



Majestic Yosemite

President's Day Weekend 2017
Friday, February 17 – Monday, February 20



Yosemite is one of the most popular National Parks in the country and we in southern California are very fortunate to have it so close. If you have never seen it then this Great Outdoors trip is a good opportunity for you to be introduced to this special place. If you have been there once or more, then you'll understand why Great Outdoors has made a Yosemite visit an annual event. The grandeur and majesty of the park are so enriching that Yosemite can be experienced and enjoyed again and again. The sublime beauty of the park has inspired many for the last 150 years, but perhaps none more effusive than John Muir, who said of Yosemite, "It is by far the grandest of all the special temples of Nature I was ever permitted to enter." Please join us in this temple of the great outdoors.

The locus of this trip will be Yosemite Valley. Our accommodations are tent cabins in Half-Dome Village (formerly Camp Curry), a rustic but charming village near the east end of the valley. Arrival should be after 4:00 pm on Friday afternoon. Once everyone is settled in we will gather for tea in the village dining hall and perhaps decide to have dinner there. Afterwards we might play games by the fireside or just relax in our cabins.





On Saturday morning the group activity will be a hike to the top of Vernal Falls, following the Mist Trail (weather conditions permitting) and returning along the beginning section of the famous John Muir Trail. The difficulty of this hike is characterized as moderate to strenuous, includes about a 1200 foot elevation gain, is 6-6.5 miles, and will probably take 3.5-4 hours. If we're ambitious (and in condition) after reaching the top of Vernal Falls we could continue on to Nevada Falls, adding about 2 miles and another 700 feet in elevation gain. If this hike sounds like too much of a challenge there are many other hikes and/or activities to choose from, such as walking the "loop" trail around the whole valley, a flat hike around the beautiful Mirror Lake, a ranger led nature walk, ice skating in Half-Dome Village, skiing and/or hiking at Badger Pass.

Sunday will be on your own to explore, recreate, or just rest as you wish. Available activities would be brunch at the historic Majestic Yosemite Hotel (formerly the Ahwahnee Hotel), visiting the Yosemite Visitors Center, seeing the Ansel Adams Gallery, any of the walks or hikes mentioned above, or simply relaxing and enjoying the ambience of this tranquil place.

Even though we'll be there in the middle of February we might not have winter conditions. Last year there was very little snow on the valley floor and the daytime temperatures were in the mid- to high 50s. The trip leader will inform you of the weather conditions a couple days before our arrival but you may also want to keep abreast of them by using the Yosemite National Park website. <http://www.nps.gov/yose/index.htm>

Driving & Directions:

When driving to Yosemite in winter it is recommended to take CA Hwy 140 through Mariposa. It's the lowest- elevation route and therefore the least likely to be affected by snow and ice. Check highway conditions outside the park at the Caltrans website or call (800) 427-7623. Since weather conditions can change quickly, it is also recommended to check the current conditions inside Yosemite, check online or call (209) 372-0200.

Tire chains are required when you go to Yosemite in winter, and be prepared to use them, even if you have four-wheel drive. They may become mandatory at any time. You may be able to find chains for rent in Mariposa, but it's better not to count on it.



What else?

Cooking facilities/campfire rings are not available in Half-Dome Village. However, there are several dining options near our cabins. You may bring snack food and drinks, but all food and scented items must be stored in the bear-proof storage locker in front of the cabin. This includes all food, food related items, toiletries, sundries and ice chests. Bears have a strong sense of smell and are attracted to anything they think will lead them to human food. Remember, not to store these items in your vehicle or tent cabin. It is recommended to use sealed plastic containers for storing your food inside the bear boxes. This makes it easier to keep your food organized, and away from campground critters.

Be sure to remember a flashlight or headlamp to find your way around Camp Curry at night. In addition, a sleeping bag or an extra blanket may help keep you warm at night. Other things to bring:

- Warm outer gear appropriate for snow and/or rain
- Layered under gear (long underwear, etc.)
- Hat, gloves, scarf, etc.
- Sunglasses, sun block (for your face), lip balm
- Well-worn sturdy, hiking shoes (not new)

Weather: Average daytime temperatures in February in the Yosemite Valley range from the 30s to the 50s. It will be colder at Badger Pass (7,200 ft.), which is about 3,000 feet higher than the valley. Conditions may vary between sun, clouds, rain, or snow. Be prepared for anything.

Price: \$172 for [Great Outdoors](#) members, or \$197 for non-members. Registration in online only at this site:

www.regonline.com/GOYosemiteWinter2017

Cancellation policy: full refund (minus a service fee of \$12.00) given at least eight (8) days prior to the departure (by Feb. 9); no refunds after that.

For more information, contact:

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