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Yosemite: Family Multi-Sport Vacation

Hiking & Biking from the Sierra Foothills to Yosemite Valley

Summer 2009: Multiple Travel Dates

Luxury Inns

Deluxe Camping Itinerary also available



OVERVIEW

As you stand at the edge of Glacier Point with a sweeping view of Yosemite Valley and granite-faced Half Dome, reflect on the words of naturalist John Muir, who made protection of this wilderness his life's mission: "No temple made with hands can compare with Yosemite. Every rock in its walls seems to glow with life." Muir's words only begin to describe the sanctuary of dense forests, sprawling meadows, thundering waterfalls and dramatic peaks showcased on this amazing family journey.

By bike and on foot, forge through a landscape of picturesque valleys, broad plateaus and sheer cliff faces carved by wind, rain and glacial ice—the perfect playground for young adventurers, and an ideal setting for kids to learn about conservation.

This memorable family vacation begins with a taste of the Wild West in California's Gold Country before forging into Yosemite itself. Overnight stays in a mountain resort and a historic lodge are the perfect complement to this inspiring journey.



We incorporate the "Leave No Trace" principles on our trips wherever possible

DAY ONE

Meet your Trip Leaders at 8 a.m. in the lobby of the Hotel Monaco in San Francisco. Please arrive dressed in your walking clothes and carrying a daypack stocked with any items you might need for today's walk (camera, sunglasses, etc.).

Shuttle to the Sierra Nevada 4½ Hours

California Tunnel Tree Walking Loop 3.5 Miles (600-foot elevation gain)

After meeting in San Francisco, we shuttle to the Sierra Nevada, a region that captivated John Muir with —glorious floods of light and —irised spray of countless waterfalls. Along the way, we stop in the gold rush town of Mariposa for a picnic at the Mariposa Museum and History Center, one of America's best small museums according to the Smithsonian Institute. We continue to the world-famous Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias. With 500 mature trees, this is Yosemite's largest stand of giant sequoias (also known as —Sierra redwoods), some 2,700 years old. One noteworthy resident is the Grizzly Giant, with a base diameter of 30 feet! As you follow a well-marked uphill path lined with these masterpieces, keep in mind that they have withstood the test of time—sequoias do not die from old age but from other factors such as weather and soil conditions.

After exploring, we shuttle to our home for the next two nights, Tenaya Lodge. Cradled by the pines of Sierra National Forest, this impressive lodge exudes rustic elegance with its magnificent stone fireplaces, grand public spaces and American Indian-inspired décor. Tonight, we get better acquainted at a wine reception and welcome dinner.

Lodging: Tenaya Lodge

DAY TWO

Sugar Pine Biking Route 12 Miles (750-foot elevation loss)

Family Option: Corral Out and Back 5 Miles

Longer Option: Big Sandy 17 Miles (1,000-foot elevation gain)

Horseback Riding (Kids 7 & up) or Historic Train Ride (Kids under 7)

Today we bike into the Sierra National Forest, heading out on a dirt road right behind our hotel. The gently rolling route offers views of an uninhabited wooded valley and takes you through groves of pine trees past an old Western corral. (For extra miles, continue biking to the Big Sandy, where a beautiful river weaves through the forest.) Once we reach the corral you can bike back to the hotel or enjoy an exhilarating descent to the historic community of Sugar Pine.

This afternoon your leaders have special activities planned for the kids: an easy horseback ride for ages 7 and up or a historic train ride on the Sugar Pine Railroad for the younger ones. Meanwhile, adults can take advantage of the lodge's amenities—including a full-service spa and fitness center, two swimming pools and hot tubs. Tonight, indulge your appetite at either of the lodge's dining venues: the Sierra Restaurant for adults or Jackalope's Bar and Grill with the kids.

