

YELLOWSTONE

NATIONAL PARK LODGES

Operated by *Xanterra* Parks & Resorts®

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ANYONE INTERESTED IN SNOWMOBILE TOURING IN YELLOWSTONE

Exploring Yellowstone in winter is a rare and special experience! Just as in summer, the opportunities to observe free-roaming wildlife, breathtaking scenery and the greatest concentration of geysers and hot springs in the world, are almost limitless. Snowcoaches and snowmobile tours provide excellent opportunities for winter discovery. In winter, however, weather and related conditions require special consideration. Xanterra in Yellowstone offers the following information to our guests, so that as they consider a park experience on snowmobile, they can understand the unique characteristics of this type of travel and the physical requirements associated with it.

Depending on the tour or package, snowmobile program participants will travel the following approximate distances:

Old Faithful Lower Loop Tour: 100+ miles round trip

Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel **Canyon Tour:** 80+ miles. This tour includes Hayden Valley when open.

Mammoth Hot Springs to Old Faithful Tour: 100+ miles round trip.

Mammoth Hot Springs based ***Trail of the Wolf*** package: Day 1 is 50 miles and Day 2 is 95 miles.

Old Faithful based ***Trail of the Wolf*** package: Day 1 is 95 miles and Day 2 is 50 miles

IMPORTANT NOTICE: YOU MUST HAVE A VALID DRIVER'S LICENSE WITH YOU WHEN YOU GET YOUR SNOWMOBILE.

SPEED REQUIRED:

The program itinerary includes some long travel distances. In order to ensure all scenic and wildlife stops can be made during the allotted time, (approximately 8 hours) guests must travel at a sustained average of 35 MPH. Failure to maintain this speed consistently will impact the trip, resulting in loss of opportunities to make these stops.

ROAD CONDITIONS:

Our snowmobiles are traveling the same roadways as other snowmobiles and larger snowcoaches. There may be times when snowmobile tours need to pass the larger moving snowcoaches.

Bison also utilize the roads as travel corridors. Passing bison can be an unsettling experience as snowmobilers come in close proximity to these large animals. To appropriately and safely pass bison on the roads, snowmobiles must travel in line as a group while keeping minimal space between machines. Passing in this manner helps to prevent individual bison from moving into space between snowmobiles, thus splitting up the snowmobile group and preventing passing. **Our snowmobile guides are experienced with regards to proper procedures for safely encountering wildlife on and off the road.** It is important that all participants follow the instructions of the guide.

Rutting and uneven surfaces are common on highly traveled snow-covered roads, and the snowmobile driver must pay close attention to the road at all times. When the snowmobile is moving, the snowmobile passenger will have the best opportunity to view the scenery as the driver must concentrate on the road conditions and the spacing of the other snowmobiles on the tour.

PHYSICAL REQUIREMENTS:

Snowmobiling is a strenuous physical activity. Full use of both hands is required to operate a snowmobile. Snowmobiles will naturally shift from rut to rut in the road causing the driver and passenger to bounce round in his/her seats. This can be unnerving and cause fatigue. The biggest obstacle for achieving the 35 MPH speed is this action of the snowmobile as it catches ruts and uneven surfaces on the road. The guest must be able to maintain her/his balance on the machine, and the suggested speed, despite the jostling movement of the snowmobile.

Road conditions require the operator to be in constant control of the steering mechanism of the machine. Operators and passengers must be able to steer the machine not only with the handle bars but also by leaning into the turns. The throttle (speed) is controlled by the thumb of the right hand and cramping of the hand often occurs. Braking is controlled with a lever near the left hand grip. There is no foot pedal for braking. There is not a back rest for the driver which can cause back fatigue and/or strain.

TEMPERATURES:

You may encounter temperature ranges from above freezing to 20 degrees below zero. Wind chills can exceed 50 degrees below zero. Snowmobile tours and packages will be delayed or cancelled when departure time temperatures drop to 10 degrees below zero or colder. Snowmobile jackets, overalls, boots, gloves and helmets are included with the snowmobile rental.

HOW TO DRESS FOR SNOWMOBILING

THREE WORDS: Boots, gloves and layers

One of the biggest problems of determining how to dress for a snowmobiling trip is sweat and moisture. Often times snowmobilers will become cold simply because they sweat too much and then went zipping along, creating a windy situation that finds the moisture in your sweat and chills you to the bone.

Boots: Definitely waterproof. Make sure they are made with a material that is moisture proof. These are provided with your snowmobile trip. Just as important would be the socks that you wear with the boots. Two layers of socks are best.

Most outdoor equipment stores will sell a very thin layered sock that "wicks" away moisture from your skin. By wearing those thin socks and then another layer of wool winter socks on top, your feet will stay the warmest. The thin layer pulls the sweaty moisture away from your skin and keeps it from cooling and giving your feet a moist, cold feeling. The wool socks will keep your feet warm from the outside elements. By using both you will keep your feet dry AND warm.

Gloves: Are provided for you with your trip but like socks, many outdoor sports stores sell thin moisture wicking under gloves that you can wear inside your gloves

Layers: Dress your whole body in layers. For your legs, thermal underwear works well with regular pants on top, and then your provided snowmobiling suit. For the top half of your body, an undershirt (moisture wicking if possible) and then a regular shirt or sweatshirt on top, under your suit. Moisture from sweat and the elements should be pulled away from the body whenever possible, but you still need enough layers on to keep you warm from the winter conditions outside.

Also recommended is a neck gaiter, or scarf for the area between your suit and your helmet.

GUEST LIABILITY:

Guests will sign a damage waiver requiring them to pay for the first \$750.00 in damages they cause to **EACH** damaged machine. Xanterra Parks & Resorts is not responsible for covering any medical costs you incur to yourself or others as a result of snowmobile accidents.

POINT OF NO RETURN:

Be advised that once you depart the starting location of your snowmobile tour, you will be required to complete the entire route. Xanterra Parks & Resorts does not have the resources to dispatch snowcoaches to transport participants who choose not to continue after the ride has begun. Refunds cannot be authorized for guests who choose not to use the snowmobiles they've reserved for the tour or package.

We encourage anyone interested in snowmobile touring to contact us directly with any additional questions. Please call 307-344-7311 or email us at info-ynp@xanterra.com.

Thank you!