

HOW TO ENJOY THE PARK

Before you start your tour of Yosemite, we urge that you visit the museum at park headquarters. Maps and booklets are obtainable there, and exhibits will help you to understand what you will see. Road and trail information is also available at the ranger office in the headquarters building.

Hiking

More than 700 miles of trails await you if you would like to know the park intimately. Try one of the shorter trails from the valley for your orientation trip. Distances one way are:

Vernal Fall: 1 mile to base of fall from Happy Isles.
Nevada Fall: 3.2 miles to top of fall from Happy Isles.
Glacier Point: 4.8 miles from base of Sentinel Rock.
Yosemite Falls: 3.4 miles from Camp 4 to top of falls.

Be sure to check trail conditions and obtain a fire permit and camping information at a ranger station before starting overnight trips.

Horseback riding

In summer, saddle horses and pack animals are available at Yosemite Valley stables, Tuolumne Meadows, Wawona, and White Wolf. Guides are required on saddle trips off the valley floor.

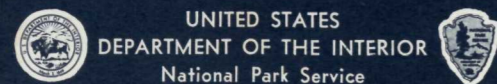
Driving

Yosemite has 216 miles of public roads. Do not be tempted to take any motor vehicle onto a trail or any other thoroughfare not intended for public vehicular travel. Park regulations strictly forbid this—for your own safety.

Skiing

Ski season usually lasts from about mid-December to mid-April depending on the weather. You will find slopes for every degree of skill at Badger Pass. Marked ski trails through the nearby woods are maintained by the park. Write to Yosemite Park and Curry Co., Yosemite National Park, Calif. 95389, for details on all-expense ski-tours.

Wild animals roam this park. Some are dangerous. Watch them from a distance. Do not alarm them or attract them with food. Stay in your car when you see them along the roads. Regulations, which are enforced for your safety, prohibit feeding or molesting the deer and bears. Protect food from bears.

**YOSEMITE****YOU WILL WANT TO SEE****Yosemite Valley**

This 7-square mile valley is famous for sheer walls, waterfalls, and towering domes and peaks high above the valley floor. At 4,000 feet elevation, this small part of the park is fortunately situated for year-round visiting—not too cold in winter, nor too hot in summer.

Waterfalls

The Upper Yosemite Fall drops 1,430 feet and the Lower, 320 feet. With the cascades between, the total drop from the crest of the Upper Fall to the base of the Lower Fall is 2,425 feet.

Other waterfalls are: Ribbon Fall, 1,612 feet; Vernal Fall, 317 feet; Bridalveil Fall, 620 feet; Nevada Fall, 594 feet; and Illilouette Fall, 370 feet.

The falls reach their maximum flow in May and June. A few run all year. In dry years, however, some have no visible water for a period beginning in mid-August.

The giant sequoias

Yosemite has three important groves of giant sequoias (*Sequoia gigantea*): the Mariposa Grove near the South entrance to the park and the Merced and Tuolumne Groves near Crane Flat, in the western portion of the park.

When you visit the groves, take care to stay on the pathway to avoid damage to these majestic trees.

Mariposa Grove is about 35 miles from the valley by way of the Wawona Road. You pass through magnificent open forests of ponderosa and sugar pine, white and red fir. You should stop at Wawona, only a few miles from the grove, to see the Pioneer Yosemite History Center, where old buildings, wagons, and other exhibits tell the story of Yosemite's human history.

Glacier Point (closed in winter)

One of the best high views in Yosemite is from Glacier Point. None of the few remaining glaciers in the park is visible from there today, but you can look far across the crest of the lofty Sierra Nevada or down into Yosemite Valley.

Across the valley you look down upon Yosemite Falls; across the Merced Canyon, upon Vernal and Nevada Falls, Half Dome, North Dome, the Royal Arches, and Washington Column. All are especially prominent from this 7,254-foot elevation.

The high country (closed in winter)

If you come to Yosemite without spending some time in the high country, you will miss one of the choice experiences the park has to offer. Many visitors head immediately for the peaks and lakes and meadows—to camp and fish, hike and ride.

