

5th Edition • COMPLIMENTARY
2025/2026

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YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE TO THE PARKS

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YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK



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Welcome



Home to more than two million acres of lakes, waterfalls, geysers and panoramic vistas, the world's first national park has hosted millions of visitors from around the world for 150 years! They come to see its renowned natural wonders and the diversity of animal life that thrives in its boundaries, much as it has for millions of years.

Every season brings special wonders and the park's many varied landscapes offer a range of exciting experiences for all ages. The NPS protects this unique resource (which includes six national historic landmarks) and its visitors. The NPS and concessioners, including Yellowstone National Park Lodges-Xanterra, work together to ensure that your visit to

Yellowstone is a memorable one.

This American Park Network guide is provided by Yellowstone National Park Lodges to enhance your appreciation and enjoyment of this magnificent park. It is made possible by the support of sponsors whose messages appear inside. Please respect the park and minimize your impact so that its natural resources will be protected and preserved for future generations. After all, the parks are for everyone. **Enjoy your visit and please come back!**

Note: Check the NPS Yellowstone National Park App for opening and closing dates, as well as descriptions of services that are currently available.



FUN FACTS

Established: In 1872 Congress passed legislation to make Yellowstone the world's first national park.

Land Area: 2.2 million acres of forests (80 percent), grassland (15 percent) and water (5 percent). Although 96 percent of Yellowstone National Park is in Wyoming, small portions of the park also lie in Montana (3 percent) and Idaho (1 percent).

Popular Activities: Enjoy sightseeing, fishing, boating, wildlife watching, cross-country skiing and horseback riding in the park.

Hiking: There are more than 1,000 miles of backcountry trails. Roads and

facilities take up less than three percent of the park; the rest is wilderness.

Number of Plant & Animal Species: The park is home to seven species of conifer trees, more than 1,000 species of native vascular plants; 67 species of mammals (including grizzly bears, wolves, bison, moose and elk) and more than 320 bird species!

Popular Sights: Yellowstone's geysers and hot springs; Yellowstone Lake; waterfalls; and iconic sights like Gallatin Range, Hayden Valley, the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone, Morning Glory Pool and Old Faithful Geyser.

Contents



American Park Network® publishes Oh, Ranger! ParkFinder™, OhRanger.com, and Oh, Ranger!® guides—a collection of visitor guides for public lands all across America—and operates Oh, Ranger! Wi-Fi in parks and public lands. American Park Network is an official partner of the National Forest Foundation, National Parks Conservation Association, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, American Hiking Society and the Student Conservation Association.

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Cover: Close up at the Grand Prismatic Spring
Credit: Wire Stock



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QUESTIONS, GO TO
OhRanger.com

What's New!

The Truth About America's Public Lands

"No amount of experimentation can ever prove me right; a single experiment can prove me wrong."

— Albert Einstein

I think everyone can agree that Albert was a pretty smart guy. His quote suggests he was also quite open to being proven wrong. Einstein set the bar for both genius and humility by his unyielding embrace of the scientific method.

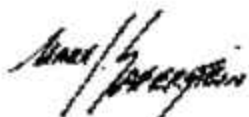
In a world where information is often clouded by personal perspective, it's crucial that we follow Einstein's lead and proceed with care when it comes to facts and truth. Facts, by definition, are verifiable, objective data — things we can observe, measure and ultimately prove. In the absence of new learning, facts are grounded in evidence that remains constant despite opinion or belief. The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines truth as *"being in accord with fact or reality."* One person's reality may be quite different from another's. Truth, therefore, requires context. If we're open, it's not that hard to see how different life experiences may provide us with wildly different (and subjective) realities.

America's public lands are steeped in both facts and truth. From the geology of the Grand Canyon to the biodiversity in Yellowstone, facts about these places are backed by years of research and scientific study. But the truth of these lands is more complex. It's about the cultural significance they hold, the stories they tell, and the way they connect us to the past and to each other. The truth includes understanding the important role these lands play — for future generations, to native communities, with regard to preservation, as engines of economic development and so

much more. 'Truth' may lead one person to favor mining while another's truth may dictate conservation above all else.

