Experience Your America Yosemite National Park

Vol. 34, Issue No.1

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Dec ‘08 - Feb ‘09

Where to Go and What to Do in Yosemite National Park

Yosemite Guide
Welcome to Yosemite

Keep this Guide with You to Get the Most Out of Your Trip to Yosemite National Park

The Yosemite Experience

John Muir once wrote, “As long as I live, I’ll hear waterfalls and birds and winds sing, I’ll interpret the rocks, learn the language of flood, storm and the avalanche. I’ll acquit myself with the glaciers and wild gardens, and get as near the heart of the world as I can.” Yosemite provides nearly 1,200 square miles of forests, meadows, granite cliffs, lakes and ponds, trails, roads, and pristine wilderness to do just that.

As Muir understood, there are as many ways to experience this amazing place as there are granite rocks in the Sierra Nevada landscape. To make the most of your time here, read through and enjoy this edition of Yosemite Guide. The contents of this publication will give you options for the experiences you choose to have here, help you plan those experiences, provide a listing of services to have here, help you plan those contents of this publication will give you this edition of Yosemite Guide. The contents of this publication will give you options for the experiences you choose to have here, help you plan those experiences, provide a listing of services and programs available in each area of the park, then provide more detailed information on topics such as camping and hiking.

Keep this guide with you as you make your way through the park. Pass it along to friends and family when you get home. Save it as a memento of your trip. This guide represents the collaborative energy of the National Park Service, Yosemite Fund, DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite, Yosemite Association, The Ansel Adams Gallery, and Yosemite Institute—organizations dedicated to Yosemite and to making your visit enjoyable and inspiring (see page 11).

National parks were established to preserve what is truly special about America. They are places to be shared, places where everyone is welcome, places where we can re-connect with our spirit. Whether you are here for a few hours or a few days, let Muir’s words—and this guide—bring you nearer to the heart of Yosemite. During your visit to Yosemite, perhaps you too will make a lasting connection with this place.

An Internationally Recognized Park

Designated a World Heritage Site in 1984, Yosemite is internationally recognized for its spectacular granite cliffs, waterfalls, clear streams, giant sequoia groves, and biological diversity.
Experience Yosemite Valley

An unlimited array of possibilities await you in Yosemite Valley. Most involve sightseeing and learning about the scenery before you. See pages 5-7 for more information on program topics and visitor services available.

The base of Lower Yosemite Fall is usually an easy walk from shuttle stop #6. Be aware that snow and ice can make the walk more difficult. The hike features educational exhibits and a picnic area, and is accessible to the mobility impaired when the path is clear.

Bridalveil Fall is another waterfall that you can visit by car on your way into or out of the valley. Winds swirling about the cliff lift and blow the falling water in a delicate free-fall.

El Capitan, a massive granite monolith, stands 3,593 feet from base to summit. From spring to fall, climbers come from all over the globe to scale El Capitan.

Half Dome, Yosemite’s most distinctive monument, dominates most views in Yosemite Valley. Forces of uplift, erosion from rivers and glaciers, and rockfall all shaped this famous feature into what we see today. Cook’s Meadow, Sentinel Bridge, Tunnel View, Glacier Point, and Olmsted Point are just a few locations with stunning views of Half Dome.

Happy Isles is a place to see dramatic natural processes at work. It is easily reached by shuttle at stop #16. Cross the footbridges onto the Isles or wander through outdoor exhibits detailing Yosemite’s geologic story. Shuttle buses may not travel to stop #16 when the road is snow-covered or icy.

For a strenuous day hike, you can use this trailhead to reach Vernal Fall footbridge (¾ miles) and Nevada Fall (2.7 miles) via the Mist Trail. Do not attempt this route when it is snow- or ice-covered, though. Visitors with mobility impairments can obtain a placard at the Valley Visitor Center or an entrance station that lets them drive to Happy Isles or Mirror Lake.

Tunnel View, along Wawona Road (Hwy 41) provides a classic view of Yosemite Valley, El Capitan, Half Dome, Sentinel Rock, Cathedral Rocks, and Bridalveil Fall. It is spectacular at sunset or after the clearing of a storm.

A Valley sightseeing tour is offered in Yosemite through the winter months. The Valley Floor Tour is a 26-mile, 2-hour tour that departs several times daily from Yosemite Lodge. Tours travel by enclosed motorcoach. An experienced guide narrates the tour. Only very poor weather cancels it.

A variety of other bus and open-top tram tours are offered during the warmer months.

Call 209/372-1240 for reservations or inquire at the tour and transportation desk at Yosemite Lodge.
Wawona

Located six miles from the park’s South Entrance or a one-hour drive from the Valley, the Wawona area tells the story of Yosemite’s human history and pioneer past. The charming 19th-century Wawona Hotel and the Pioneer Yosemite History Center are a history buff’s delight. The center is a collection of historic buildings associated with the people and events that shaped the national park idea in Yosemite. Interpretive signs and a brochure provide a self-guiding tour. Also in Wawona, you will find hikes of varying difficulty to places like Wawona Meadow and Chilnualna Falls, one of the tallest outside Yosemite Valley.

Hetch Hetchy

Hetch Hetchy Valley is accessible via the Big Oak Flat Road and Evergreen and Hetch Hetchy Roads; it is 40 miles from Yosemite Valley. The Hetch Hetchy Road is open 8 am to 5 pm through March 31. Call 209/372-0200 for the most up-to-date information. Vehicles over 25 ft. are prohibited on the narrow Hetch Hetchy Road. Once considered a twin to Yosemite Valley, this valley was described by John Muir as “a grand landscape garden, one of Nature’s rarest and most precious mountain temples.” Hetch Hetchy is located along the Tuolumne River in the northern part of the park and now contains a reservoir created by the O’Shaughnessy Dam. Hetch Hetchy’s relatively low elevation gives the area one of the longest hiking seasons in Yosemite National Park.

