



YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

ESSENTIAL YELLOWSTONE

Itinerary & Details

Summer 2023

The **Essential Yellowstone** Lodging & Learning package is designed for those who want to enjoy the full spectrum of the Yellowstone experience in a truly immersive way. Participants will be led by a Yellowstone Forever field educator who handles all the logistics while ensuring everyone gets to see Yellowstone's most popular features. Fascinating thermal features, colorful canyons, exciting wildlife, and beautiful lake scenery are but a few of the highlights of this all-inclusive package.

Each day the group will venture out with a Yellowstone Forever educator to learn about and explore a region of the park, while incorporating short, scenic hikes throughout the program. We'll leave early to beat the crowds and increase the odds of seeing charismatic megafauna that are most active at dawn. We will then return to the shores of Yellowstone Lake early every evening, leaving you plenty of time to relax in the historic Lake hotel or elsewhere along the lake shore.

Most sightings of wildlife occur at a distance; the field educator will provide high-powered spotting scopes and binoculars for group use. However, participants are encouraged to bring additional scopes and binoculars if they have them.

WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- (4) nights lodging at Lake Hotel – Cabin
- Most meals, to include:
 - (3) breakfasts
 - (1) box breakfasts (to go)
 - (2) dine-in breakfasts
 - (3) lunches
 - (3) box lunches (to go)
- In-park transportation via a 14-passenger minibus
- World class educational programming with a Yellowstone Forever field educator
- A Nalgene water bottle (gift item)
- Field equipment as needed

Gratuities for the Yellowstone Forever field educators are not included but are recommended and greatly appreciated.

WHY CHOOSE A LODGING & LEARNING PROGRAM?

These award-winning Lodging & Learning packages are developed through a partnership with Yellowstone National Park Lodges and Yellowstone Forever. These packages combine the best lodging locations with an exceptional immersive field education experience.

Here's why this package stands out:

- **Yellowstone Forever is Yellowstone National Park's official nonprofit education and fundraising partner.** Yellowstone Forever's mission is to protect, preserve, and enhance Yellowstone National Park through education and philanthropy. To learn more about Yellowstone Forever, visit our website, [yellowstone.org](https://www.yellowstone.org).
- **Support Yellowstone National Park.** Proceeds collected by Yellowstone Forever educational programs are used to preserve Yellowstone National Park and provide more opportunities for people to experience its magic.
- **Yellowstone Forever Field Educators are world class.** The Yellowstone Institute has been providing in-depth educational programs in Yellowstone for over 40 years. Yellowstone Forever field educators are among the best experts in Yellowstone. Educational staff are passionate professionals with significant training who are dedicating their careers to this vital work. They live in the Yellowstone ecosystem, they work and train alongside park researchers and educators, and thus can provide accurate and exciting behind the scenes perspectives on the park's natural and cultural history. They know where to go and when, and they handle all the details to make the experience as enjoyable as possible.
- **Small group size.** Lodging & Learning programs have a max capacity of 13. The program capacity size allows participants to enjoy camaraderie with fellow participants and receive more attention in a small group setting. It allows the educator to take an inquiry-based approach to learning and tailoring the experience to the group's specific interests.
- **Essential equipment provided.** Yellowstone Forever provides high-quality scoping equipment to bring distant wildlife into crisp, clear view. Educators are at a minimum Wilderness First Aid certified. They carry a first aid kit and handheld radio during all outings and provide bear spray to participants if hiking in bear country. Additionally, they incorporate teaching aids such as skulls, tracks, pelts, books, I-Pads with videos, and test equipment such as temperature guns for thermal features.
- **Incredible in-park lodging.** All lodging in this package is in the park, within short walking distance from popular features and spectacular scenery. This minimizes drive time during daily outings and allows more time to enjoy the park's features at a relaxing pace. It also allows more time in the evenings, after daily outings, to relax and enjoy the beautiful surroundings.

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**

Participants are welcome to check into the Lake Hotel beginning at 4:30 p.m. After checking in, guests will meet a Yellowstone Forever field educator for an orientation. Education staff will go over the program itinerary, discuss clothing and equipment needed for daily outings, and answer any questions participants may have.

This evening dinner reservations are prebooked and participants will be spending this night at the Lake Hotel (Cost of dinner not included in package).

5:15 p.m. Dinner Reservations at Lake Yellowstone Hotel Dining Room

Dinner reservations are prebooked.

