

Yosemite Sierra Hiker

An Inn-to-Inn Hiking Adventure

Explore three of the Nation's finest national wonders, Yosemite, King's Canyon, and Sequoia National Parks, located along the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada. Encompassing 14,000-foot peaks, alpine lakes, and stands of giant sequoia trees, these parks provide a stunning landscape where mountains extend into a seemingly endless sky.

This trip has been created with plenty of flexibility to accommodate a wide range of individual interests and abilities. We have chosen non-technical day hikes for the reasonably athletic, and that best reflect the variety and scenic beauty that make up these extraordinary parklands. So join us for a week of active days and luxurious nights that is sure to quench your appetite for adventure and relaxation.

Day 1. Hike Redwood Mountain Grove loop in Kings Canyon National Park, Wuksachi Lodge (559-253-5678 / private bath)

The group assembles at 9:00 a.m. in Fresno. After a shuttle to Kings Canyon National Park, we will break in our hiking boots exploring the majesty and solitude of Redwood Mountain Grove. We are treated with superb views into the depths of Redwood Canyon and the spectacular alpine peaks of the Great Western Divide.

Tonight we enjoy the backcountry ambiance of the Wuksachi Lodge, in the heart of adjacent Sequoia National Park.

- Redwood Mountain Grove loop hike [up to 6.25 miles; 650 feet of elevation gain/loss]

Day 2. Hike to Giant Forest and Moro Rock in Sequoia National Park, Wuksachi Lodge

For a real taste of solitude, we will hike deep into the backcountry of Sequoia National Park. From Giant Forest we meander through one of the most majestic stands of Sequoias in the world. The General Sherman Tree, the world's largest living thing, towers above our path. Witness beautiful Crescent Meadow where brilliant wildflowers adorn its lush grounds. John Muir is said to have called this lovely, grassy open area the "gem of the Sierra." Next we connect with the High Sierra Trail, with incredible and breathtaking views that make this a favorite of the Sierra's backcountry enthusiasts.

After an exhilarating climb up Moro Rock, complete with steps and railings in places, we spend the remainder of the afternoon and another evening at Wuksachi Lodge. Here you're free to just relax or explore the wonderful forest of white fir, incense cedar, sugar pine, and of course, giant sequoias.

- Hike from Giant Forest to High Sierra Trail and to Moro Rock [up to 6 miles, 500 feet of elevation gain/loss]
- Moro Rock Option [600' climb, then descent]

Day 3. Hike to Mist Falls in Kings Canyon National Park, Appletree Inn (559-683-5111 / private bath)

After a hearty breakfast and a scenic shuttle through towering Sequoias and beneath granite walls, we hike through the glaciated canyon of the South Fork of the Kings River. We will pass old-growth forests and cascading rapids, until we reach Mist Falls, with its incredible display of water and mist falling down the canyon's face.

After our hike, we shuttle back through Fresno toward Yosemite National Park. Along Lewis Creek lies our peaceful mountain hideaway for the evening, Sierra Sky Ranch, complete with a bit of history and rustic charm.

- Mist Falls hike [8 miles; 800 feet of elevation gain, then loss, following a 1-3/4 hour shuttle]
- Shuttle to Appletree Inn south of Yosemite [3-1/2 hours]

Day 4. Hike to Taft Point in Yosemite National Park, Yosemite View Lodge (209-379-2681 / private baths)

In 1864, President Lincoln declared Yosemite Valley and Mariposa Grove to be public parks in order to protect this region. By 1890 John Muir's campaign to further protect the region was successful when it was declared a national park. We start today off with a beautiful stroll through McGurk Meadows and the adjoining ponderosa pine-filled forests. This delightful hike leads us to Taft Point, which offers some of the most breathtaking views to be found anywhere in the world. Be sure to bring your camera because you will definitely want to capture today's hike on film.

- McGurk Meadow to Taft Point [up to 8.5 miles, 700 feet of elevation gain]
- Moderate option: Continue to Sentinel Dome

Day 5. Hike Panorama Trail in Yosemite National Park, Yosemite View Lodge

You couldn't ask for a better way to see the majestic splendor that Yosemite has to offer than by hiking the challenging Panorama trail. Cascading waterfalls, granite monoliths and breathtaking views to the valley floor abound on this little-known trail. With magnificent, yet different views around every

corner, your eyes will be overwhelmed by all the visual stimuli!

- Panorama Trail [10 miles, 2700 feet elevation change]
- Moderate Option [Yosemite Falls Trail]
- Easy Option [Mirror Lake Trail 4.5 miles]

Day 6. Free Day, Yosemite Valley in Yosemite National Park, Fresno

We will travel into Yosemite Valley on one of California's most beautiful and scenic byways. We have a number of options today--hike the many trails that dot the valley floor, horseback ride to Mirror Lake, stand dwarfed below the majestic valley walls, or shop at the valley's numerous gift shops. Our trip concludes at approximately 5:30 p.m. in Fresno.

- Hiking [distances up to the individual]
- Shuttle to Fresno [2-3 hours]

Trip Details

Trip Type: Inn

Trip Length: 6 days/5 nights

2004 Departure Dates: June 6-11, August 29-September 3 (singles), September 12-17

Cost: \$1995

Single Supplement: \$475

Trip Rating: Moderately Easy with Moderate options

Activities: hike (4 1/2 days), free time (1 day)

Gateway City: Fresno, CA

Gateway City Transfer: For guests of the Picadilly Inn Airport or the Chateau Inn (next door), a free shuttle is available to and from the airport. Call 800-HOTEL-CA / 559-251-6000 for the Picadilly Inn or 800-445-2428/ 559-456-1418 for the Chateau Inn. Public transportation is available between Fresno Yosemite International Airport and various hotels in Fresno by calling Casey's Yellow Cab 559-268-2222. Reservations are recommended. Rates vary: approximately \$5 for airport hotels including Picadilly & Chateau Inn; approximately \$13 for downtown Fresno.