Lodging: Tenaya Lodge

DAY THREE

Shuttle to Glacier Point 1½ Hours

Pohono Loop 4 Miles with Shuttle (500-foot elevation gain)

Family Option: Sentinel Dome 2.5 Miles with Shuttle (200-foot elevation gain)

Longer Options: Yosemite Valley 8 Miles with Shuttle (750-foot elevation gain; 4,000-foot elevation loss) or Ahwahnee Hotel 9.8 Miles (750-foot elevation gain; 4,000-foot elevation loss)

After breakfast, we leave Tenaya Lodge behind and return to Yosemite National Park. Covering 1,170 sq. mi., the park is about the size of Rhode Island, yet most visitors only spend time in Yosemite Valley, an area seven miles long (and, at its widest point, one mile across). Yosemite has been sculpted over millions of years by geologic activity, including erosion from the Merced River, and the movement and retreat of glaciers. The valley has inspired artists including Ansel Adams, the famed photographer who immortalized the park's landmarks—Half Dome, El Capitan and Bridalveil Falls—in his magnificent photos.

Today's hike begins at Glacier Point (elevation 7,214 feet) with panoramic views of Yosemite Valley and magnificent Half Dome towering above. There are several walking options to choose from:

Follow the Pohono Trail along the ridgeline and climb to the summit of granite-faced Sentinel Dome for 360-degree views of the park. Once you've completed your hike, a van shuttles you to the valley. For a more strenuous route, you can follow the Panorama Trail down to the Mist Trail for spectacular close-up views of thundering Nevada and Vernal Falls—you may get to cool off with a refreshing spray!

If you're just warming up, forge on through Yosemite Valley and to our home for the next three nights, the legendary Ahwahnee Hotel. *Ahwahnee*, the word the original Miwok Indians used for Yosemite Valley, means —Place of the Gaping Mouth. □ This grand 1920s hotel is a National Historic Landmark that sits proudly in a wooded setting, granite cliffs towering behind it. When you enter the lobby, note the impressive patterned floors, soaring beamed ceilings and the masterful blend of American Indian artifacts, artwork and Colonial Shaker furnishings. This evening relax in your room or explore the Ahwahnee's magnificent public spaces, such as the Grand Lounge, Mural Room or Solarium. Tonight, you're on your own to sample the fine cuisine at the Ahwahnee (we recommend making reservations two to four weeks in advance) or at one of the more casual restaurants nearby.

Lodging: Ahwahnee Hotel

DAY FOUR

Naturalist-Guided Walk

Free Time in Yosemite Valley

This morning, learn more about Yosemite's natural and cultural history on a walk led by a naturalist from the Yosemite Association. This nonprofit educational organization, founded in 1923, is dedicated to the support of Yosemite National Park.

The rest of the day is yours to explore the park on foot, by bike or on horseback. If you'd like to hike, there are several family-friendly routes in the valley, including hikes to Bridalveil Falls, Vernal Falls and Nevada Falls (if you didn't see them the day before). You can either walk or bike to the trailheads, or hop on one of the free, park-operated buses that run through the valley. If you choose to bike, we'll provide you with locks and chains, as well as maps and directions to help you get to your destination. (Please note that due to park restrictions, we're unable to provide van support for bike rides in the park.) Riding around the valley is a lovely way to experience the park: hop off to watch a deer grazing in a meadow, dip your feet in the river or visit Happy Isles Nature Center, a great place to find educational children's books.

Your family may also decide to explore the park on a horseback ride to Mirror Lake, or, for a relaxing alternative, consider an in-room massage. If you have some extra time, visit the Ansel Adams Gallery or learn more about the area's history and culture at the visitor center or the Indian Cultural Museum.

(Please note that horseback riding, massage services, and museum fees are not included in the trip price.)

For lunch on your own, choose from several nearby restaurants.

This evening we learn about the Ahwahnee's history on a private tour of the hotel, then leaders take the kids out for pizza while adults dine at nearby Yosemite Lodge.

Lodging: Ahwahnee Hotel

DAY FIVE

Shuttle to Tuolumne Meadows 3 Hours Round-Trip

Rock-Climbing Class (For Kids) 5 Hours

Lembert Dome Loop (For Adults) 6 Miles (850-foot elevation gain)

Shorter Option: Tuolumne Forks Loop 3.3 Miles

After breakfast, we shuttle to Tuolumne Meadows, the largest subalpine meadow in the Sierra Nevada. Sitting at 8,600 feet, the meadow was created by a glacier more than 2,000 feet thick and 2½ miles long!