Center of activity in the high country is beautiful Tuolumne Meadows (8,600 feet), the largest subalpine meadow in the High Sierra. It is 55 miles from Yosemite Valley by way of Big Oak Flat and Tioga Roads. In summer at Tuolumne, the National Park Service operates a large campground and conducts a full-scale naturalist program, including ranger-naturalist guides on the 7-day hiking trips along the High Sierra loop.

Scheduled saddle or hiking trips, operated by the Yosemite Park and Curry Company, are available.

YOU NEED TO KNOW

Motor vehicles. The speed limit is 35 miles an hour unless otherwise posted. Commercial trucking is not allowed in the park except on park business; commercial buses may enter only by special arrangement with the superintendent. All vehicles must stay on public roads.

Camping is limited to 14 days in any calendar year and is restricted to designated areas. However, during June, July, and August camping in Yosemite Valley is limited to 10 days.



Fishing. California fishing licenses are required for fishing in the park. The season conforms to State regulations. Study the posted bulletins for full regulations on fishing.

Boating and swimming. Boating is permitted only on these lakes: Benson, Kibbie, Many Islands, May, Merced, Tenaya, Tilden, and Twin. Motors are not permitted. Concessioner-operated swimming pools are at Camp Curry, Yosemite Lodge, and Wawona.

Preserving natural features. Destruction, defacing, or removal of trees or rocks is prohibited, as are the picking or carrying away of wildflowers or other plants and the killing, injuring, or capturing of wildlife.

Pets may be brought to Yosemite if they are kept under full physical control at all times. They may not be taken on trails or beaches or into public buildings. Campers with pets are restricted to certain campgrounds. Dogs may be boarded in kennels.

Fires. Report fires immediately to nearest ranger station. Campfire permits are required except in public automobile campgrounds. Never leave a fire unattended. Be sure your fire is out before you leave. Pour water on it to put it out.

You are not allowed to smoke while hiking or riding horseback or to throw cigarettes, cigars, or matches from your automobile.

Firearms must be declared at entrance stations. Hunting with any kind of weapon is not permitted. Firearms must be sealed, cased, broken down, or otherwise packed to prevent their use while in the park.

Trails. Stay on designated trails while hiking. Short-cutting between zigzags or switchbacks is dangerous to you and can cause destructive erosion. You should never hike alone; and you should tell someone where you are going and when you will return.

Horses have the right-of-way on roads, trails, and bridges. Stand quietly at the trailside until they pass.

THE NATURALIST PROGRAM

At the Yosemite Museum in Yosemite Village, a summer program of naturalist activities for every age and interest is conducted.

The museum and its surroundings

Morning and, in summer, afternoon talks in the museum's geology room or in the wildflower garden tell how the valley was formed. The geologic story is enlivened by the relief maps and models, photomurals, and exhibits. Other exhibits treat such subjects as trees, birds and other animals, Indians, and history.

Books on specific subjects related to the park are for sale at the Yosemite Museum and elsewhere in the park. A list of available publications can be obtained at the museum, or by writing to the Yosemite Natural History Association, Box 545, Yosemite National Park, Calif. 95389.

In summer at the Indian Circle behind the museum, a naturalist explains how the Indians lived, hunted, cooked, and dressed. An Indian basketweaver is often present to demonstrate her art.

Natural history walks and hikes

Easy, guided walks may be taken through the valley and at Wawona, Glacier Point, and Tuolumne Meadows. More vigorous all-day hikes leave almost daily from Tuolumne Meadows. Schedules for these ranger-naturalist conducted activities are posted.

Campfire programs (summer only)

Informal outdoor programs are held nightly, except Sunday, in Yosemite Valley at Camps 7 and 14 and at Yosemite Lodge, and several nights a week at Glacier Point, Wawona, Bridalveil Creek Campground, White Wolf Campground, and Tuolumne Meadows. At these programs, naturalists tell about the plants and animals, mountains and valleys, lakes and streams. They suggest the trail trips that will lead you to places of unusual beauty or interest; and they relate the history of man in the area. For detailed information about campfire programs check campground bulletin boards or inquire at the museum information counter.

