



TRAILS THROUGH YELLOWSTONE

Package Itinerary & Details

Summer 2019

The **Trails through Yellowstone** Lodging & Learning package is designed for those who want to enjoy a more active vacation adventure in Yellowstone National Park. The package is offered by Yellowstone National Park Lodges, covering lodging arrangements and meals, with Yellowstone Forever providing educational programming. On this program you'll spend less time in the bus and along the roads, and more time exploring Yellowstone's wild backcountry. You'll hike along some of the most scenic trails the park has to offer, exploring features and unique backcountry habitat far from crowds and noise, led by an expert naturalist guide throughout.

Each day you will venture out with a Yellowstone Forever naturalist guide to explore a particular region of the park. Daily outings begin early to beat the crowds and increase odds of seeing exciting wildlife that are most active at dawn. After exploring the park, you'll have opportunities to return to your lodging early every evening, so you can relax on your own.

We intentionally do not list specific hikes in advance for this package. We allow our naturalist guides the flexibility to use their extensive knowledge to cater the hikes to your interests, the weather, and seasonal trail conditions.

Lodging is based at Yellowstone National Park Lodges' locations in Mammoth Hot Springs and Grant Village.

Program Highlights

- Getting away from crowds and finding secluded spaces to experience the wonders of Yellowstone
- Wildlife watching in Lamar Valley followed by select hikes in Yellowstone's northern range
- A chance to see backcountry thermal features along the trail as well as along boardwalks
- The day spent hiking and sightseeing along the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone
- An afternoon spent hiking and sightseeing along the shores of Yellowstone Lake
- Opportunities to participate in citizen science activities to help protect park resources
- Dinner with your Yellowstone Forever naturalist guide at the historic Old Faithful Inn
- Exciting facilitated discussions about Yellowstone's geology, ecology, natural history, current research, and management issues

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Why Choose a Lodging & Learning Package?

Our Lodging & Learning packages are offered by Yellowstone National Park Lodges (third-party), covering lodging arrangements and meals, while Yellowstone Forever provides in-depth educational tours and programming led by Institute naturalist guides. Here's how this package stands out:

- ***Yellowstone Forever is Yellowstone National Park's official nonprofit education and fundraising partner.*** Our mission is to partner with Yellowstone National Park to create opportunities for all people to experience, enhance, and preserve Yellowstone forever. Yellowstone Forever funds priority projects that preserve and enhance Yellowstone National Park for future generations. To learn more about Yellowstone Forever, [visit our website](#).
- ***Our naturalist guides are world class.*** The Yellowstone Forever Institute has been providing in-depth educational programs in Yellowstone for over 40 years. Our naturalist guides are among the best expert field educators in Yellowstone. They're professionals with academic credentials who are dedicating their careers to this vital work. They live in the Yellowstone ecosystem, they work alongside park researchers, and thus can provide accurate and exciting "behind the scenes" perspectives on the park's history, management, geology, flora, and fauna. They know where to go and when, and they'll handle all of the details to make your experience is as enjoyable as possible.

The same naturalist guide will lead this program from the evening orientation on the first day to the final farewells on the last day. They'll go out of their way to get to know you throughout the program, and make sure your needs are met. They'll build upon what you've learned each day, so you can better understand the fascinating story behind everything you see and experience.

- ***Small group size.*** This program has a max capacity of 13 participants. You'll enjoy camaraderie with fellow participants and receive a lot more attention in this small group package. It allows your naturalist guide to take an inquiry-based approach to learning, tailoring the experience to your specific interests.
- ***We provide the essential equipment.*** Your naturalist guide will provide high-quality spotting scopes and binoculars to bring distant wildlife into crisp, clear view, and even adaptors so you can take pictures through these scopes on your smart phone! Our guides are Wilderness First Aid or Wilderness First Responder certified. They carry a first aid kit and handheld radio during all hikes, and provide bear spray if hiking in bear country. They will incorporate teaching aids such as skulls, tracks, pelts, books, i-pads with videos, and test equipment such as temperature guns for thermal features.
- ***In-park lodging.*** All lodging in this package is located in the park. This minimizes drive time during daily outings with Yellowstone Forever, and allows more time to enjoy the park's features at a relaxing pace.

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What's Included?

