

# YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

SUMMER 2024  
MID MAY–LATE SEPTEMBER

**SAMPLE ONLY**  
SIGNIFICANTLY  
ABBREVIATED



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| 4  | Planning Tips             |
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| 10 | Region: Yosemite Valley   |
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Scenic Drive



Hiking



Recreation Activity



Scenic View



Food/Drink



Iconic Natural Feature



Discover



Wildlife

## RESERVATIONS TO ENTER

### Don't make the number one mistake.

In an effort to address ongoing congestion inside the park, Yosemite is requiring a reservation to visit in 2024. It's required for anyone entering the park between 5am-4pm.

- **April 13 - June 30:** reservations needed on Saturdays, Sundays & holidays
- **July 1 - August 16:** reservations needed daily
- **August 17 - October 27:** reservations needed on Saturdays, Sundays & holidays

This is generally viewed as a good thing and will provide a more quality visitor experience, but it's something you must plan for in advance. Reservations can be made now by visiting the following link: <https://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/reservations.htm>

## START EARLY

### Begin the day early to avoid crowds.

Unless you're trekking through the backcountry and sleeping in the wilderness, you will experience some crowds in Yosemite. Visitors are inevitable in this gorgeous place. But avoid falling victim to the hours-long lines at entry gates or the impossibly full parking lots.

Do your best to enter the park before 8am or after 4pm. And between those hours don't try to re-park your car unless relocating to an entirely different region of the park. Utilize the shuttle system to get around the valley instead.

## WEATHER

### Bring layers and be prepared for all four seasons.

Because of the dramatic changes in elevation across this park—from valleys to peaks—temperatures and precipitation vary widely. If you're a motivated visitor you could easily experience all four seasons in a single day. Wear layers that can be added or subtracted easily and don't be afraid to hike in the rain, unless there's thunder!

## WATER TO DRINK

### Understand the pros and cons of where you're drinking.

Water is essential for your health and safety. In Yosemite, you'll find water in many places, but not all are safe to drink. Some water sources are treated, while others are not. Always check with a local ranger or visitor center for the most up-to-date information on water safety in the park.

Water is available at many ranger stations and visitor centers throughout the park. You can also purchase bottled water at many of these locations. If you're hiking, carrying water is essential. A good rule of thumb is to carry at least one liter of water per person per day.

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## PLAN YOUR TRIP

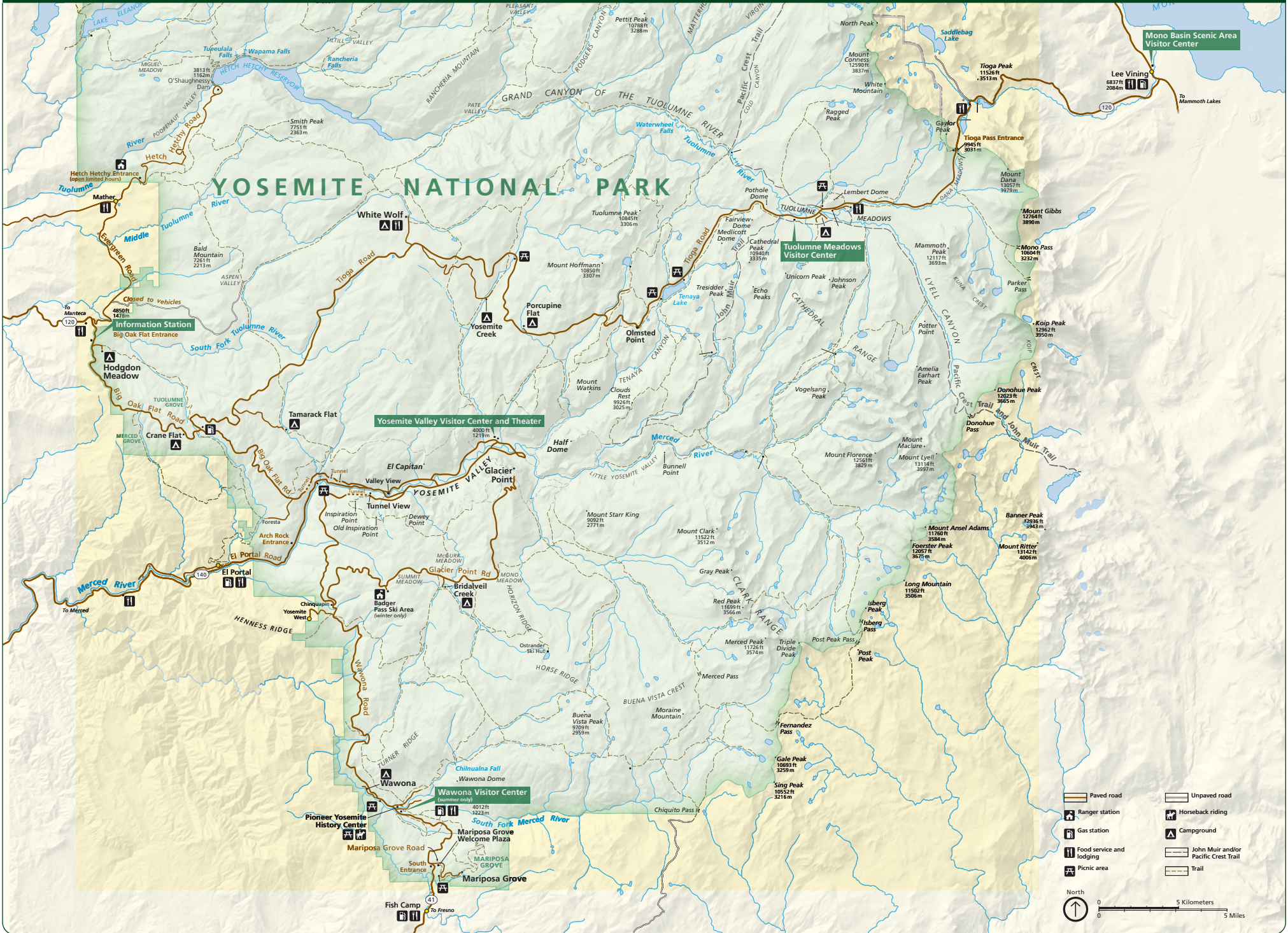
### Consider your season of travel in advance.