Today's adult hiking route is incredible and highlights a variety of scenery. We begin by crossing two forks of the Tuolumne River, whose rushing water winds through the meadow, past granite domes, alpine lakes and deep canyons, and into the Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. The trail continues through forest to the base of Lembert Dome, a huge mound of polished granite rising 800 feet above Tuolumne Meadows. It's pretty to look at, but for the best vantage point, you'll want to climb it. It's a short steep ascent on the dome's spine; endless views at the top are worth the effort. Continue on to Dog Lake, framed by distant Mount Gibbs and Mount Lewis. Meanwhile, children 6 and older have the chance to attend a kid-friendly rock-climbing class in Tuolumne Meadows. Under the guidance of well-trained instructors and a Backroads leader, they learn the basics of scaling a granite rock face (safely roped in, of course!).

Our last night's celebration takes place in the Ahwahnee Hotel's legendary dining room, so make sure you bring your appetite! With its 34-foot-high ceilings supported by sturdy pine trestles and granite pillars, this room witnesses some of the country's most noteworthy culinary events, including the world-famous Bracebridge

Dinner, an annual affair that re-creates a 17th-century English Christmas celebration. The dining room's floor-to-ceiling windows, chandeliers, handcrafted iron candelabras, crisp linen tablecloths and exquisite china create the perfect setting for our farewell dinner.

Lodging: Ahwahnee Hotel

DAY SIX

El Capitan Meadows Hike 2.8 Miles

Shuttle to San Francisco 4.5 Hours

This morning we start our hike from Camp 4, a world-famous gathering place for rock climbers. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it's a great place to watch climbers prepare, share ideas and swap stories. Our route takes us to a meadow in the shadow of El Capitan, a 3,000-foot sheer rock face and longtime destination for serious climbers. If you look closely, you'll see them scaling the legendary —Nose□ route—they look miniscule compared to El Capitan's mammoth size. Then we head out of Yosemite, stopping for a farewell picnic lunch on the way back to San Francisco, where our trip ends.

ARRIVING AND DEPARTING

Please note that meeting and departing times provided here were current at the time of printing, but are subject to change. **PLEASE DO NOT BOOK YOUR FLIGHTS UNTIL YOU ARE CONFIRMED ON YOUR VACATION AND HAVE VERIFIED THE DETAILS OF ARRIVING AND DEPARTING WITH YOUR TRIP CONSULTANT.**

TRIPS FOR ALL ABILITIES

On this Family Trip, our routes follow gentle terrain with little significant gain or loss in elevation. Liberal van shuttling is incorporated into the itinerary to facilitate our activities and mileage is kept moderate to enable you to spend more time exploring on your own. **Longer options are available for stronger riders and hikers.**

ACCOMMODATIONS



Tenaya Lodge

Fish Camp (2 nights)

A relaxing mountain resort and spa near Yosemite's South Gate, which offers panoramic forest views.



Ahwahnee Hotel

Yosemite Village (3 nights)

Designated a National Historic Landmark - and as much an icon of Yosemite as Half Dome - the Ahwahnee is a luxurious and stunning hotel on a grand scale, with elaborate stained-glass windows, etched stone floors, original Miwok Indian arts and crafts, carved wood paneling, Oriental rugs and Shaker-style furnishings.

RECOMMENDED CHILDREN'S AGES

Recommended minimum age for the trip: 3 years

Minimum age restrictions:

Canyoneering: 6 years

Ride own bike: 7 years

Horseback riding: 7 years

This trip is designed to appeal to a wide variety of interests and fitness levels. We know your pace may vary from one day to the next-and your traveling companion's may differ somewhat from yours. So we present a range of mileage options, and each day you decide exactly what and how much you want to do.

We strongly encourage families to join our Family Trips, designed with kid- and adult-friendly features. Please note that we have a minimum age requirement of 1 year for all Inn trips and 2 years for all Camping trips. Other than that, we do not *restrict* trips to a minimum age except in the rare case of a hotel age restriction.

