

Backpacking in Yosemite - the Alpine Lakes



Highlights

Spend four days backpacking in Yosemite! in the wilderness of Yosemite National Park! Hike from your base camp to beautiful lakes and awe-inspiring peaks and spend the nights staring at the stars from your campfire.

The Yosemite mountains, part of the 400 miles long mountain range of Sierra Nevada, is one of the most beautiful places in the world, with elevation from 2-13,000 feet and steep granite cliffs. The area around the Yosemite high country and Ansel Adam's wilderness forms the northern end of the High Sierra, home to beautiful alpine lakes covering the landscape amongst the peaks. Hiking up to the heights of the boundary peaks of the Yosemite National Park, rewards you with unbeatable views of its most famous sights – it is not listed as a UNESCO World Heritage site and visited by 3,5 million people a year for nothing!

This trip traverses the borderline between the two wilderness areas of Ansel Adams and Yosemite National Park. With a mixture of on-and off-trail hiking, you will have the surroundings to yourself as you make your way to a remote base camp, from where day trips to alpine lakes and high peaks will be made. The trip is customized to your abilities and wishes, providing you with options of where to go each day and thereby a chance to pick your own highlights, whether they be alpine lakes or the Yosemite national park, or just the wilderness itself.

Is it for me?

Before embarking on a trip like this, you should be confident that you are fit and motivated to complete the hike to base camp with a backpack, as well as enjoying the day trips that will have some elevation gain. The trip is graded as "beginner/intermediary", and with some training and hiking experience this should be within the reach of most people in normal physical condition.

This trip is suitable for both single and group travellers, but you need to be comfortable with sharing a hotel room with members of the group - singles do not need to share tents though. Group sizes vary from 3 to 12 participants, with 1 or 2 guides.

Accommodation

You will spend the first night in a shared hotel room in the Pines Resort by Bass Lake, a picturesque area with surrounding woodland. The hotel offers both a swimming pool and lakeside view, and you can also dip your feet in the actual lake, if you wish. The following three nights are spent in a base camp location that you will hike to on the second day, and from where you will make your day excursions.

Dinner on day one and breakfast on day two is your own responsibility, but there are plenty of restaurants and bakeries by Bass Lake to cater for your needs. In the wilderness, all food is provided, and the guides put pride in making this much more memorable than your average camping meal!

Itinerary

Day 1: Check in anytime after 4pm at the Pines Resort by Bass Lake. There are several restaurants in this tiny village, where you can have dinner on your own. At 6pm, you will meet your guides in the lobby of your

Prices from

455 GBP (5 days) per person

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accommodation and go over the trip details together.

Day 2: After breakfast on your own, you will drive to the trailhead, from where you will find the group and hike about six miles to base camp, for a relaxing afternoon of swimming, fishing, eating and stargazing or sitting around the campfire.

Day 3 and 4: Both days will be spent on day trips from the camp to alpine lakes in the area, of which there are several scenic ones. This will be tailored to the wishes and abilities of the group, and the option to climb the Yosemite boundary peaks for a view of the National Park and Yosemite Valley will also be available.

Day 5: After an early breakfast, you head back down to Bass Lake, where arrival is early in the afternoon. Here, a swim in the lake or a dip in the hot tub is a good end to the trip before heading home.

Details

Getting there

Fly to San Jose, San Francisco, Fresno or Los Angeles, and drive from there (hiring a car is recommended).

Price includes

Meals, camping gear (if requested), shared accommodation, permits and guides.

Comfort level

Down to earth (hostels, camping, huts)

Experience required

Some previous experience is needed

Travellers should bring

This kit list is by no means an exhaustive list. All group cooking gear, stoves, water filters, maps, matches, compasses, emergency/first aid gear, and toilet paper will be provided.

Recommended kit list

Backpack (65 litres); sleeping bag (15/20 degrees F) (can be provided); sleeping mat (can be provided); 3 season tent (can be provided); day rucksack (15-20 litres); trail hiking boots; 2-3 pairs of socks, (wool/synthetic: Smartwool or Thorlo); 2/3 pairs of underwear; long underwear trousers (light/mid-weight wool/synthetic: Icebreaker and Patagonia); long underwear top; hiking trousers/shorts; 1/2 hiking shorts; insulating layer; insulating jacket; heavy fleece; waterproof trousers; warm hat.

Sun protection: sun hat, sunglasses, sun screen, etc; personal toiletries: toothbrush, toothpaste, sunscreen, lip balm, insect repellent (all soap must be biodegradable); personal medication; headlamp (rather than a hand-held torch); water bottle or bladder (2/3 litres); whistle; a medium size bag or large stuff sack to put your clothes in (examples: Columbia Freeboard, Regular; Granite Gear Large); rubbish bag (if your stuff sack if it is not waterproof).

Additional items you might want to bring

Trekking poles (highly recommended to reduce fatigue and add stability: Leki Thermolite); book; knife; camp towel; small towel (MSR Pack Towel); lightweight gloves for early or late season trips; swimming costume; camp shoes (Crocs, Teva/Chaco sandals, flip flops); fishing gear (including licence: kids under 16 fish free); camera: For posterity.