- 3 nights lodging in a Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel Frontier Cabin (lodging upgrades may be available)
- 2 nights lodging at a Grant Village Premium Room
- 5 breakfasts (three hot dining room breakfasts and two box breakfasts to go)
- 4 deli lunches to go
- Dinner with your naturalist guide at the Old Faithful Inn Dining Room
- Hot beverages (coffee, tea and hot cocoa) and box breakfast in the field
- All gratuities for foodservice
- All in-park transportation in a 14-passenger minibus
- A Yellowstone Forever naturalist guide throughout the program
- A custom 32 oz. Nalgene Tritan wide mouth bottle (gift item)
- Scopes, binoculars, bear spray, and other field equipment as needed
- An orientation on the evening of the first day to assure you will have an enjoyable and comfortable experience throughout the program.

Gratuities for your Yellowstone Forever naturalist guide are not included, but are recommended and greatly appreciated.

How fit do you need to be?

This program is rated *Level 4* on Yellowstone Forever's Activity Level Scale. You should be prepared to hike up to 8 miles per day comfortably with climbs up to 1,500 feet on dirt trails. Loose rocks, uneven footing, and off-trail hiking are possible. Good coordination is recommended. Hiking is a rigorous activity, demanding on leg and back muscles, and aerobic in nature. Most hikes will take place at elevations between 6000 to 7500 feet. Participants residing at lower elevations may want to arrive a day early to adjust to the altitude. To learn more about how specific medical conditions can be affected by Yellowstone's environment and our activities, please visit [our site page](#) on health information.

All field activities will be conducted as a group. If you cannot participate in the day's activities, please let your naturalist guide know in advance.

To participate in this program, each participant must fill out and sign our health questionnaire and assumption of risk waiver. Registrants receive a link to this form in their confirmation letter which is sent via e-mail. These forms must be completed and returned at least 30 days prior to your program start date.

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Program Itinerary

The itinerary is designed to take advantage of the best opportunities in the park, but may be adjusted to adapt to weather conditions, wildlife activity, holidays, and road construction.

Day 1

Welcome and Orientation

After checking in and enjoying dinner, you'll meet your naturalist guide for an orientation. They'll go over the program itinerary, discuss clothing and equipment needed for daily outings, and answer any questions you may have about the adventure that lies ahead.

- 4:30 p.m. Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel check in begins
Ask the front desk staff for directions to the orientation room
- 5 p.m. Orientation in Mammoth Hot Springs
Dinner on your own
Overnight at Mammoth Hot Springs

Day 2

Wildlife Watching and Hiking along Yellowstone's Northern Range

Today we will leave early and travel along Yellowstone's northern range to Lamar Valley in search of "charismatic megafauna." Stops will vary based on where the most likely wildlife sightings are to be found. Prepare to learn a lot of really amazing things about Yellowstone's wildlife! In the afternoon your naturalist guide will lead you on a select hike, where we'll search for animal tracks and sign as we take in the beautiful backcountry scenery.

- 6 a.m. Depart Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel
Hot beverages (coffee, tea and hot cocoa) and box breakfast in the field
Early morning wildlife watching
Select hike in the northern range
Deli lunch in the field
- 3 p.m. Return to Mammoth Hot Springs
Dinner on your own
Overnight at Mammoth Hot Springs

Day 3

Southbound to Grant Village with Select Hikes along the Way

Today we'll travel south to your lodging accommodations at Grant Village. Our route will include scenic Dunraven Pass and Hayden Valley. Along the way, your naturalist guide will lead select hikes in the northern range and near Yellowstone Lake to enjoy breathtaking mountain and lakeshore scenery. You will see the effects of the 1988 fires and the recovery of the Yellowstone landscape, and travel into the heart of the volcanic caldera. Along the way, we'll search for more wildlife and watch the scenery change as we travel from the of the park's arid lower elevations into the subalpine forests around Yellowstone Lake.

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- 6:30 a.m. Check out from Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel
Depart Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel
Hot beverages and box breakfast in the field
Select hike in the northern range
Deli lunch in the field
Select hike near Yellowstone Lake
- 6 p.m. Check in at Grant Village
Dinner on your own
Overnight at Grant Village

Day 4

Hiking Amongst Geysers and Hot Springs in the Old Faithful Area

Today we'll explore the fascinating geyser basins in the Old Faithful while hiking front country and backcountry trails. Experience playful geysers and colorful hot springs as you conduct tests on the temperature and pH of the water with our equipment. Get a feel for how the early explorers experienced Yellowstone, away from roads and crowds where you might catch a glimpse of a rushing waterfall or a bubbling hot spring next to the trail. Watch Old Faithful's stunning display of natural power and discover why it's been so faithful for all these years! After a day of exciting hikes you'll enjoy an elegant dinner with your naturalist guide at the historic Old Faithful Inn.