We do, however, *recommend* minimum ages based on the following criteria:

- 12+ cultural appreciation, difficulty of activities and route
- 9+ difficulty of activities and route
- 6+ several long adult dinners; parent may not be able to pull a Burley and/or there may be multiple activity restrictions
- 3+ riding is on bike paths, making it great for young kids; Burley and Piccolos are available; there are few or no activity restrictions; and no long dinners (or we offer alternatives)

PACKAGE DATE AND PRICING

Multiple Travel Dates for 2009:

July 1- 6 July 19 - 24 August 2 - 7 August 9 – 14 August 16 – 21 August 23- 28

Adult Vacation Price

\$3198 pp

Based on double occupancy

Single Supplement

\$1040 pp

Deposit Required: \$750 per person

Reserve early for the best available price. Prices may change during the course of the year--if they do change, the best prices are available earlier. Once you book your trip, your price is guaranteed.

On all **Family Camping trips**, and on **Family Inn trips** where children are sharing a room with two adults, youths receive the following tiered discounts:

- 75% off for children 2 and under
- 40% off for ages 3-6
- 20% off for ages 7-10
- 10% off for ages 11-16

On Inn Trips when a child shares a room with one adult or two children share a room, a 10% discount applies to children 16 and younger. The third and fourth youths in a room with an adult will receive the tiered discounts described above. When one youth is in a separate room a 10% discount is applied to the trip price, but the full single supplement applies.

On Camping Trips we provide spacious four-person tents with prices based on double occupancy per tent. If a family requests an additional tent, there will be a single supplement applied, but children will still receive a discount based on their age.

On **non-Family Trips**, children 16 and younger receive 10% off on Camping Trips and on Inn Trips when sharing a tent/room with two adults. All minors (under 18 years) must be accompanied by at least one adult. When one youth is in a single room the full single supplement will apply.

TRIP CONCLUSION

Our trip ends with a 4½-hour shuttle from Yosemite back to San Francisco, arriving at the Hotel Monaco at about 6 p.m. If you're flying out of San Francisco International Airport on the last day of our trip, please schedule your return flight for after 9 p.m.

PRE AND POST TRAVEL

We do recommend for travelers to arrive a day early, and we will be happy to arrange your pre hotel stay. For those who wish to stay an additional night at the end of the trip, we can easily suggest or arrange a post hotel stay as well.

CANCELLATION POLICY

Cancellation fees may vary based upon departure date. Please review the grid below:

Number of Days Prior to Trip Start	Cancellation Fees per person)	Departure Dates
96+ days	\$200	2009 07/01, 08/09, 08/02, 08/23, 08/16, 07/19
61-95 days	30%	
31-60 days	60%	
0-30 days	100%	

Cancellation penalties imposed on LUX World Travel by its suppliers are stringent, and are per person for land arrangements. Airline tickets are different, and hold a completely separate penalty and we will advise you at the time of your cancellation of this additional penalty if you purchased your airfare with our Air Desk.

LUX World Travel reserves the right to cancel this retreat to lack of participation to create a minimum number of passengers, or for any other foreseen reason that may create hazards or jeopardy to our clients. In the case that LUX World Travel needs to cancel or post-pone any tour, all monies collected will be returned in full for the land portion. Penalties from the airlines may occur depending on the type of air purchased, for which LUX World Travel is not responsible. We do highly recommend **Cancel for Any Reason Insurance** for at least the flight portion of your journey to insure our clients with full flight protection coverage.

RELEASE OF LIABILITY

Guests are required to provide a signed "Release of Liability, Assumption of All Risks, and Arbitration Agreement" form and a completed Personal Information Form prior to trip departure; you will receive these materials shortly after reserving your trip. We are unable to allow guests to participate in any aspect of this trip without a signed release form.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend travel insurance for this journey. We will be happy to provide you with a variety of quotes to fit your specific travel needs. **1.866.269.2659**.

TO REGISTER FOR THIS VACATION

To register for this tour, please call us directly at **1-866-269-2659** or email us at info@luxworldtravel.com for a Registration Form and a Credit Card Payment Form.

YOUR RIPPLE EFFECT

LUX World Travel will donate \$31 per adult traveler and \$15 per child traveler in your name Special Olympics.

Special Olympics is a global nonprofit organization serving the nearly 200 million people with intellectual disabilities, with a presence in nearly 200 countries worldwide. With seven regional offices, they are constantly expanding to add new Programs in every part of the world – which is why we can say with all truth that “the sun never sets on the Special Olympics movement.” For more information or to make a donation on your own go to: www.specialolympics.org

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