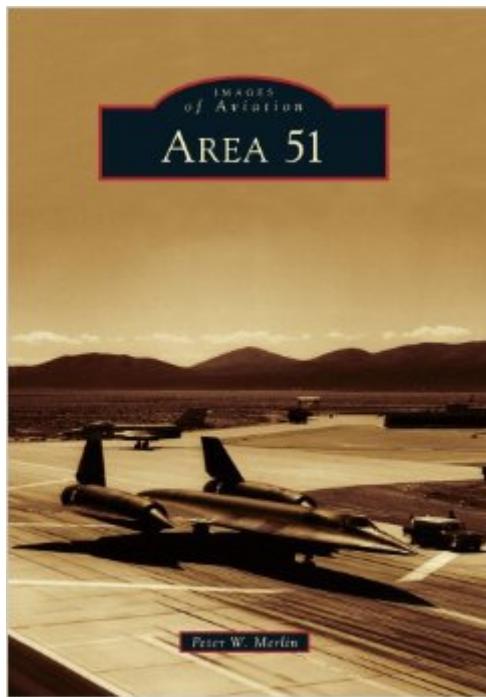


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# Area 51 (Images Of Aviation)



## **Synopsis**

Area 51, a top secret military installation for testing unacknowledged, or black, projects, lies in a desert valley northwest of Las Vegas. During the Cold War, CIA and Air Force officials chose this remote location to shield such efforts from foreign spies and US citizens. Although the base has been known by many names--Paradise Ranch, Watertown, and Dreamland, among others--the designation "Area 51" has taken root most deeply in the public imagination. Since 1955, it has grown from a temporary camp into a national test facility supporting nearly 2,000 military and civilian workers and dozens of projects, including aircraft capable of cruising at Mach 3 and stealth airplanes that are virtually invisible to radar. Although secrecy surrounding Area 51 spawned rumors of UFOs and reverse-engineered alien spacecraft, declassified photographs provide a rare glimpse into the true nature of America's most famous secret base.

## **Book Information**

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## **Customer Reviews**

This book is not intended to be a definitive history of Area 51. What it is is the best collection of pictures taken at the Groom Lake Base. About half the book is dedicated early operations and the U2 program. The next third concerns the various Lockheed blackbird models, and the remainder is everything else. You won't find anything UFO related here. The pictures are well-annotated. Nobody knows this stuff better than Peter Merlin. He has been a dedicated aviation historian for more than two decades. There are plenty of pictures of Soviet planes that were evaluated at Groom. Until this

book, I had never seen pictures of a stealth cruise missile called Senior Prom which was a contemporary of the F-117's predecessor, Have Blue. There are pictures taken inside two bars at the base, Sam's Place and the Conehead Bar. You don't need to worry about current military technology being compromised by this book. The only aircraft picture that dates since 1990 is of the Boeing 737-600 "Janet" aircraft, but that picture was taken at their terminal in Las Vegas. This fairly small book is a must-have for the wonk, and it would be an interesting read for any aviation enthusiast. Rumor has it that Peter Merlin is planning a more comprehensive Dreamland/Area 51/Groom Lake book. I'm looking forward to it.

This is one of the finest collections of photos of the aircraft that have made Area 51 famous. The majority of the photos are "first time published" and give a unique insiders look at what happened there in (especially) the early years. Much has changed over the years ... The "Ranch" isn't what it used to be .....

You can not go wrong when you see Peters name on a book you know it is excellent nothing else to say except keep up the good work Peter.

See my review of the Edwards AFB book if you are unfamiliar with this series of books. They're all worth the price of admission. This book deals with the Groom Lake / Tonapah test range...the super secret Area 51! It rolls back the curtains a bit for us, talking about the past test programs conducted there that are now somewhat declassified, so photos are available to fill the book with unique illustrations of U-2s, A-12s, SR-71s, Stealth aircraft of all sorts, unknown of testbed equipment, and the now admitted to and declassified "secret" MiG squadrons flown by the USAF and USN pilots there during the times from 1968 to the late 1980s. Sure as can be, there are probably more foreign aircraft still there but under deeper classifications than any ever before, and many people believe the mythical "Hanger 18" is at Area 51, housing our otherworldly air vehicles being evaluated since the events at Roswell in 1947! Maybe so...maybe no! But, one thing I've noticed is that the U.S. military has never actually retired a weapons or flight system (read airplane) from service until we have a really superior replacement installed and perfected to take its place. If so, maybe the so called "Aurora" hypersonic recon bird that was supposedly being tested at Area 51 really has taken the place of the SR-71 after all...if so, you can bet Area 51 has something to do with it... Anyhow, another nice book.

My wife loves this book so much that we bought 4 at Costco and gave away 3 as gifts. When Costco ran out, I ordered this one through for another friend who looked at ours and asked where we got it so he could get one, too. Great photos and lots of good writing that is historically accurate, not a bunch of alien hype.

As a book gift, this is nice. It's high quality, great photos and isn't flashy like most books about this subject. However, there's nothing in here that's new nor is it interestingly told in a way that makes me recommend this book as a "must have".

It wasn't that long ago that the Air Force denied that the base at Groom Lake existed. Now we have in one place--Peter Merlin's Area 51--a set of photographs with informative captions that even document the presence there of bars and bartenders. The photos are evocative. The backgrounds are sometimes more interesting than the subjects. During the course of the book Merlin reveals several of the USAF organizations that have served there--including a wing-sized detachment. This is good reading of a familiar subject. Another book by Merlin is also recommended:Â X-Plane Crashes: Exploring Experimental, Rocket Plane & Spycraft Incidents, Accidents & Crash Sites

I love these great tales of engineers facing problems and coming up with complex, multi-faceted, yet elegant solutions. The pictures, though, are what make this a great book and a good buy. This book is packed with imagery that the aviation fan will pore over for hours. Learn the stories of these fantastic marvels of aeronautical engineering that were designed and tested by moonlight, and see for yourself what it looks like to build an aviation legacy!

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