- 7:30 a.m. Breakfast at Grant Dining Room or Lake House Restaurant
Depart Grant Village
Select hikes in the Old Faithful Area
Deli lunch in the field
- 5 p.m. Dinner with naturalist guide at the Old Faithful Inn
Return to Grant Village
Overnight at Grant Village

Day 5

Hayden Valley Wildlife Watching and Hikes along the Grand Canyon

On this final day, after checking out of Grant Village, we'll travel north through Hayden Valley in search of wildlife. We'll then enjoy hiking and sightseeing along the rims of the iconic Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. Your naturalist guide will lead you to locations where you can enjoy breathtaking views of this colorful canyon and its magnificent waterfalls while revealing the geology behind the spectacle. Hikes in this part of the park contain some of the most spectacular terrain in Yellowstone—a fitting end to our program! While it is difficult to top the incredible scenery of the canyon, backcountry lakes, possible wildlife, and subalpine meadows will certainly make an impression. We'll close the day with a reflective discussion of the overall experience before checking into the Mammoth Hotel.

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7:30 a.m. Check out from Grant Village Hotel
Breakfast at Grant Village Dining Room or Lake House Restaurant
Depart Grant Village
Morning wildlife watching in Hayden Valley
Select Hikes in the Grand Canyon Area
Deli lunch in the field

4:30 p.m. Check in at Mammoth Hot Springs
Dinner on your own
Overnight at Mammoth Hot Springs

Day 6 Check Out and Departure

Hot breakfast at Mammoth Hot Springs Dining Room
Check out of Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel

Cancellation and Refund Policy

For Lodging & Learning packages, 60-day notice is required to receive a full refund of your deposit amount. Cancellations made between 30-60 days will result in 50% forfeiture of package cost. Cancellations made within 30 days of arrival result in 100% forfeiture of package cost. **We strongly recommend the purchase of travel insurance to help protect you against financial loss if you must cancel or interrupt your trip due to unforeseen circumstances.** For more information about travel insurance, please ask our representative when booking your reservation

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General Equipment and Clothing List

Much of your time will be spent outdoors, and you should be prepared for a variety of mountain weather conditions and temperatures. Appropriate clothing, equipment, and footwear are very important. Spring, summer, and fall temperatures can range from below freezing in the mornings to 85 degrees Fahrenheit in the afternoons. The layered use of garments for protection against the wind, sun, and temperature extremes should guide your clothing choices.

Equipment:

Your naturalist guide will be carrying a first aid kit, bear spray, and emergency communication device.

- ☐ **Daypack**, with enough capacity to carry extra clothes, water, lunch, camera, binoculars, etc.
- ☐ **Water bottle**. You will receive a 32 oz. Nalgene Tritan wide mouth quart water bottle as a gift during the program orientation. You should always keep a minimum of one quart of water on hand at all times to facilitate proper hydration.
- ☐ **Sunglasses**
- ☐ **Sunscreen/lip protector**. Sun at high altitude can burn unprotected skin quickly.
- ☐ **Camera, binoculars**.

Summer clothing:

- ☐ **Insulating underwear**, capilene, polypropylene, wool, or similar wicking fabric.
- ☐ **Mid-weight insulating layer**, a light synthetic fleece or wool shirt/pullover
- ☐ **Heavyweight insulating layer**, wool, down, or heavy-weight fleece jacket
- ☐ **Waterproof and windproof outer layer**, lightweight and breathable, jackets and pants
- ☐ **Short-sleeve shirt**, cotton is okay in summer, but synthetic wicking shirts are ideal.
- ☐ **Pants**, synthetic hiking pants. Jeans are not recommended.
- ☐ **Hats**, both a brimmed sun hat and an insulating hat for cool weather.
- ☐ **Gloves**, lightweight glove liners and a pair of wool/fleece gloves or mittens.
- ☐ **Socks**, specifically designed for hiking, that wick moisture
- ☐ **Hiking boots** that provide stability and traction. Make sure they are broken in, comfortable, and do not cause hot spots or blisters.
- ☐ **Off-duty shoes**, sandals, athletic shoes, or other leisure footwear.