Glacier Point

The Glacier Point Road is open to snowshoeing and nordic skiing during the winter months. It is closed to vehicles past Badger Pass Ski Area. The snow-covered road takes you right to the brink of Yosemite Valley. Go to the railing’s edge and catch your breath at an exhilarating view, looking down 3,214 feet to the Valley floor. For a trip to an overhanging lookout, choose the track (depending on conditions) and the appeal of combining a visit to Yosemite with winter activities.

Nordic ski facilities in the area include close to 25 miles of machine-groomed track (depending on conditions) and the availability (with reservations and fee) of ski huts at Glacier Point and Ostrander Lake. Snowshoe enthusiasts are asked not to tread on ski tracks.

Badger Pass

The ski lifts, groomed runs, and cross-country ski trails at Badger Pass make it a destination for winter adventure and beauty at the same time. The ski area is about an hour by road from Yosemite Valley and is located a short distance from Wawona Road at Chinquapin on the Glacier Point Road. (The road is closed for winter beyond Badger Pass.) Badger Pass Ski Area is the oldest continuously operating ski area in California. The lodge and original lift opened to the public in December 1935. That January, close to 10,000 people visited the ski facility—proving the demand for winter sport in the region and the appeal of combining a visit to Yosemite with winter activities.

Winter Weather and Driving in Yosemite

Tioga Road, Glacier Point Road, and Mariposa Grove Road are closed each year from November to late May or early June. Other roads are plowed, but expect icy or snowy conditions. Roads may close briefly due to accidents or extreme conditions. Motorists must carry chains (see p. 8 for more on chains). To check conditions, call 209/372-0200 for roads inside the park and 800/427-7623 or visit www.dot.ca.gov for highways connecting to Yosemite.

Self-Guiding Trails

A Changing Yosemite

This one-mile-long walk through Cook’s Meadow explores both natural and cultural stories of Yosemite. Brochure available at the Valley Visitor Center.

Mirror Lake

Mirror Lake interpretive trail is a short loop adjacent to Mirror Lake, a seasonal lake on Tenaya Creek. Exhibits focus on the rich natural history of the area and American Indian use. To reach the start of the trail, walk one mile from shuttle stop #17 to the disabled parking spaces near the lake. The trail begins here.

Indian Village

This short loop winds through the Indian Village of Ahwahnee, a reconstructed Miwok-Paiute village. A booklet is available at the trailhead and in the Visitor Center. The trail begins behind the Yosemite Museum.

Curry Village

The Legacy of Curry Village is an easy stroll commemorating the early days of Camp Curry. Pick up a map and guide at the Curry Village front desk or tour desk.
Planning Your Trip

What do you want your experience to be?

Entrance Fees
Reservations are NOT required to enter Yosemite. The park is open year-round, 24 hours a day.

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<tr>
<th>Vehicle</th>
<th>$20</th>
<th>Valid for 7 days</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>$10</td>
<td>In a bus, on foot, bicycle, motorcycle, or horse. Valid for 7 days.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yosemite Pass</td>
<td>$40</td>
<td>Valid for one year in Yosemite.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interagency Annual Pass</td>
<td>$80</td>
<td>Valid for one year at all federal recreation sites.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interagency Senior Pass</td>
<td>$10 (Lifetime)</td>
<td>For U.S. citizens or permanent residents 62 and over.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interagency Access Pass (Free)</td>
<td>(Lifetime)</td>
<td>For permanently disabled U.S. citizens or permanent residents.</td>
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Campground Reservations
877/444-6777
www.recreation.gov

Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System (YARTS)
www.yarts.com

 Lodging Reservations
801/559-5000
www.yosemitepark.com

INFO OUTSIDE THE PARK
West Highway 120
Yosemite Chamber of Commerce
800/449-9192 or 209/962-0429
Tuolumne County Visitors Bureau
800/446-1333
www.thegreatunfenced.com

Highway 41
Yosemite Sierra Visitors Bureau
559/683-4636
www.yosemitethisyear.com

Highway 132/49
Coulterville Visitor Center
209/878-3074

Highway 140/49
Yosemite Mariposa Tourism Bureau
866/425-3366 or 209/966-7081
www.hom eof yosemite.com

Highway 120 East
Lee Vining Chamber of Commerce and Mono Lake Visitor Center
760/647-6629
www.leeving.com
California Welcome Center, Merced
800/446-5353 or 209/384-2791
www.yosemite-gateway.org

Yosemite Valley
Yosemite Valley is world famous for its impressive waterfalls, cliffs, and unusual rock formations. Snow occasionally blankets the Valley, but it is open year round and may be reached via Highway 41 from Fresno, Highway 140 from Merced, Highway 120 west from Manteca.

Wawona and Mariposa Grove
The Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias is located 36 miles (1½ hours) south of Yosemite Valley via the Wawona Road (Highway 41), two miles from the park’s South Entrance station. The road to the Mariposa Grove is closed from sometime in December to April. The nearby Pioneer Yosemite History Center in Wawona is a collection of historic buildings associated with people and events that shaped the national park idea in Yosemite.