Meeting Time & Place: 9:00 a.m. at the Picadilly Inn Airport, 5115 E. McKinley Avenue, Fresno, CA, 800-HOTEL-CA/ 559-251-6000. Please plan to arrive at the inn at the designated meeting time, and not earlier, for the convenience of the innkeeper. We recommend that you have a big breakfast before you arrive, and come prepared to hike following a short orientation and a shuttle. We suggest that you wear comfortable hiking boots with ankle support and wool socks coupled with a thin liner sock.

Trip Conclusion: 5:30 p.m., Picadilly Inn Airport, Fresno, CA. Shuttle services should be scheduled no earlier than 6:30 p.m. and airline departures should be scheduled no earlier than 8:00 p.m.

Trip Fees Include: All meals (lunch Day 1-lunch Day 6), all accommodations (double occupancy), all national park fees, T-shirt, water bottle, support vehicle, and professional guides.

Trip Fees Exclude: Airfare, personal insurance, hotel miscellaneous expenses (phone, fax, laundry, etc.), additional optional tours, services not specified in the tour itinerary, and guide gratuities (as deemed appropriate).

Trip Notes: Exploring this region can involve daily shuttles of up to several hours.

The Next Step...

References Don't take our word for it that the Hidden Trails trips are the finest in the adventure travel industry. Ask our past guests. *Call about any of our trips and we'll be happy to refer you to someone who's been there with us.*

The Best Value in Active Travel Guarantee: *We commit to you that all of our trips are of the highest quality at the best value.* If you find a trip of equal quality that matches our itinerary and inclusions at a lower fare within 30 days of booking your trip with us, we will gladly refund the difference. A simple guarantee that assures you of the best trip at the best fare!

Special Requests: If you have any special dietary needs or any special request that will make your trip more enjoyable, please be sure to notify your Trip Consultant or travel agent upon booking.

Then Leave the Rest to Us... Before you go, we provide you with extensive pre-departure information, including your reservation payment receipt and confirmation, travel insurance application, suggestions for preparing for your trip, a packing list, information on pre- and post-trip arrangements, a guest questionnaire and a liability release agreement.

Travel Protection: To make your trip even more carefree, we strongly recommend the purchase of our travel insurance plan. Offering comprehensive coverage and peace of mind, our travel insurance plan is designed to protect you in case of

lost or damaged luggage, a sudden illness or death in the family, emergency medical expenses and transportation costs, and flight delays. We'd be happy to arrange travel insurance coverage for you, so contact us with any questions.

How do I book airfare for this trip? Call your travel agent or Amanda Bernier at Travel-Ease Boulder to arrange and book your airline tickets and your pre- and post-trip arrangements. She can be reached between 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. MST at (888) 524-4182 or via email at amanda@traveleaseboulder.com.

General Information, Questions & Answers

What type of weather can I expect? You can expect daytime temperatures to be in the 70°s, with evening temperatures being up to 30° F cooler. As in other mountainous regions, weather conditions in the Sierras are extremely variable... Be prepared for anything!

How will the change in altitude affect me? This is a difficult question to answer as altitude physiologically affects different people in different ways. The Sierra Mountains range from 5,000 feet to over 14,000 feet elevation, and have an extremely dry climate. Thus, to prevent altitude sickness we recommend that you always remain well hydrated, gradually expose yourself to higher elevations, exercise moderately until altitude acclimatized, eat a diet consisting of at least 70% carbohydrates beginning 1 to 2 days prior to ascent, and get plenty of rest. Furthermore, we suggest that you arrive at our gateway city *at least* 1 to 2 days prior to the first day of your trip.

How difficult is this trip? ... Really. This terrain on this trip is hillier and more challenging than our Easy tours. It is intended for the average active adult who feels comfortable exercising 4-6 hours a day. The hikes are 4-8 miles, with additional miles optional, and include climbs of up to 1200 feet with options of up to 1500 feet.

Driving to the Meeting Place: Fresno is northwest of Los Angeles approximately 3 1/2 hours by car. It is located on Highway 99, which is best approached on I-5 from the north or south. To get to the Picadilly Inn from Rt. 99, take the exit for Rt. 41, then take a left on Chestnut and a right on McKinley. The Picadilly Inn and Chateau Inn are both located a couple blocks on the left side of the street. Rental cars may be left in the hotel parking lot for the week you are on your TWO tour. Please notify the front desk if you are going to do so.

Car Rentals: Avis 800-331-1212; Hertz 800-654-3131; National 800-227-7368

Pre & Post Trip Accommodations: We recommend the following hotels if you arrive early or stay after your trip.

- Picadilly Inn Airport 5115 E. McKinley Avenue 800-HOTEL-CA/ 559-251-6000 [rate: \$81]
- Chateau Inn (Near Airport) 5113 East McKinley Avenue 800-445-2428 / 559-456-1418 [rate: \$69-\$106]
- Doubletree Inn 1055 Van Ness Avenue 559-485-9000 [rate: \$79]
- Centre Plaza Holiday Inn 2233 Ventura 559-268-1000 [rate: \$99]

We're Always Improving! While the information presented here details this trip's planned activities, routes, accommodations, departure and conclusion times, we are consistently seeking new opportunities to enhance this itinerary and your experience. Our actual activities and sites may vary due to season, special events, or weather. As a result, we reserve the right to alter the itinerary since unforeseen circumstances that mandate change may arise. Naturally, we will keep you up-to-date on any changes that may affect your arrival or departure times.