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Supporter Program

Yellowstone Forever Supporters directly fund priority park programs and projects. Supporters also provide scholarships for teachers and help expand programming for underserved youth. Benefits include a subscription to our magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly*, early registration and discounts for Yellowstone Forever Institute programs, and discounts on Yellowstone Forever Park Store purchases throughout Yellowstone (exclusions apply). If you are not yet a supporter of Yellowstone Forever, an introductory subscription (one year) to our magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly* is included with your tuition. For more information, visit: Yellowstone.org/donate.

Yellowstone Forever Supporters, and additional registrants who are staying in rooms occupied by a Yellowstone Forever Supporter, each receive a \$15 discount on this package. A valid Yellowstone Forever Supporter card must be presented at check-in to receive this discount. This discount cannot be applied retroactively after initial check-in. We encourage all registrants to join online to take advantage of this discount and all of the benefits available to Yellowstone Forever Supporters.

Suggested Reading

No prior reading is required, but you might want something to occupy your flight or car ride. Most publications are available from Yellowstone Forever's online Park Store at www.Shop.Yellowstone.org/ or by calling 406.848.2400. Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15 percent discount and proceeds directly support the park.

- * [*A Field Guide to Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks*](#). Johnson, Kurt F. 2013. Farcountry Press
- *Adventures in Yellowstone*. Miller M. Mark. 2009. TwoDot, Guilford, CT
- * *Decade of the Wolf: Returning the Wild to Yellowstone*. Smith, D.W. and G. Ferguson. 2005. Lyons Press, Guilford, CT
- * *Empire of Shadows: The Epic Story of Yellowstone*. Black, George. 2013. St. Martin's Griffin
- * [*Hawk's Rest: A Season in the Remote Heart of Yellowstone*](#). Ferguson, G. 2003. National Geographic
- * *Lost in the Yellowstone: Truman Everts' "Thirty-Seven Days of Peril."* Whittlesey, L.H. 1995. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City, UT
- * *Mountain Spirit: The Sheep Eater Indians of Yellowstone*. Loendorf, Lawrence L. and Stone, Nancy Medaris. 2006. University of Utah Press
- *Searching for Yellowstone: Ecology and Wonder in the Last Wilderness*. Schullery, P. 1999. First Mariner Books, Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, NY

* Book available at <https://shop.yellowstone.org>, unless out of stock.

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Park Stores

Our Park Stores features more than 900 educational books, maps, and videos to help you plan your visit, along with a wide selection of shirts, hats, and other logo items to remind you of your visit to Yellowstone. Yellowstone Forever Supporters receive a 15 percent discount on merchandise online or at any of our 11 locations in and around Yellowstone. Proceeds directly support Yellowstone. Visit: Shop.Yellowstone.org

Code of Ethics

The Yellowstone Forever Institute is committed to demonstrating a high standard of appropriate and ethical behavior in Yellowstone. As a participant in a Yellowstone Forever Institute program, we ask you to adhere to the following Code of Ethics. In addition to the ethics highlighted below, the Yellowstone Forever Institute abides by all National Park Service rules and regulations. We also practice Leave No Trace guidelines for traveling responsibly in the wilderness.

Observing wildlife: We will do our best to have as little impact on wildlife as possible. Animals will be observed from a distance, using high-powered spotting scopes to help keep our presence from affecting their behavior. Participants should not expect to get close-up photographs of wildlife. The Yellowstone Forever Institute will adhere to National Park Service regulations by keeping a minimum distance of 25 yards from bison, elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose, coyotes and nesting birds and 100 yards from bears and wolves. We will not entice wildlife with food, animal calls or any actions that change their behavior.

Leave what you find: It is illegal to remove natural or cultural artifacts (plants, animals, bones, rocks, etc.) from Yellowstone. Yellowstone Forever Institute instructors have permission from the National Park Service to manipulate plants, rocks, bones, etc. for educational purposes and will return them to their natural positions and locations.

General etiquette: Yellowstone Forever Institute groups will be considerate of other visitors and respect the quality of their experience. Voices and vehicle sounds carry great distances and affect both wildlife and people—remaining silent or very quiet while watching wildlife lets the sounds of Yellowstone (including wolf howls) prevail.

Roads and vehicles: Expect wildlife on the road, and drive at or below the posted park speed limits. When stopping to observe wildlife or other park features, the Yellowstone Forever Institute will move vehicles entirely off the road. If there is no safe pullout available, we will drive to the next safe place and walk back to observe the wildlife. We will not stop in the middle of the road, and should a traffic jam develop as a result of our activities, we will cease the activity.

Properly dispose of waste: We will pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter. Your instructor will discuss techniques for properly disposing of human waste in the field.