Junior rangers (summer only)

Students in grades 3 through 8 are invited to become junior rangers at a program given from Monday through Friday. They will learn about animals, trees, and wildflowers, and will make a nature notebook. Campfire programs, with such themes as Indians or the rocks of Yosemite, are held each week. Schedules are posted.



PLANTS AND ANIMALS

Life zones

From the warm foothills below Arch Rock, at 2,000 feet above sea level, to the windy summits of peaks such as 13,114-foot Mount Lyell, are five assemblages of plants and animals. These are roughly arranged in belts called life zones. As you ascend the slopes, you go from one life zone to another. At first the change is hardly noticeable; then, the different plants you see make you realize you are surrounded by a different community—not only of plants but also of the animals associated with them.

The story of life zones in relation to plants and animals is best understood by first studying the exhibits in the museum.

The lowest elevations in the park, at about 2,000 feet, are in the Upper Sonoran life zone, where trees begin to crowd brush-covered areas, and redbud and digger pine are in scattered stands.

Yosemite Valley, at 4,000 feet, is in the Transition life zone. You will see stands of black oaks and canyon live oaks, yellow pine, incense-cedar, and white fir. Note the increase in coniferous trees (pines, etc.) as you drive up to the valley.

Beginning at about 6,000 feet is the Canadian life zone with cool evergreen forests of lodgepole, western white, sugar, and Jeffrey pines, and red fir.

On Tioga Road you traverse a region ranging between 8,000 and 10,000 feet elevation. Here you are in the Hudsonian life zone. The plants and animals are similar to those found near sea level in the Hudson Bay area of Canada, far to the north.

Above all this, along the higher crest of the Sierra, a climate similar to that of the Arctic produces the Arctic-Alpine life zone. There, above treeline, grow stunted willows not more than a few inches high.

The animals of Yosemite

Of the 220 bird and 75 mammal species known to live in Yosemite, many stay within their accustomed life zones, but others, such as the California mule deer, migrate between high and low elevations with the seasons. Some of the deer, however, do spend the entire year in Yosemite Valley. Amphibians, reptiles, and insects of many species are associated with particular life zones and contribute their part to the ecology of their chosen habitats.

The park museums and studios have for sale illustrated, pocket-size books listing and describing plants and animals of the park.

PARK SEASONS

Spring

The season of waterfalls! Spring in the Yosemite Valley means May and June when the waterfalls are booming, the leaf-buds are bursting in a pattern of green, and the dogwood and azalea reveal themselves in showy white and pink along the roadsides. Sometimes melting snow and spring rains bring dozens of waterfalls into play and swell the waters of the major falls to many times their average volume.

Summer

From mid-June until early September all facilities in Yosemite Valley are heavily used. But July and August are ideal months in the high country. The meadows are colorful with the season's first flowers because spring is later up there. Waterwheel Falls on the Tuolumne River are at full volume. Days are warm; but you will find a sweater comfortable as the sun gets low. Nights are chilly, with freezing temperatures not uncommon.

Autumn

In September the ferns in the valley begin to turn many shades of yellow; in October the trees turn tawny and the air is clear. Autumn color of oak and maple, dogwood and aspen varies from year to year, and with different elevations. By the end of October the Big Oak Flat and Wawona Roads are often bright with yellows and reds. Color along the 46-mile stretch of the Tioga Road from Crane Flat to Tioga Pass comes earlier and is an unforgettable sight. Check with the ranger office (phone 372-4469) to find out whether or not the road is blocked by snow.

Winter

Center of winter outdoor activities at Yosemite is the Badger Pass ski area, reached by way of the south entrance from Fresno and the west entrance from Merced.