Crane Flat
Crane Flat is a pleasant forest and meadow area located 16 miles from Yosemite Valley at the junction of Big Oak Flat and Tioga Roads. To see giant sequoias, park at the Tuolumne Grove parking area, and walk, ski or snowshoe one steep mile down to the Tuolumne Grove of Giant Sequoias. Or, park at Merced Grove trailhead and walk (ski or snowshoe) 2 steep miles down to this small grove.

Hetch Hetchy
Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, a source of drinking water and hydroelectric power for the City of San Francisco, is also home to spectacular scenery and the starting point for many wilderness trails. Hetch Hetchy Reservoir is located 40 miles from Yosemite Valley via Highway 120 and Evergreen and Hetch Hetchy Roads. The Hetch Hetchy Road is open 8 am to 5 pm through March 31.

Above: Yosemite’s giant sequoia groves usually have more snow than this in winter; use travel by skis or snowshoes is recommended. Photo by Christine Vlahos Jaberg
### Yosemite Valley

**Programs printed in COLOR are specially designed for CHILDREN AND FAMILIES.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00am</td>
<td><strong>WWE WILD ONES</strong> (except Jan. 4, 11, 18, and Feb. 8) ½ hr. Stories &amp; activities for kids 6 &amp; under. The Ahwahnee Great Lounge Fireplace (DNC)</td>
<td>(AAG)) $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1:00pm</td>
<td>Crane Flats to Clark Range Vista Snowshoe Walk (starts in January, except Jan. 15, Feb. 8 and 15 &amp; March 15 &amp; April 4, 11 &amp; 18. No experience required. Advance sign up at any tour desk. (DNC)</td>
<td>Ansel Adams Gallery (conditions permitting) (AAG) $</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:30pm</td>
<td>History of Bracebridge Talk (Dec. 21 only) ½ hr. The Ahwahnee Winter Club Room (DNC)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00pm</td>
<td>Evening Program 1 hr. Check local postings for venue &amp; topic (DNC)</td>
<td>(FWS) $</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00pm</td>
<td>Ranger Stroll - Riverside and Waterfalls 1½ hrs. Shuttle stop #6 (NPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00pm</td>
<td>Ranger Stroll - Geology (Dec. 22 only) ½ hr. The Ahwahnee Winter Club Room (DNC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:00pm</td>
<td>Winter Twilight Stroll (except Jan. 19) ½ hr. The Ahwahnee Patio (DNC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00pm</td>
<td>Evening Program 1 hr. Check local postings for venue &amp; topic (NPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:00am</td>
<td>Photography Walk 2 hrs. Limited space. Reservations required. Sign up &amp; meet at Ansel Adams Gallery (conditions permitting) (AAG)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12:00pm</td>
<td>Yosemite Forum (except Jan. 19) ½ hr. Selected lectures by park scientists. East Auditorium (NPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30pm</td>
<td>Using Your Digital Camera Class (except Dec. 25) 4 hrs. Reservations required. Sign up and meet at the Ansel Adams Gallery (AAG)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00pm</td>
<td>Ranger Stroll - Trees 1½ hrs. The Ahwahnee, Shuttle Stop #3 (NPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:00pm</td>
<td>STORYTIME (Dec. 30) ½ hr. The Ahwahnee Great Lounge Fireplace (DNC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00pm</td>
<td>Evening Program 1 hr. Check local postings for venue &amp; topic (NPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:30pm</td>
<td>History of Bracebridge Talk (Dec. 24 only) 1½ hr. The Ahwahnee Winter Club Room (DNC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00pm</td>
<td>NPC Open House (Jan. 9 only) 3 hrs. Come learn about park improvement efforts. Valley Visitor Center Auditorium (NPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00pm</td>
<td>Ranger Stroll - Wild about Wildlife 1½ hrs. Front of Yosemite Valley Visitor Center (NPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>7:00pm</td>
<td>Evening Program (except Dec. 31) 1½ hr. Yosemite Lodge (NPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:00pm</td>
<td>Ranger Stroll - Yosemite's Legacy 1½ hrs. Front of Yosemite Valley Visitor Center (NPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30pm</td>
<td>History of Bracebridge Talk (Dec. 18 and 26 only) ½ hr. The Ahwahnee Winter Club Room (DNC)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:00pm</td>
<td>Film - Ansel Adams 1 hr. Check local postings for venue and topic. (AAAG)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00pm</td>
<td>Photography Walk 2 hrs. Limited space. Reservations required. Sign up &amp; meet at Ansel Adams Gallery (conditions permitting) (AAG)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30am</td>
<td>Snowshoe Walk—Explore the Forest in Winter Conditions permitting. 2 hrs. Meet at ranger office A-frame for natural tour of winter landscape. Bring warm clothing, snowshoes provided (suggested donation $5). (NPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30pm</td>
<td>Vintage Music of Yosemite (Dec. 24 and 31 only) 4 hrs. Live music and interpretive programs with pianist/singer Tom Bopp. Programs are available by request, usually given at 8:30pm. Drop by the piano early in the evening and ask Tom for details. Wawona Hotel lounge (DNC)</td>
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<td>1:00pm</td>
<td>Ranger Stroll - Yosemite's First People 1½ hrs. Front of Yosemite Museum (NPS)</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:30am</td>
<td>Adventure Hike—Snowshoes to Dewey Point Conditions permitting. 6½ hours. Meet at nordic center. Tickets/hike at any park tour desk. (YMS) $</td>
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<td>3:00pm</td>
<td>Winter Theater Live! The Spirit of John Muir: Stories of Ice and Snow (Dec. 23 and 29 ½ hr. Yosemite Lodge at the Fall Cliff Room. Tickets at lodge tour desk, or at door, if available. (DNC) $</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30pm</td>
<td>Full Moon Snowshoe Walk (Jan. 11 and Feb. 8 only) 2½ hrs. No experience required. Advance sign up at any tour desk. Meet at Badger Pass Lodge. (DNC) $</td>
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<td>Ranger Stroll - Geology 1½ hrs. Yosemite Lodge, shuttle stop #6 (NPS)</td>
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<td>5:00pm</td>
<td>Full Moon Snowshoe Walk (Jan. 20 and Feb. 7 only) 2½ hrs. No experience required. Advance sign up at any tour desk. Meet at Badger Pass Lodge. (DNC) $</td>
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### Badger Pass