Yosemite is a beautiful park year-round, but each season offers a different experience. Spring is a great time to visit if you want to see wildflowers and waterfalls. Summer is the best time for hiking and camping. Fall is a beautiful time to visit if you want to see the colorful foliage. Winter is a great time to visit if you want to see snow and enjoy winter sports.

## STAYING IN THE PARK

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## AN AMERICAN ICON

### **A crown jewel of the American landscape.**

Nestled in the heart of California's Sierra Nevada mountains, Yosemite was established in 1890 making it one of the world's oldest national parks. It encompasses nearly 1,200 square miles of diverse landscapes, from towering granite cliffs and cascading waterfalls to lush meadows and ancient giant sequoia groves. The calm Merced River attracts wildlife to its shores as it meanders through idyllic Yosemite Valley. This 7-mile long by 1-mile wide gorge is where the majority of visitors spend their time, but there is so much more to this park.

## WORLD-FAMOUS LANDMARKS

### **Waterfalls, giant trees, and glacially carved rock.**

Yosemite's iconic landmarks, like the granite monolith Half Dome and the towering El Capitan, have captured the imagination of visitors for generations. Waterfalls are a defining feature of Yosemite, especially in the spring when surging snowmelt brings them to life. Yosemite Falls, the tallest waterfall in North America, plunges 2,425 feet in three cascades, while Vernal and Nevada Falls tumble over granite cliffs in a dazzling display.

## GIANT SEQUOIAS

### **Walk among ancient giants.**

The park is also home to some of the world's largest and oldest living organisms: the giant sequoia trees. These majestic titans, some of which have been standing for over 3,000 years, can reach heights of over 300 feet and have trunks wider than 30 feet. Mariposa Grove, located in the southern part of the park, is the best place to see these awe-inspiring trees but Tuolumne Grove shouldn't be missed either.

## OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES

### **Truly something for everyone.**

Beyond the iconic sights, Yosemite offers a wealth of outdoor activities for visitors of all ages and abilities. Hiking trails range from leisurely strolls to strenuous ascents, while rock climbers from around the world come to test their skills on the sheer granite faces of El Capitan and Half Dome. The Merced and Tuolumne Rivers offer terrific playgrounds for kayakers and rafters, while walking and biking paths weave their way along the valley floor for a calmer experience.



Cook's Meadow with Half Dome in the distance (Photo: AllTrails)



Mirror Lake Trail along Tenaya Creek

## HIKING TRAILS

**2.0 miles round trip**  
~1 hour

**Sentinel Meadow & Cook's Meadow Loop Trail (Easy)**  
This is a very relaxed stroll through the central open meadows of the valley, giving views of Yosemite Falls, Half Dome and Sentinel Dome. In late spring the meadows can become marshy but boardwalked sections of trail allow visitors to enjoy this temporary wetland.

**2.3 miles round trip**  
~1.5 hours

**Mirror Lake Trail (Easy)**  
This lovely little trail follows Tenaya Creek into the easternmost edge of Yosemite Valley, past Mirror Lake which forms seasonally when enough snow melts (it's usually dry by July). It's generally very level.

**1.2 miles round trip**  
~0.5 hours

**Lower Yosemite Falls (Easy)**  
A nice, easy saunter through a conifer forest, over Yosemite Creek, and finally to the base of the Lower Falls. It's mostly level with only a few dips. The volume of water decreases significantly by late July.

**1.4 miles round trip**  
~1.25 hours

**Vernal Fall Footbrige (Moderate)**  
Take the trailhead for the *Mist Trail/John Muir Trail* near Happy Isles Nature Center. You gain about 375 feet of elevation on this moderate hike, where you'll capture a glimpse of Vernal Falls from the footbridge. The further you go past the footbridge, the better the hike gets—but it also gets more strenuous (see the *Mist Trail* on next page).

**2.3 miles round trip**  
~2 hours

**Inspiration Trail (Moderate)**  
Once you see Tunnel View, imagine the same view twice as high up and without 95% of the people. That's what a hike to Inspiration Point will earn you. It's a gradual ascent that does have a few steep segments.

Always pack  
extra water, food,  
and a first aid kit for  
every hike.



**...there's so  
much more!**