7:00 p.m. Orientation at Lake Hotel Conference Room

Specific room to be determined; ask front desk for directions.

Day 2 **Old Faithful & Yellowstone's Many Thermal Features**

This day we'll head to the Old Faithful area and surrounding geyser basins to explore a myriad of captivating thermal features. The Yellowstone Forever field educator will introduce you to the exciting geology of the Yellowstone volcano and underground magma chamber. You'll learn how geysers, hot springs, mud pots, and fumaroles are formed. We'll delve into the science behind the vivid colors surrounding the hot springs, the microscopic life found in them, and applications in modern science and technology.

This evening dinner reservations are prebooked and participants will be spending this night at the Lake Hotel (Cost of dinner not included in package).

6:30 a.m. - Dining Room Breakfast

8:00 a.m.

8:00 a.m. Depart Lake Hotel

Hot beverages and box breakfast in the field

**Exploring Old Faithful and surrounding areas
on boardwalks and trails**

Deli lunch in the field

4:30 p.m. Return Lake Hotel

5:15 p.m. Dinner Reservations at Lake Yellowstone Hotel Dining Room

Dinner reservations are prebooked.

Day 3

Yellowstone Lake

This day will begin with a private chartered boat tour of Yellowstone Lake. We will dock the boat at Frank Island and disembark to explore the coastline habitat. Here you'll have time to relax, reflect, and take in the panoramic views of this large high elevation lake from a remote island. Throughout the day, the Yellowstone Forever field educator will discuss the ecology of the lake and current efforts to save native fish populations. You'll also visit the site of a shipwreck and learn some interesting history!

This evening dinner reservations are prebooked and participants will be spending this night at the Lake Hotel (Cost of dinner not included in package).

6:30 a.m. - Dining Room Breakfast
8:00 a.m.

8:00 a.m. Depart Lake Hotel
Hot beverages and box breakfast in the field
Chartered boat tour of Yellowstone Lake
Deli lunch in the field

3:00 p.m. Return Lake Hotel

5:15 p.m. Dinner Reservations at Lake Yellowstone Hotel Dining Room
Dinner reservations are prebooked.

Day 4

Wildlife Watching & Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone

On this final day, participants will head out early for wildlife watching in Yellowstone's Hayden Valley and up toward Mount Washburn. The group will enjoy hiking and sightseeing along the rims of the iconic Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. The field educator will lead the group to locations where the group can enjoy breathtaking views of this colorful canyon and its magnificent waterfalls.

This evening dinner reservations are prebooked and participants will be spending this night at the Lake Hotel (Cost of dinner not included in package).

6:30 a.m. Depart Lake Hotel
Hot beverages and box breakfast in the field
Morning wildlife watching in Hayden Valley
Hike and sightsee around the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone
Deli lunch in the field

2:30 p.m. Return Lake Hotel

5:15 p.m. Dinner Reservations at Lake Yellowstone Hotel Dining Room
Dinner reservations are prebooked.

Day 5

Check Out and Departure

ACTIVITY LEVEL

How fit do you need to be?

This program is rated **Level 2** on Yellowstone Forever's Activity Level Scale.

Participants should be prepared to hike up to 3 miles per day comfortably with elevation gains of up to 600 feet. Some off-trail hiking is possible. Most hikes will take place at elevations between 6,000 to 7,500 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 members of the group cannot participate in the day's activities, they need to let the educator know in advance.

To participate in this program, each participant must fill out and sign a 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 the program start date.

CANCELLATION AND REFUND POLICY

The following policies apply to Lodging & Learning packages. If you cancel:

- 60 days or more prior to the start of your package, 100% of the package cost will be refunded.
- 30 days or more prior to the start of your package, 50% of the package cost will be forfeited.
- If you cancel with fewer than 30 days before the start of your program, 100% of the package cost will be forfeited.

Please call the Yellowstone National Park Lodges Reservations Office at 307.344.7311 to cancel.

We 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.

WHOM TO CONTACT

For any questions, concerns, or additional information please contact the following:

- Reservations, lodging, food, and payment questions please contact Yellowstone National Park Lodges at reserve-ynp@xanterra.com 307-344-7311
- Program itinerary, health forms, and activity questions please contact Yellowstone Forever at institute@yellowstone.org or 406-848-2400 extension 3
- Road updates, park conditions, and general park information please contact Yellowstone National Park Service at <https://www.nps.gov/yell/contacts.htm>

COVID-19 HEALTH & SAFETY

Yellowstone Forever continues to adopt appropriate sanitization measures as prescribed by the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](https://www.cdc.gov/). Guests are encouraged to refer to this respected resource when making near-term travel plans.