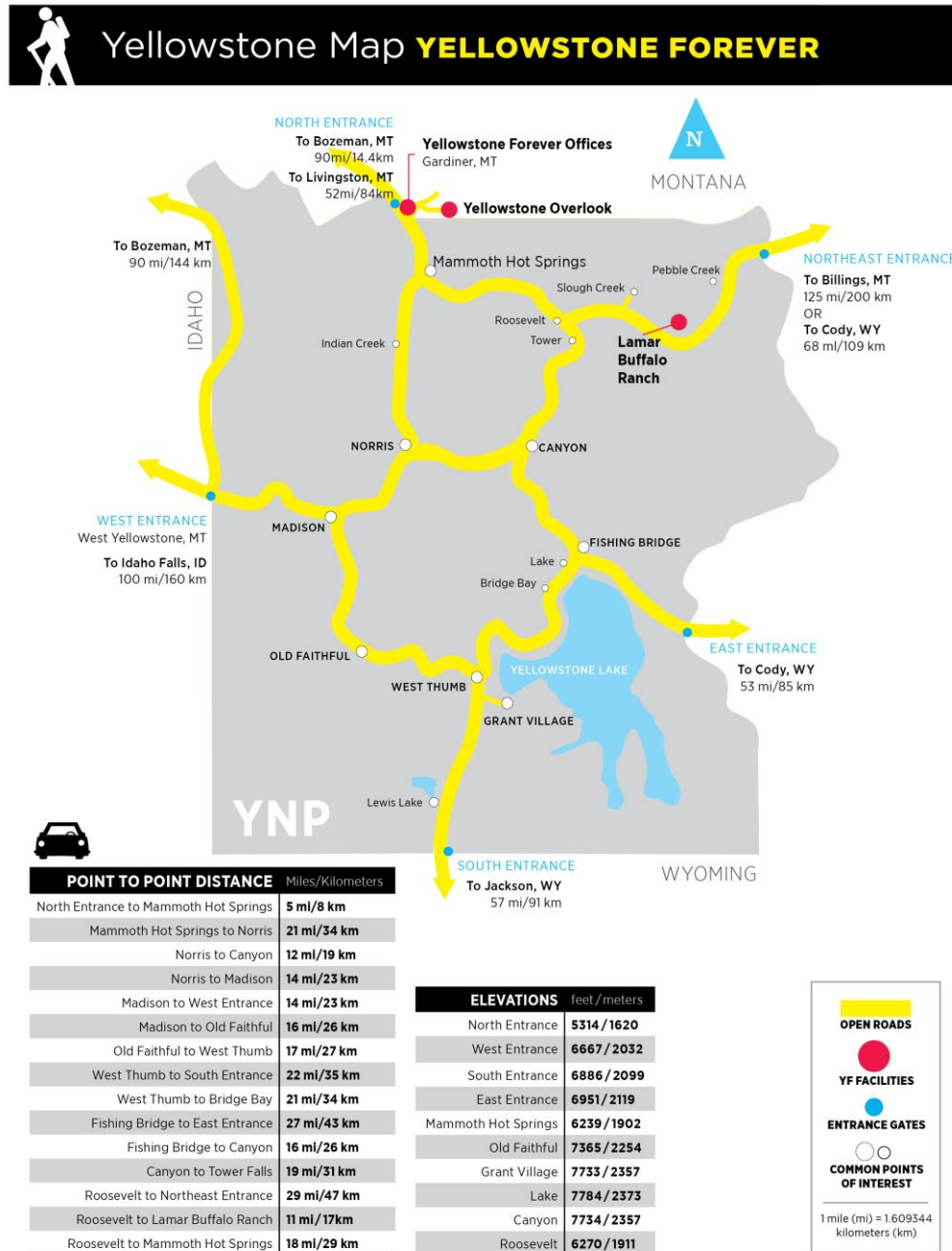
Traveling lightly: When hiking or walking in Yellowstone, we will use existing trails and boardwalks. We will follow appropriate techniques when walking off-trail. Walking around muddy or wet places in the trail increases erosion and negatively affects the resource; proper equipment is essential to hiking ethically. Participants should come adequately prepared with the equipment listed for their program and should expect to walk through mud, snow or puddles in the trail.

Thank you for helping us set a good example in Yellowstone!

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Plan on extra driving time in the park. The speed limit is 45 mph or lower. There may also be construction delays. Visit www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/hours.htm, call the recorded NPS Road Report at 307.344.2117, or contact a visitor center for up-to-date travel information.

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