**Programs in green are specially designed for ELDERLY VISITORS.**

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Services and Facilities
Where to Go & What to Do

Yosemite Valley

Valley Visitor Center and Bookstore
Visitor center and bookstore hours are 9 am to 5 pm, just west of the main post office (shuttle stops #5 and #9). The center offers information, maps, and books, in the attached bookstore. Explore the exhibit hall and learn how Yosemite’s spectacular landscape formed and how people interact with it.

FILM: SPIRIT OF YOSEMITE
This inspiring visitor-orientation film provides a stunning overview of Yosemite’s splendor. It is shown every 30 minutes, Monday through Saturday 9:30 am and 4:30 pm, and Sunday between noon to 4:30 pm in the Valley Visitor Center Theater.

Internet Access
Fee-based terminals are open at Degnan’s Deli. Free internet access is available at the Mariposa County branch library, adjacent to the Yosemite Cemetery. Hours vary. Ask at the Valley Visitor Center.

Yosemite Museum
Located in Yosemite Village next to the Valley Visitor Center.

INDIAN CULTURAL EXHIBIT
Open 9 am to 5 pm. May close for lunch. The exhibit interprets the cultural history of Yosemite’s native Miwok and Paiute people from 1850 to the present.

Demonstrations of traditional skills are presented. No food or drink.

YOSEMITE MUSEUM STORE
Open 9 am to 5 pm, the store offers traditional American Indian arts and crafts, and books on related subjects.

The Indian Village of Ahwahnee
Located behind the Yosemite Museum and open daily, the village offers a self-guiding trail brochure and exhibits on Ahwahneechee life.

Yosemite Cemetery
This historic cemetery is located just west of the Yosemite Museum, across the street. People buried here include American Indians and others who played an important role in the development of what is now Yosemite National Park. Guide to the Yosemite Cemetery is available at the Valley Visitor Center.

Ansel Adams Gallery
Located in Yosemite Village next to the Valley Visitor Center, the gallery is open daily from 9 am to 5 pm. (It will close at 3 pm on Christmas Eve and will remain closed on Christmas Day.) The gallery offers the work of Ansel Adams, contemporary photographers, and other fine artists. It also offers camera walks, photography workshops, and classes. Scheduled activities are listed on the front porch. For more information, call 209/372-4413, or visit www.anseladams.com.

ANSEL ADAMS GALLERY EXHIBITS

Special Winter Events

Yosemite Winter Theater Live! The Spirit of John Muir: Stories of Snow and Ice
Dec. 21 and 28 only, 7pm at Yosemite Lodge.

Family Winter Celebration
Join park interpretive staff for an afternoon of crafts, learning stations, walks, and winter fun! Sunday, Feb. 15, 1pm at Curry Village Pavilion.

Throughout Yosemite National Park
Winter is a time of special beauty and offers unique opportunities for sport and outdoor adventure in the park. Note that some tours and roads familiar to summer visitors do not reopen until May or June.

POST OFFICE
Yosemite Village
Main Office
Monday–Friday: 8:30am to 5pm
Saturday: 10am to noon
Yosemite Lodge
Post Office
Monday–Friday: 12:30pm to 2:45pm
El Portal
Post Office
Monday–Friday: 8:30am to 5pm
closed for lunch from 12:30 to 1:30
Wawona Post Office
Monday–Friday: 9am to 5pm
Saturday: 9am to noon

BOOKS, GIFTS, & APPAREL
Yosemite Village
The Ansel Adams Gallery
9am to 5pm
Yosemite Art & Education Center closed for season
Yosemite Bookstore
Inside Yosemite Visitor Center
9am to 5pm
Yosemite Museum Store
9am to 5pm, Thurs.–Sun. as of Jan. 1
Village Store
8am to 8pm
Habitat Yosemite
11am to 4pm, Friday–Sunday only
Sport Shop
10am to 4pm
Thrift Shop
The Ahwahnee
The Ahwahnee Gift Shop
8am to 8pm
The Ahwahnee Sweet Shop
7am to 10pm
Mountain Shop
Gift/Grocery
8am to 7pm
Nature Shop
11am to 7pm
Curry Village
Mountain Shop
9am to 5pm
Curry Village Gift/Grocery
9am to 7pm, Holiday Hours: 8am–8pm, (1/16–1/19 and 2/13–2/16)
Wawona's Yonder: A Pioneer Gift Shop
8am to 5pm

SKIING
Mad River Glen Area
Scheduled opening Dec. 12.
9am to 4 pm daily, conditions permitting.
**Wawona**

Pioneer Yosemite History Center

Go back to a time of horse-drawn wagons, a covered bridge, and log cabins. A visit to the Pioneer Yosemite History Center explores Yosemite’s history and explains how Yosemite was the inspiration for national parks across America and around the world. The center is open throughout the year.

**Evening Programs**

Join pianist/singer Tom Bopp in the Wawona Hotel lobby from 5:30 to 9:30 pm, Tuesday through Saturday, as he performs songs and tells stories from Yosemite’s past.