Yellowstone Forever and Yellowstone National Park Lodges are in frequent contact with local authorities and partners such as county health departments and the National Park Service to continually monitor the situation on a regional level. Both entities are closely monitoring government policy changes, CDC guidelines, government mandates, and public health advancements, and will continue to make changes as necessary and appropriate to operations.

These protocols have been updated as of May 2022, please visit our website: <https://www.yellowstone.org/covid-19-health-safety/> for up-to-date protocols and information.

GENERAL EQUIPMENT & CLOTHING LIST

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

***The field educator will be carrying a first aid kit, bear spray, and emergency communication device.**

Equipment:

- **Daypack**, with enough capacity to carry extra clothes, water, lunch, camera, binoculars, etc.
- **Water bottle**, participants will receive a Nalgene water bottle as a gift during the program orientation. Guests should always keep a minimum of one quart of water on hand to facilitate proper hydration.
- **Hand Sanitizer**
- **Sunglasses**
- **Sunscreen/Lip protector**, sun at high altitude can burn unprotected skin quickly
- **Optics**; camera and binoculars

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

SUGGESTED READING

No prior reading is required, but participants might enjoy the following publications, that complement the program. Some of the publications are available at Yellowstone Forever's online store at shop.yellowstone.org Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15% discount and proceeds directly support the park.

- *Decade of the Wolf: Returning the Wild to Yellowstone*. Smith, D.W. and G. Ferguson. 2005. Lyons Press, Guilford, CT.
- *Searching for Yellowstone: Ecology and Wonder in the Last Wilderness*. Schullery, P. 1999. First Mariner Books, Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, NY.

ABOUT YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

Park Stores

Yellowstone Forever park stores feature more than 900 books, maps, and videos to help participants plan their visit, along with a wide selection of shirts, hats, and other logo items. Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15% discount on merchandise online or at any of the locations in and around Yellowstone. Proceeds directly support Yellowstone.

Visit: shop.yellowstone.org

Supporter Program

Yellowstone Forever supporters directly fund visitor education and park preservation. Benefits include:

- Seasonal lodging discounts throughout Yellowstone National Park.
- 15% discount on merchandise at all Park Stores locations, including the online store, Yellowstone National Park Lodges gift shop and Yellowstone General Stores. Exclusions apply.
- Discounts at over 400 participating public land stores across the country. For a list of participating organizations visit: www.publiclandsalliance.org
- A library card for the Yellowstone Heritage and Research Center.

If participants are not yet a supporter of Yellowstone Forever, an introductory membership (one year) to Yellowstone Forever is included with the tuition. For more information, visit: yellowstone.org/donate.

CODE OF ETHICS

Yellowstone Forever is committed to demonstrating a high standard of appropriate and ethical behavior in Yellowstone. As a participant on a Yellowstone Forever program, participants will adhere to the following Code of Ethics. In addition to the ethics highlighted below, the Yellowstone Forever abides by all National Park Service rules and regulations, in addition to practicing Leave No Trace guidelines for traveling responsibly in the wilderness.

Observing wildlife: Groups will do their 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 the group presence from affecting their behavior. Participants should not expect to get close-up photographs of wildlife. Yellowstone Forever adheres 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. Wildlife will not be enticed 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 educators 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.