It is 20 miles from Yosemite Valley on Glacier Point Road. Have tire chains available. Yosemite Valley and the road to Badger Pass offer many excellent opportunities for photography after a winter storm. The trees are often laden with a mantle of snow, and winter clouds hide the rocky peaks.

GEOLOGY

Twice the land of Yosemite was submerged in a warm, shallow sea and twice it emerged to form mountains. What you see today is the hard granite rock of the last uplift, stripped of the overlying sedimentary layers, and polished and carved by glaciers.

Erosion and glaciers and more erosion have formed the hills and valleys, the lakes and streams of the high country. These same forces created Yosemite Valley. The pre-glacier Merced River eroded a V-shaped valley. Into it, several glaciers flowed down from the mountains, gouging the valley into a U-shape. The first glacier extended as far as El Portal and the last left a moraine dam in the lower end of Yosemite Valley that backed a lake into the valley. The river, thus slowed in its rush, deposited sediments that filled the lake to form the flat valley floor we have today.

This story of how the mountains and Yosemite Valley were formed, sketched briefly above, is graphically described daily at the museum by the park naturalist, and also in publications on sale there.

Domes

These were shaped in two ways—by exfoliation and by overriding glacial action.

Exfoliation (from the Latin "to strip of its leaves") is the expansion and subsequent cracking of layers of rock. The spalling process tends to shape angular surfaces into rounded contours like Sentinel Dome, Half Dome, and the Starr King group.

Glacial action has helped to shape Liberty Cap and other domes in Little Yosemite Valley, as well as Lemberth Dome and others in Tuolumne Meadows. These were rounded and polished as the glaciers ground over them.

YOSEMITE HISTORY

Indians lived in Yosemite Valley and other places in the park for hundreds of years before white men came to California.

In 1851 members of the Mariposa Battalion entered Yosemite Valley. This fighting force was to subdue the Sierra Indian tribe descending from the Ahwahneechee, but then called "U-zu-ma-ti" (which means grizzly bear) who lived in the valley and the surrounding mountains. The soldiers named the valley for the Indians, and Lake Tenaya was named for their chief. "Yosemite" has undergone many changes of spelling from that first used.

The first tourist party came in 1855, brought by James Mason Hutchings, a San Francisco publisher, guided by two Indians. Hutchings brought with him Thomas Ayres, Yosemite's first artist, whose sketches on display today in the park museum were published by Hutchings in his *California Magazine*.

The Yosemite Grant

Certain public-minded Californians became convinced that Yosemite should be protected from private exploitation and set aside for public use. As a result, President Lincoln, on June 30, 1864, signed an act of Congress providing that there be granted to the State of California:

"The 'cleft' or 'gorge' in the granite peak of the Sierra Nevada * * * known as Yo-Semite Valley * * * for public use, resort, and recreation * * * inalienable for all time." The act also included the Mariposa Big Tree Grove.

John Muir

This Scottish-born naturalist had much to do with molding the destiny of the Yosemite country. Appalled at the destruction caused by grazing and other uses he wrote about the need for conservation in wilderness areas. Working with the publisher, Robert Underwood Johnson of *Century Illustrated Monthly Magazine*, he influenced Congress and the American people to think about a system of National Parks. Thus in 1890, again by act of Congress, Yosemite National Park was established around the original Yosemite Grant.

HOW TO REACH THE PARK

By automobile

Yosemite National Park and its approach roads are shown on all good road maps. Check one for directions most convenient for you.

By railroad and bus

Southern Pacific and Santa Fe trains, and Pacific Greyhound and Continental Trailways buses go to Merced and Fresno from the north and south.

The Yosemite Transportation System of the Yosemite Park and Curry Company carries passengers to Yosemite Valley from Fresno and Lake Tahoe in summer and from Merced all year. (Write to Yosemite Transportation System, Yosemite National Park, Calif. 95389, for timetables, or visit your local travel agent.)

By air

United Air Lines serves Merced and Fresno on Los Angeles-San Francisco flights; Trans World Airlines serves Fresno.