As with many issues, we won't all agree on how to balance facts and truths. Different perspectives exist on how to best utilize public lands. We need to resist the urge to simply dismiss the opinions of others whose views don't align with our own. Facts provide a foundation for understanding. Truth is shaped by personal and collective values. It's essential that we utilize facts in decision-making while, at the same time, embrace the truth in its full complexity. There's never been a better time to commit to listening, remaining open and considering different experiences and values. Only then can we have constructive dialogue that leads us to common ground. The Organic Act of 1916 created the National Park Service and placed equal weight on conservation as it did recreation, which are often in direct conflict. More than a century later, it's still hard to reconcile such opposing goals... and that's a fact!

Let's approach the stewardship of our public lands with an acknowledgement of facts, a respect for truth and an openness to understanding each other's perspectives, especially when we disagree. Together we can ensure that America's public lands remain a rich resource and a legacy for generations to come!

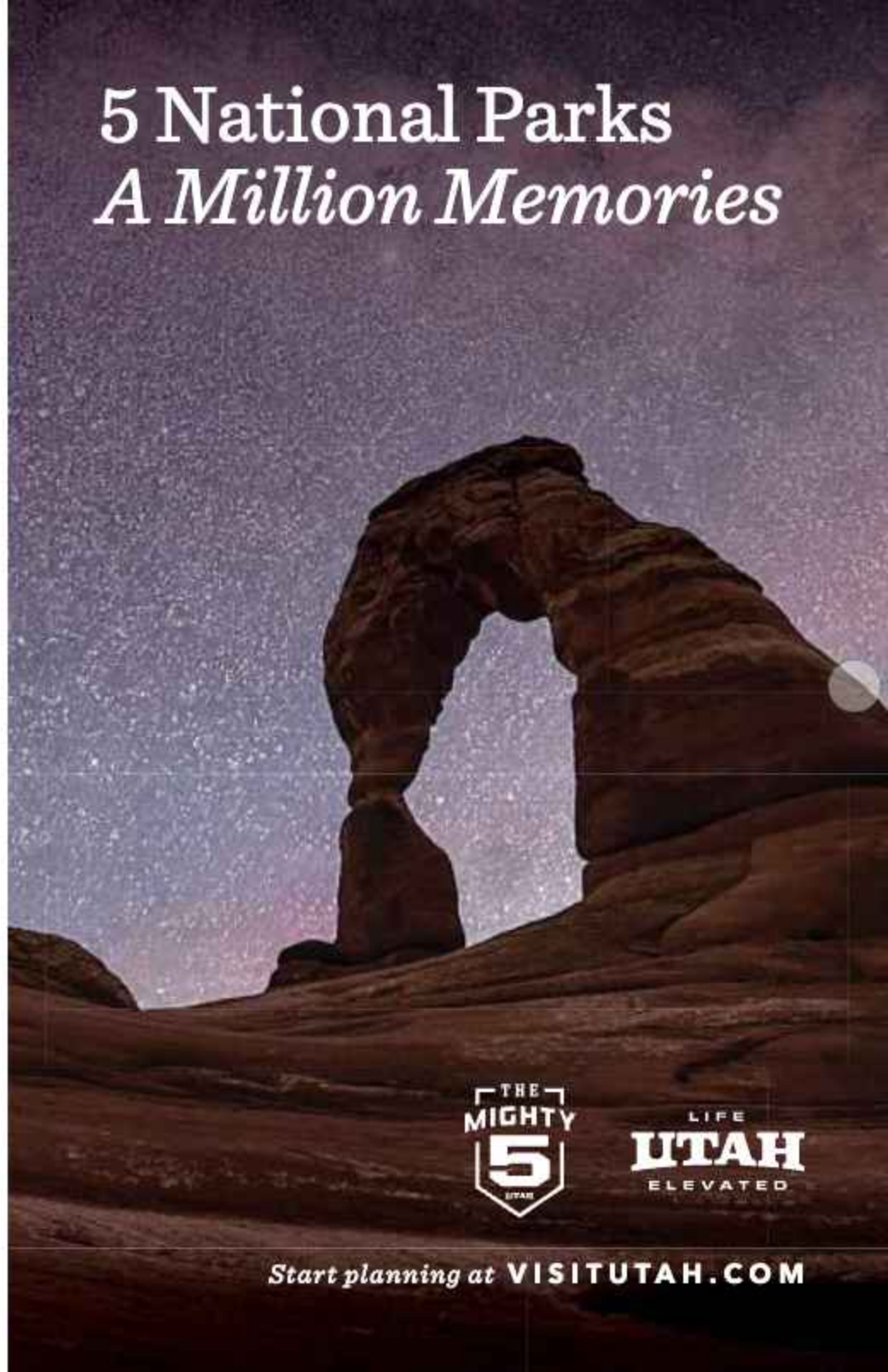


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5 National Parks A Million Memories



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GETTING TO YELLOWSTONE

Park Entrances: Yellowstone is accessible from five major entrances during the summer: **North** (U.S. 89) from Gardiner, Montana; **West** (U.S. 20) from West Yellowstone, Montana; **South** (U.S. 89) from Jackson, Wyoming; **East** (U.S. 20-16-14) from Cody, Wyoming; and **Northeast** (U.S. 212) from Silver Gate and Cooke City, Montana.