**Wilderness Permits**

Visitors can obtain wilderness permits at a self-service kiosk attached to Hill’s Studio, adjacent to the Wawona Hotel.

**Mariposa Grove**

Located near Yosemite’s South Entrance, the Mariposa Grove is the park’s largest stand of giant sequoias, with about 500 trees. The road to the Grove closes in November or December and opens sometime in April. Visitors can walk, ski, or snowshoe when the road is closed to vehicles.

**Getting to Mariposa Grove**

Allow an hour’s driving time to reach the grove’s access road from the Valley. A locked gate prevents vehicles from entering the closure area. Limited parking is available near the gate.

**Snow Travel to the Grove**

Skiers and snowshoers can follow the snow-covered road into the Grove. Trails within the grove are marked by yellow flags attached to trees above ground level. When snow covers the ground here, access is limited to foot, snowshoe, or ski.

**Dogs or bikes are not permitted anywhere in the Grove.**

**Distance & Elevation**

Distances below do not include the 2-mile approach from the locked gate near the park’s south entrance.

**GRIZZLY GIANT**

Distance from trailhead: 0.5 mi / 0.8 km
Elevation Gain: 400 ft / 122 m

**GROVE MUSEUM**

Distance from trailhead: 2.1 miles / 3.5 km
Elevation Gain: 800 ft / 292 m

**FALLEN TUNNEL TREE**

Distance from trailhead: 2.5 miles / 4.0 km
Elevation Gain: 1,000 ft / 305 m

**WAWONA POINT**

Distance from trailhead: 3.0 miles / 4.8 km
Elevation Gain: 1,200 ft / 438 m

**Big Oak Flat**

**Big Oak Flat Information Station**

The station is closed until spring, but wilderness permits are available at a self-service, 24-hour kiosk throughout the winter season.

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**Religious Services**

**Yosemite Community Church (NonDenominational)**

**Worship Service/Yosemite Valley Chapel**

Sunday 9:15am and 11am

Thurs.: 7 pm; Tuesday Bible Studies
Christmas Eve: 4pm candlelight service
New Year’s Eve: 10pm prayer service, communion at 12 midnight

Call 209/372-4831 for information

**Roman Catholic**

Yosemite Valley Visitor Center Chapel
Sunday Mass: 11 am
Christmas Mass: Dec. 25, 10 am

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**Food & Beverage**

**Yosemite Community Church (NonDenominational)**

**Village Grove**

NO GAS AVAILABLE IN YOSEMITE VALLEY

**Yosemite Medical Clinic**

7am to 5pm

**Dental Services**

Adjacent to Yosemite Medical Clinic.

For hours, call 209/372-6200

**Emergency Care**

24 hours daily.

**Rotary International**

Meets the first and third Thursdays of each month at noon, The Ahwahnee.

Call 209/372-4475.
The best way to avoid it is to slowly decrease your rate of breath, general malaise and fatigue. Symptoms include headache, nausea, dizziness, and labored breathing in the lungs. Hypothermia is experienced in diagnosing and treating this sickness.

Avoid Hypothermia

Sierra winters are comparatively mild, but temperatures can drop into dangerous territory with little warning. Winter sports require a high degree of preparation and training. Be prepared for a blizzard even when out just for the day. Know how to use your gear and carry basic repair materials.

Avoid the combination of wetness, wind, and cold. Know symptoms of hypothermia. Carry emergency fire-starting materials and food. Avoid dehydration; carry and drink plenty of water and carry emergency high-energy food.

Traffic Safety

Roads leading to the park are two-lane, narrow, and winding. When traveling on a road you can protect yourself, other visitors, and park wildlife by observing the following simple rules: Please obey posted speed limits. Yosemite’s roads are used by both visitors and park wildlife. Use turnouts to pull completely out of the road, to take photos, consult the park map, or simply enjoy the park’s scenery and wildlife.

Effects of Altitude

Altitude sickness may develop in otherwise healthy and fit people who are exposed to rapid increases in altitude. It can develop at altitudes as low as 8,000 feet (Yosemite Valley’s elevation is 4,000 feet). The risk of occurrence increases with age and with diseases of the heart and lungs. Symptoms include headache, nausea, insomnia, irritability, shortness of breath, general malaise and fatigue. The best way to avoid it is to slowly acclimatize yourself to higher elevations, over the span of two to three days by gradually gaining elevation until you reach 10,000 feet (Tioga Pass). Avoid alcohol, sugar and high-fat meals. Should altitude sickness develop, descend to a lower elevation. The Yosemite Medical Clinic in Yosemite Valley is experienced in diagnosing and treating this sickness.

Niking, Backpacking, Backcountry Snow Travel, and Rock Climbing

• There are no scheduled winter patrols, so be prepared. Be honest about your abilities and plan with the least experienced member of your group in mind. Tell someone where you are going and when you are due back.

• Be prepared for icy travel before conditions arise. Bring crampons, ice axe, climbing skins, and other traction devices.

• Carry and know how to use a map and compass.

• Check weather forecasts. Snow can occur with little warning, and can make route finding very difficult. Temperature shifts are common.

• Avoid dehydration or heat exhaustion; carry and drink plenty of water, and bring high-energy food.

• Be prepared to set up emergency shelter even when out just for the day.

• Know how to use your gear and carry basic repair materials.

Protect Yosemite’s Wilderness

• Pack out all trash and toilet paper/sanitary products.

• Use gas stoves rather than wood fires.

