

Deserts are desperate places. It's a wonder anyone lives there at all. But despite the terrible heat and drought, about 700 million people call desert home.

The Bedouin people mainly live in Arabia and North Africa. Their Arabic name is Bedu, which means "people of the desert".

How do these desert dwellers handle the harsh conditions?



The Bedouin are nomads, which means they're always on the move. They shift from place to place in search of food and water for themselves and their animals.

With all that moving, they need a home that's easy to put up and take down and that fits neatly on the back of a camel. And what could be better than a nice, snug tent made from camel's hair or sheep's wool?

When it comes to desert dress, the Bedouin know what to wear. Their loose, flowing robes are ideal for letting air circulate. Their long headdresses keep the sand and sun out.



The Bedouin are famous for their hospitality. They'll always give guests a meal and a place to stay. When you are invited, watch your manners. Turn down a cup of coffee and you'll offend the whole family.

desperate: forlorn, hopeless
dweller: inhabitant
to handle: to manage
harsh: tough
shift: change
snug: cosy
hospitality: friendliness
manners: behaviour
to offend: to insult

Surviving in the desert is not a picnic. Maybe you'll find some snakes, but there aren't any snack stands. Forget about hot dogs, hamburgers, French fries. No ice cream is available. In the desert, desserts are rarely served. Food takes second place. You can go for weeks without eating but without water, you'd be dead in two days. To stay alive, you need to drink at least a bucket of water a day.

Never leave home for the desert without a camel. Unfortunately, camels are terribly bad-tempered and tend to spit. That's probably why some desert people use Land Rovers instead. But camels are brilliantly adapted to desert life and can walk miles without water or food.

ILL. by CARL HAAG (+1915)

Delete two words from each line:

desert	palm tree	polar bear	icebergs	sand
dessert	hot dog	hamburger	ice cream	cake
car	camel	Land Rover	Jeep	sheep
dwelling	tent	house	robe	bucket
clothes	robe	dress	sand	food
bad manners	invite	thank	spit	offend
desperate	lonely	alive	sad	snug
maybe	perhaps	possibly	never	always