Seasonal Road and Entrance Closures: The North and Northeast entrances are open year-round, as is the road from Gardiner, MT and the North Entrance to Cooke City, MT at the Northeast Entrance. In the winter, visitors must return to Gardiner to drive back to Interstate 90 and destinations beyond. *All other park entrances and interior roads close to the public November 1st.* They reopen to tracked, over-the-snow vehicles from mid-December through mid-March and begin to reopen for wheeled vehicles in mid-April.



Construction: There are two ongoing improvement projects in Yellowstone National Park in 2025: Lewis River Bridge (South Entrance Road) and Yellowstone River Bridge (Northeast Entrance Road). In the fall of 2025, construction will begin at Bridge Bay, Gibbon River Bridge #5 (Madison Junction), and at the Old Faithful Interchange. It's important that visitors plan accordingly as these five projects are expected to cause 15-30 minute delays.

FEDERAL RECREATIONAL LANDS PASSES

A federal recreation pass is helpful if you plan to visit many national parks, forests or other federal lands. For information, call (888) 275-8747 or visit store.usgs.gov/pass.

Type	Cost	Availability	Details
Annual Pass	\$80 \$20	General Public Seniors (62+)	This one-year pass is available on site, by phone or online (see above).
Senior Pass	\$80	U.S. residents age 62+	This lifetime pass is available on site, via mail order or online. ID required. A 12-month pass is available for \$20.
Military Pass	Free	U.S. active military and their dependents	This one-year pass is available on site. ID (CAC Card or DoD Form 1173) required.
Access Pass	Free	U.S. residents with permanent disabilities	This lifetime pass is available on site or via mail order. ID and documentation required. Plus \$10 for handling.
Volunteer Pass	Free	250 volunteer service hours with NPS	Inquire locally to obtain information about this one-year pass.

SUMMER STARTS



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For current road construction and conditions, call the NPS at **(307) 344-2117** or visit [nps.gov/yell](https://www.nps.gov/yell). Text "82190" to 888-777 to receive text alerts about park road closures and conditions.