• Camp in an existing campsite at least 100 feet from water and trail. You must be four trail miles from any populated area and one mile from any road before camping.

• To minimize trampling of vegetation, bring a container to carry water to your camp from lakes or streams.

• Maximum group size is 15 people for trail travel and eight people for off-trail travel.

• Yosemite is a wildlife preserve. Pets, weapons, bicycles, strollers, and motor vehicles are never allowed on Yosemite’s wilderness trails.

Wilderness Permits

Free wilderness permits are required for all overnight trips into the Yosemite Wilderness. No permit is required for day trips. Permits are issued at Yosemite Valley, Big Oak Flat, Wawona, and the Hetch Hetchy Entrance Station. Self-service permit kiosks are open during the autumn and winter, with an additional permit point open at Badger Pass. Call the park’s main phone line for current permit information: 209/372-0200.

Vehicle Chain Requirements

When you are visiting from November through March, expect chain requirements to be in effect, even if you only plan to park in the Valley and ride the shuttle bus. Any time chain controls are in effect, all vehicles must have chains or cable chains readily available. Not having them could subject you to an expensive citation.

Changes in Elevation

Because higher elevation roads receive more snow, chains are required on the Wawona Road (Highway 41), Big Oak Flat Road (Highway 120 west), and Badger Pass Road more often than on the El Portal Road (Highway 4), roads within Yosemite Valley, and the Hetch Hetchy Road.

Check by Phone

Call 209/372-0200 (press 1 then 1) for updated road information inside the park. This recording is updated whenever road conditions change and is the same way in which park staff get road information. This recording includes information about current chain requirements. Remember that conditions can change rapidly.

You can also call 800/427-7623 for road conditions throughout California (these links and phone number do not provide information about roads within Yosemite).

Online Information

A summary of chain control rules can be found on the park website at www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/backpacking.htm

There are many ways to experience the wildness of Yosemite. While the forces of nature can create unexpected hazardous conditions, with a little common sense and some pre-planning, you can minimize the risks associated with many activities.
Around Ice and Water

- Stay off frozen lakes, ponds and streams and away from swiftly-moving water. Keep children from wandering on or near these hazards.
- Never swim or wade upstream from the brink of a waterfall, even if the water appears shallow and calm. Each year, unsuspecting visitors are swept over waterfalls to their deaths when swimming in these areas.
- Swimming is not permitted in the Hetch Hetchy reservoir or in Emerald Pool above Vernal Fall.

Fishing

Trout season in Yosemite does not open until April. A valid California sport-fishing license is required for those persons age 16 years and older. When fishing, the license must be plainly visible by attaching it to an outer layer of clothing above the waistline.

- Trout season opens on the last Saturday in April and continues through November 15 (except Frog Creek near Lake Eleanor, which opens June 15).
- Special fishing regulations apply on the Merced River in Yosemite Valley from Happy Isles downstream to the Foresta Bridge in El Portal. Within these reaches of the river, it is catch-and-release only for rainbow trout. Brown trout limits are five fish per day. Only artificial lures or flies with barbless hooks may be used.
- The use of live or dead minnows, bait fish or amphabians, non-preserved fish eggs or roe is prohibited.

Water Quality

To protect yourself from disease, treat any surface water before drinking.
- Treatment methods include boiling for five minutes, use of a Giardia-rated water filter, or iodine-based purifier.
- To prevent the spread of Giardia and other water-borne disease organisms, use restroom facilities where available, and always wash hands afterwards with soap and water. In natural areas where facilities are not available, wash, camp, and bury human waste (6 inches deep) at least 100 feet away from any water source or trail.

Pets

Some visitors choose to bring pets along on their vacations. Keep in mind, in Yosemite, pet owners have a few rules to follow:
- Pets are only allowed in developed areas and on roads and paved bike paths. They are not allowed on other trails, or in wilderness areas.
- Pets must be on a leash (6 feet or less) or otherwise physically restrained.
- For the courtesy of others, human companions are responsible for cleaning up and depositing pet feces in trash receptacles.
- Pets are not allowed in any lodging facilities or other buildings within the park and are not allowed in some campgrounds.
- Pets may not be left unattended.

Bicycling

Each season, plants are crushed from bicycle travel in meadows, campgrounds, and picnic areas. Please respect park resources and keep bicycles on paved roads and paved bicycle trails. They are not allowed to travel off-trail or on dirt paths or trails.

Permits and Other Rules

To find out more about Yosemite National Park regulations visit www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/yoursafety.htm and find a copy of the Superintendent’s Compendium. This document is a compilation of designations, closures, permit requirements, and other restrictions made by the superintendent, in addition to what is contained in applicable federal statutes and regulations.

Reporting Violations

During your visit to Yosemite be aware that there are people who either unknowingly or intentionally harm park resources. Please contact a park official if you see the following illegal acts:
- Actively feeding or harassing wildlife
- Collecting plants, reptiles, or insects
- Hunting or directly harming animals
- Picking up archeological items such as arrowheads
- Using metal detectors to locate and collect historic objects
- Driving vehicles into meadows
- Camping outside of campgrounds
- Possession of weapons
- If you see activities that could harm people or park resources, jot down any descriptions or a vehicle license plate number and call the park dispatch office at 209/379-1992.

Mountain Lions

Mountain lions are a normal and important part of the park ecosystem. They are attracted to areas with healthy deer and raccoon populations, which include many areas of the park. Generally, they are calm, quiet, and elusive. Sightings are quite rare, so if you spot one, consider yourself privileged!

Avoid hiking alone. Watch children closely and never let them run ahead or lag behind on the trail. Teach children what to do if they see a lion.