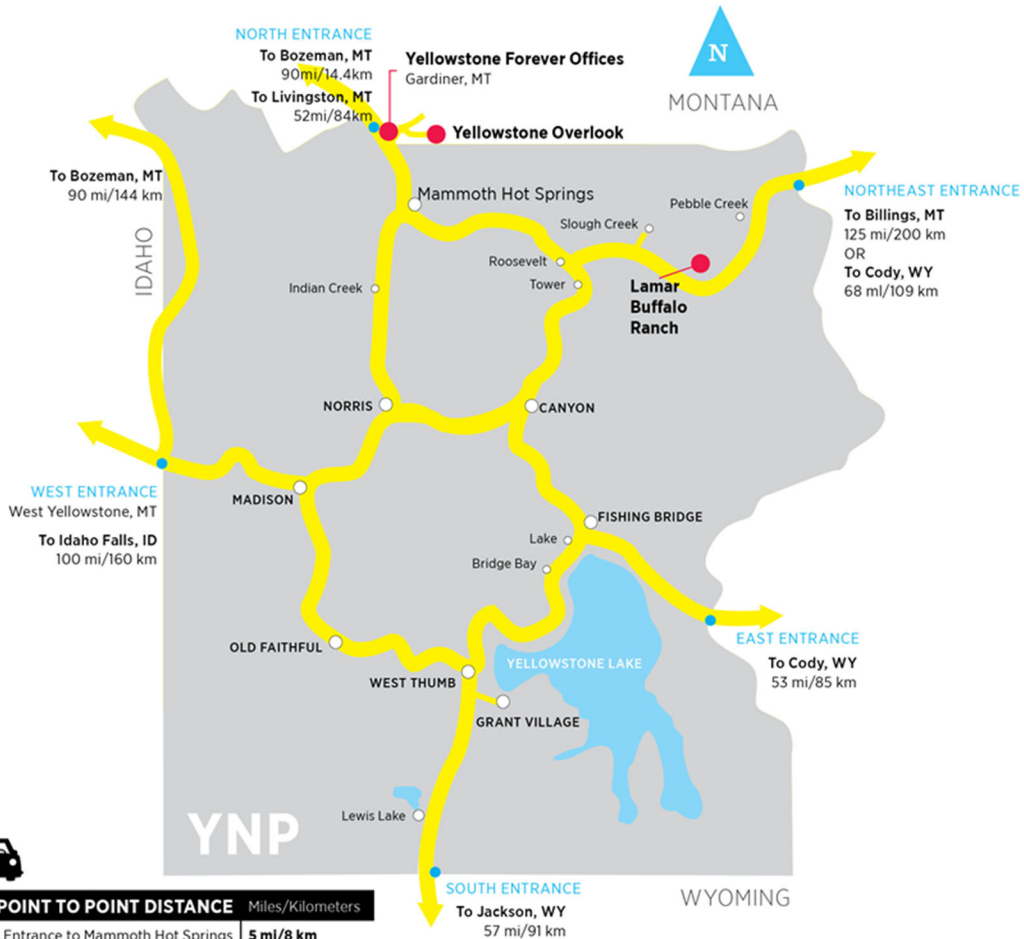
General etiquette: Yellowstone Forever groups will be considerate of other visitors and respect the quality of their experience. Voices and vehicle sounds carry great distances and affect both wildlife and people—remaining silent or very quiet while watching wildlife lets the sounds of Yellowstone (including 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, Yellowstone Forever field educators will move vehicles entirely off the road. If there is no safe pullout available, educators will drive to the next safe place and walk back to observe the wildlife. Yellowstone Forever will not stop in the middle of the road and should a traffic jam develop because of the group's activities, the activity will cease.

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

Traveling lightly: When hiking or walking in Yellowstone, groups will use existing trails and boardwalks. Hikers 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 the program and should expect to walk through mud, snow, or puddles in the trail.

Yellowstone Map **YELLOWSTONE FOREVER**



POINT TO POINT DISTANCE	Miles/Kilometers
North Entrance to Mammoth Hot Springs	5 mi/8 km
Mammoth Hot Springs to Norris	21 mi/34 km
Norris to Canyon	12 mi/19 km
Norris to Madison	14 mi/23 km
Madison to West Entrance	14 mi/23 km
Madison to Old Faithful	16 mi/26 km
Old Faithful to West Thumb	17 mi/27 km
West Thumb to South Entrance	22 mi/35 km
West Thumb to Bridge Bay	21 mi/34 km
Fishing Bridge to East Entrance	27 mi/43 km
Fishing Bridge to Canyon	16 mi/26 km
Canyon to Tower Falls	19 mi/31 km
Roosevelt to Northeast Entrance	29 mi/47 km
Roosevelt to Lamar Buffalo Ranch	11 mi/17 km
Roosevelt to Mammoth Hot Springs	18 mi/29 km

ELEVATIONS	feet/meters
North Entrance	5314 / 1620
West Entrance	6667 / 2032
South Entrance	6886 / 2099
East Entrance	6951 / 2119
Mammoth Hot Springs	6239 / 1902
Old Faithful	7365 / 2254
Grant Village	7733 / 2357
Lake	7784 / 2373
Canyon	7734 / 2357
Roosevelt	6270 / 1911

OPEN ROADS

YF FACILITIES

ENTRANCE GATES

COMMON POINTS OF INTEREST

1 mile (mi) = 1.609344 kilometers (km)

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.