TRANSPORTATION

Air: Commercial air service is available to Billings (129 miles), Bozeman (77 miles) and West Yellowstone (three miles) in Montana; to Jackson (57 miles) and Cody (53 miles) in Wyoming; and to Idaho Falls (112 miles) in Idaho. Air service to West Yellowstone is only available in summer. *Note: Distances are measured from the nearest park entrance.*

Bus: Greyhound serves Bozeman, MT, West Yellowstone, MT, Cody, WY and Jackson, WY. Yellowstone National Park Lodges offer shuttle service from Bozeman to Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel in the winter. Reserve in advance by calling **(307) 344-7311** or by submitting a request form found on their website [yellowstonenationalparklodges.com](https://www.yellowstonenationalparklodges.com). *Additional bus companies that serve the region include: Karst Stage, Salt Lake Express, Wind River Transportation Authority, Express Arrow, Southern Teton Area Rapid Transit, and Alltrans Charter Service.*

Tours: Explore the incredible natural wonders of Yellowstone National Park guided

by a knowledgeable park professional. Book land, water and horseback adventures at [yellowstonenationalparklodges.com/adventures](https://www.yellowstonenationalparklodges.com/adventures). Custom private guided tours are available with transportation. Call **(307) 344-5282** to learn more and book. Educational family tours, hiking and/or wildlife tours may be booked through Yellowstone Forever [yellowstone.org](https://www.yellowstone.org).

Rental Car: Cars may be rented at some airports and in major towns near the park.

Train: There is no direct rail service to the park. The closest Amtrak station is Salt Lake City, Utah.

ENTRANCE FEES

The entrance fee is \$35 for a private, noncommercial vehicle with up to 15 passengers; \$30 for a motorcycle; or \$20 for each visitor 16 and older entering on foot, bike, ski, etc. This fee provides the visitor with a seven-day entrance permit. Remember to keep your admission receipt to re-enter the park.

To streamline entry during peak season, digital passes for select federal public lands including Yellowstone National Park are available at [recreation.gov/pass](https://www.recreation.gov/pass) or in the **Recreation.gov** app.

An annual Yellowstone pass is \$70. Visitors entering Yellowstone's South Entrance will be traveling through Grand Teton National Park first; separate entrance fees are charged, or annual passes may be used at both parks.

EVERY KID OUTDOORS

To help engage and create our next generation of park visitors, supporters and advocates, the Every Kid Outdoors initiative was launched in February 2015—and the Every Kid Outdoors Act was signed into law in 2019. The immediate goal is to provide an opportunity for every fourth-grade student across the country to experience their federal public lands and waters in person.

All kids in the fourth grade have access to their own free Every Kid Outdoors pass at [everykidoutdoors.gov](https://www.everykidoutdoors.gov). This pass admits the pass owner and any accompanying passengers in a private non-commercial vehicle to the park. You can obtain the pass by visiting [everykidoutdoors.gov](https://www.everykidoutdoors.gov) and you must print it and present it at the park. Educators can down-

load activity guides and get one pass for each of their fourth-grade students. The Every Kid Outdoors pass is valid until August 31, 2025.

PARK NEWSPAPER

Pick up a copy of **Yellowstone**, a free NPS publication, at visitor centers and park entrances or online at [yellowstone.net/newspaper](https://www.yellowstone.net/newspaper). It offers news and current information about park facilities and programs.

CONTACT INFORMATION

For park information, call the NPS visitor information line at **(307) 344-7381**. For lodging, camping, activity and dining information, contact Yellowstone National Park Lodges at **(307) 344-7901** (general information); **(307) 344-7311** (reservations) or visit [yellowstonenationalparklodges.com](https://www.yellowstonenationalparklodges.com).

PARK HEADQUARTERS

Located at Mammoth Hot Springs, Yellowstone National Park Headquarters is the



GENERAL STORES

Grab a bite to eat or a souvenir at one of 12 Yellowstone General Stores located throughout the park. You'll find groceries, gifts, apparel, sandwiches and tasty grab-and-go items that you can enjoy quickly and get back to exploring. From retro 1950s-inspired counter service to casual cafeterias, hand-dipped ice cream parlors and self-serve frozen yogurt bars, there are a variety of dining experiences. The stores are also convenient places to rest, refuel and enjoy one-of-a-kind shopping. For more information, call **(406) 646-7038** or visit [yellowstonegeneralstores.com](https://www.yellowstonegeneralstores.com).