Never approach a lion, especially if it is with kittens. Most lions will avoid confrontation. Always give them a way to escape. Don’t run. Hold your ground, or back away slowly.

Face the lion and stand upright. Raise your arms. If you have small children with you, pick them up.

If the lion behaves aggressively, wave your arms, shout, and throw objects at it. The goal is to convince it that you may be dangerous. If attacked, fight back!

Report lion encounters at 209/372-0322.

Keeping Bears Wild

Three Top Ways to Keep Yosemite’s Black Bears Wild and Alive. Remember that Yosemite Bears are Active All Winter Long:

1. Store Your Food Properly.

“Food” includes any item with a scent, regardless of packaging. This may include items that you do not consider food, such as canned goods, bottles, drinks, soap, cosmetics, toiletries, trash, ice chests (even when empty), and unwashed items used for preparing or eating meals. Do not store food in your car after dark, use a food locker. Remember to clear your car of food wrappers, baby wipes, and crumbs in baby seats. If you are staying in a campsite or tent cabin, you must store all your food in food lockers. A food locker is available at each campsite and tent camp. Food may be stored out of sight in hard-sided RV’s with windows closed. Do not leave food unattended at picnic areas and along trails. When backpacking in the wilderness, bear resistant food containers are required.

2. If you see a bear, scare it away and keep your distance.

You may not see a bear during your visit because they naturally avoid people. However, if you see one in a developed area (like a campground or parking lot), act immediately to scare it away: Make noise and yell as loud as possible. If there is more than one person, stand together to present a more intimidating figure, but do not surround the bear. If you see a bear anywhere else, consider yourself lucky—but keep your distance (at least 50 yards, or about the distance made by four shuttle buses parked end to end). If you get too close, you will be helping the bear become used to being around people.

3. Drive the speed limit.

The most common human-related cause of death for a black bear in Yosemite is being hit by a car. Please slow down!

To report bear sightings, improper food storage, trash problems, and other bear-related problems, leave a message for the Bear Management Team at 209/372-0322.
February 2009 marks the bicentennial of Abraham Lincoln’s birth. In 1864, the president signed a bill that would ultimately create Yosemite National Park.

By Ranger Sarah Dunham

Few visitors probably link the author of the Gettysburg Address with Yosemite, but Abraham Lincoln is an important figure in the park’s history. On June 30, 1864, in the midst of the American Civil War, Lincoln signed the Yosemite park act, which protected the Mariposa Grove and Yosemite Valley from logging and other forms of exploitation. These plots would form the core of one of America’s natural treasures, Yosemite National Park.

Photographer’s role

Today, people come to Yosemite National Park from all over the world seeking the waterfalls that seem to fall from the sky and the monolithic cliffs that soar up to the horizon. But Abraham Lincoln never saw Yosemite. Instead Yosemite came to him in photographs taken by Carleton Watkins and the passionate voices of people such as Captain Israel Ward Raymond and U.S. Senator John Conness.

Carleton Watkins was the first photographer to utilize large-format “mammoth-plate” photographs to capture the magnitude and splendor of Yosemite’s rugged landscape and the apparent absence of human habitation even though people had been living in the area for thousands of years.

An escape from war

Watkins’ photographs sharply contrasted with images of the Eastern landscape at the time that depicted scenes of battle and fields littered with the bodies of fallen Civil War soldiers. To many people, Watkins’ photographs depicted a place so remote it offered a chance to escape the political and social unrest of the time. Watkins’ photographs also offered a setting and context for the discussion of the preservation of natural landscapes.

Discussion among preservationists and politicians reflected America’s changing lifestyles. In the middle and late 1800s many people were moving from rural to urban settings where manicured public parks and gardens were replacing wild natural landscapes. Some Americans became nostalgic for a more peaceful and preindustrial era and took it upon themselves to ensure that some natural landscapes would be preserved for generations to come. Captain Israel Ward Raymond was one of those individuals. He came to Yosemite and was struck by its remarkable beauty and majesty. Raymond was also concerned by the trend toward private development in Yosemite Valley and the discussion of harvesting giant sequoias.

On February 20, 1864 Captain Raymond authored a persuasive letter to US Senator John Connness urging congress to protect “that cleft or Gorge in the granite peak of the Sierra Nevada...known as the Yo Semite Valley...to prevent occupation and especially to preserve the trees.”

Team effort succeeds

Much of the language in Captain Raymond’s letter became the language of a bill introduced in the Senate by Senator John Connness stating that “the [Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias and Yosemite Valley] shall be held for public use, resort, and recreation, shall be inalienable for all time.” This bill passed in the Senate and passed unanimously in the House of Representatives.

The next day Abraham Lincoln signed the bill setting aside the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoia and Yosemite Valley, to be administered the state of California. In 1890, President Benjamin Harrison signed a bill creating Yosemite National Park. The Valley and the Mariposa Grove were added to the national park in 1906. “Yosemite was in fact the first national park,” historian Alfred Runte would later write.

Significance of act

At the time the Yosemite park act was signed, it did not invite much attention because America was in the midst of a Civil War. Only later did the significance become clear; Yosemite was the first land in American history to be preserved for public use simply because it was beautiful. The Yosemite Grant became legal precedent and began a world movement toward land conservation.

Abraham Lincoln gave California the gift of expansive valleys, rugged mountains, waterfalls that jump from the sky, and monolithic cliffs that soar up to the horizon; he gave California Yosemite. Ultimately, Yosemite is a gift to all of us. As visitors to national parks it is our privilege to explore all the wonders and surprises woven into the natural landscape. As the owners and caretakers of national parks it is our duty to care for them for the generations to come.