WHERE TO STAY IN THE PARK

Free campgrounds are maintained in Yosemite Valley, one of which is open all year. Campgrounds in the high country and other parts of the park are open in summer. A list of campgrounds can be obtained from the superintendent.

Housetrailer accommodations are available in most campgrounds, but there are no utility connections except at one location on private property at Wawona. Camper-trucks can use all campgrounds. All campgrounds are near water and restrooms. Showers are available near the campgrounds in Yosemite Valley and at Tuolumne Meadows.

Study the camping regulations on the bulletin boards and keep a good camp; leave it clean when you go away; throw into garbage cans everything that will not burn.

On trail trips, camp only at the locations listed on your campfire permit—which you must have with you. You can get a fire permit at anytime at the chief ranger's office, Yosemite Village, or during the day at outlying ranger stations.

Hotels, lodges, and cabins in the park are operated by the Yosemite Park and Curry Company, Yosemite National Park, Calif. 95389 (offices also in Los Angeles and San Francisco), from which you can obtain information on rates, seasonal opening and closing, types of accommodations and services. Reservations are advised and deposits are required.

There are also accommodations at the El Portal Administrative Site and on private property at Wawona.

Stores. At Yosemite Village in Yosemite Valley, Wawona, and El Portal, all year; at Camp 14, Housekeeping Camp in Yosemite Valley, and Tuolumne Meadows, in summer.

Equipment rental. Camping supplies, tents, cots, blankets, and cooking utensils may be rented in summer at Housekeeping Camp headquarters; a deposit is required. In winter, skates and sleds may be rented at Camp Curry, and ski boots and equipment at Badger Pass.

Pack and saddle animals. In summer, guided saddle trips are scheduled daily both in and out of Yosemite Valley. Saddle animals are available also in summer at Mather, White Wolf Lodge, Tuolumne Meadows Lodge, and Wawona.

Dining rooms and cafeterias are open all year in Yosemite Village and El Portal; summer only in other parts of the park.

Mail should be addressed to you at the main post office in Yosemite Village in care of general delivery, or at the lodging unit where you are staying. Yosemite Lodge and Wawona post offices are open all year; Camp Curry and Tuolumne Meadows post offices, in summer only.

Emergency messages will be delivered to you in campgrounds (if you have registered) and at regular lodging units.

Telephone and telegraph. In summer, telegraph offices are open in Yosemite Village post office building and at Camp Curry; in winter, there is an office in Yosemite Lodge. Telephones are located throughout the park.

Medical aid and dental service are available all year at the Lewis Memorial Hospital in Yosemite Village. A first-aid station is maintained in winter at Badger Pass ski house.

Church. Weekly services for most denominations are held in summer; announcements are posted on campground bulletin boards. In winter, services are at the Yosemite Chapel in the valley.

For the children. In summer the following are offered: Junior Ranger Program (see schedule at Yosemite Museum); daily burro picnic trips, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. (Yosemite Park and Curry Co.); Kiddie Kamp and Grizzly Club at Camp Curry. Also, there are baby-sitting services at Camp Curry in summer and at Badger Pass in winter.

Miscellaneous. Laundry (self-service in summer in Yosemite Valley) and dry cleaning are available in each area.

Filling stations that offer towing service are located throughout the park; garage and repair service is available in Yosemite Valley and El Portal.

ADMINISTRATION

Yosemite National Park is administered by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior and is a unit of the National Park System which is dedicated to conserving the scenic, scientific, and historic heritage of the United States for the benefit and inspiration of its people.

A superintendent, whose address is Yosemite National Park, Calif. 95389, is in immediate charge of the park.

Park rangers are the uniformed protective force of the park. They are here to help you and to enforce park regulations.

Park naturalists, also uniformed, are the interpretive staff of the park. Their job is to help you understand and enjoy the natural and human history of Yosemite.

Park headquarters, in Yosemite Village, is open 24 hours a day. Report fires, accidents, lost persons, injuries, or any other emergencies there.