President Abraham Lincoln signed the Yosemite park act into law on June 30, 1864.

Photo: Library of Congress

Israel Ward Raymond was a California representative of a New York steamship company who took an early interest in Yosemite. In February 1964, he wrote Sen. John Connness to urge the area’s preservation.

Photo: Yosemite Research Library

California Sen. John Connness stressed the importance of preserving giant sequoia trees of the Mariposa Grove in a speech to the U.S. Senate Committee on Public Lands in 1864. Today, a mountain and glacier bear his name near the park’s eastern edge.

Photo: Yosemite Research Library

On February 20, 1864 Captain Raymond authored a persuasive letter to US Senator John Connness urging congress to protect “that cleft or Gorge in the granite peak of the Sierra Nevada...known as the Yo Semite Valley...to prevent occupation and especially to preserve the trees.”
Supporting Your Park
Providing for Yosemite’s Future

Enhancing the Visitor Experience
It takes a legion of people working together to protect this special park for you and future generations of visitors. You, too, can extend your connection to Yosemite well after you return home by getting involved with the organizations that partner to preserve Yosemite.

This publication was made possible by the Yosemite Park Partners listed on this page. Read more below or visit www.yosemitepartners.org to learn more about helping these organizations provide for the future of Yosemite National Park.

The Ansel Adams Gallery
The Ansel Adams Gallery, owned by the family of photographer Ansel Adams since 1902, is a center that celebrates the arts and the natural grandeur of our environment. It cultivates an aesthetic appreciation and concern for our world by offering visitors a unique variety of literature and art, as well as programs that inspire creativity. Visit online at www.anseladams.com.

DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite
DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite (DNC) operates hotels, restaurants, sightseeing tours, recreational activities, interpretive programs, stores, shuttles and service stations in the park under contract with the U.S. Department of the Interior. DNC encourages its employees to develop a strong relationship with the park during their tenure. For more information and employment opportunities with DNC at Yosemite, visit online at www.yosemitepark.com.

Yosemite Association
The Yosemite Association is a nonprofit membership organization that provides opportunities for people to learn about, enjoy, and experience Yosemite National Park and the Sierra Nevada. The Association celebrates the majesty and grandeur of this region through its visitor services, publications, outdoor classroom, and membership activities, which give people of all ages the chance to forge an enduring and inspirational connection to Yosemite. This, in turn, builds a commitment to the long-term preservation and vitality of Yosemite and our National Parks. Since 1923, the Association has provided important services and financial support to the National Park Service. Anyone who loves Yosemite and wishes to become more closely involved and affiliated with the park will enjoy membership in the Association. For more information, visit www.yosemite.org.

The Yosemite Fund
The Fund provides broad-based private funding from 27,000 members for projects that preserve, protect, or enhance Yosemite Park. Fund operations result in material improvement in the stewardship and quality of Yosemite’s natural, cultural or historical resources or the visitor experience. Fund grants repair trails, restore habitat, conduct scientific research, enhance visitor education, preserve park history, and protect wildlife. Since 1988 the Fund has provided over $50 million to complete more than 200 projects. Visit online at www.yosemitefund.org.

Yosemite Institute
Since 1971, thousands of school-age children have benefited from learning in “nature’s classroom” through the residential field-science programs offered by Yosemite Institute (YI). A YI experience strives to foster a life-long connection to the natural world—whether it is in Yosemite, on a city street or in our own backyards. YI also offers professional development for teachers, summer youth programs, backpacking adventures, community outreach programs and service learning projects. For more information, visit www.yi.org/yi.

Contact Us...

The Ansel Adams Gallery
PO Box 456
Yosemite, CA 95389
209/372-4413
209/372-4714 fax
www.anseladams.com

DNC Parks & Resorts at Yosemite
PO Box 578
Yosemite, CA 95389
801/559-5000
www.yosemitepark.com

Yosemite Association
PO Box 230
El Portal, CA 95318
209/379-2646
209/379-2486 fax
www.yosemite.org

The Yosemite Fund
155 Montgomery St. #1104
San Francisco, CA 94104
800/469-7275 or 415/434-1782
www.yosemitefund.org

Yosemite Institute
PO Box 487
Yosemite, CA 95389
209/379-9511
209/379-9510 fax
www.yni.org

Above right: El Capitan. Photo: Christine White Loberg
Experience Your America Yosemite National Park

Yosemite Guide December 17, 2008 - February 17, 2009

Inside:
01 Welcome to Yosemite
05 Programs and Events
06 Services and Facilities
10 Special Feature: Lincoln & Yosemite

Note: Service to stops 15, 16, 17, and 18 may stop after a major snowfall.

Shuttles run daily every 10-20 minutes depending on the time of day. The Valley Visitor Shuttle operates from 7:00am - 10:00pm. All shuttles follow the same route, serving stops in numerical order. Service may be affected by construction projects. Check shuttle stops for more information.

Stop # Location
1 Visitor Parking
2 Yosemite Village
3 The Ahwahnee
4 Dogwood Dell
5 Valley Visitor Center
6 Lower Yosemite Fall
7 Camp 4
8 Yosemite Lodge
9 Sentinel Bridge
10 LeConte / Hostel Backpacking Camp
11 Recreational Activities
12 Curry Village
13 Curry Village Parking
14 Upper Pines Campground
15 Happy Isles
16 Mirror Lake Trailhead
17 Stables
18 Pines Campground

Note: Service to stops 15, 16, 17, and 18 may stop after a major snowfall.