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- Otters
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- Bear Country Safety
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historic site of Fort Yellowstone where, from 1886 to 1918, the U.S. Army was garrisoned to protect the park from poachers, vandals, robbers and any other threats to the park and its early tourists. Now the old army buildings house the park's administrative offices and the Albright Visitor Center. You can take a self-guided walking tour of the fort.

WEATHER

Yellowstone's weather is always unpredictable. Storms can come up suddenly, causing a drop in temperature or resulting in precipitation. Always pack plenty of water and carry extra clothing when hiking.

ALTITUDE

Most areas that people visit in the park are above 7,500 feet. Take time to acclimate—drink plenty of water to avoid dehydration from altitude and dry climate.

WHAT TO WEAR

Always be prepared by dressing in layers. Don't forget a jacket, sweater, rain gear, sunscreen and sunglasses.

VISITOR CENTERS & RANGER STATIONS

Visitor centers, are conveniently located near lodging complexes. Stop by to purchase books, maps, and more. Opening and closing dates vary, but most have shortened hours (or are closed) between September and late May. See the park newspaper, **Yellowstone**, for current hours. **Ranger stations** are located in most developed areas.

The Albright Visitor Center, located within the historic Bachelor Officers Quarters at Mammoth Hot Springs, has park and trip-planning information, a bookstore, exhibits on the park's history and wildlife, restrooms and free Wi-Fi. This center is open all year from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. and from late May through late August

from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m. For more information call **(307) 344-2263**.

The **Old Faithful Visitor Education Center** offers immaculate views of the geyser and has park information, souvenirs, and an exhibit. It is usually open mid-April to November 1, and from December 15 to March 15. For more information call **(307) 344-2750**.

The **Canyon Visitor Education Center** contains a variety of engaging exhibits and a film explaining Yellowstone's geologic story. The Canyon Visitor Education Center is expected to open mid-April to November 1 and reopens as a warming hut from December 15 to March 9. Call **(307) 344-2550**.

Exhibits and a film at the **Grant Village Visitor Center**, tell the story of the 1988 Yellowstone fires. Grant Village is typically open from late May to early October. Call **(307) 344-2109** for more information.

Fishing Bridge Visitor Center houses exhibits about Yellowstone's birds and wildlife. A scale model of Yellowstone Lake reveals the amazing geology of the lake bottom. The visitor center, a National Historic Landmark, is open from early June through mid-October. Opening day each season varies. Call **(307) 344-2109** for more information.

Norris Geyser Basin Museum & Information Station, another National Historic Landmark, is located in Norris Geyser Basin and houses exhibits on geothermal features. It is open mid-May through mid-October. Be advised that visitor facilities at this site like restrooms and drinking fountains may be periodically unavailable. Call **(307) 344-2812** for more information.

The **Museum of the National Park Ranger** at Norris Campground, is part of the Fort Yellowstone National Historic Landmark District. It has various exhibits and is typically open from late July through early September. Please call **(307) 344-2109** for more information.



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As RVers, we know the allure of the open road and the freedom it offers. However, with freedom comes responsibility, including the important decision of securing insurance.

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RV insurance is designed to cover various types of RVs, including travel trailers, toy haulers, motor homes, fifth wheels, and camper vans. While liability insurance is not required for most travel trailers, having RV coverage could benefit you and your adventures.

How can RV insurance protect you?

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- **Coverage for theft and vandalism:** Could help with repairs or replace your trailer with less out-of-pocket expenses if it's lost or stolen.
- **Natural disasters and weather events:** May cover the cost of damage from storms, floods, or other natural disasters.

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For example, your auto policy may only cover your trailer while you're on the road, not if you're parked or at a campsite. The same goes for home insurance—if you're on your home's property it might be covered, but damage from a storm at a campground wouldn't be.

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Madison Information Station at Madison Junction in the Madison Picnic Area, provides information, and Junior Ranger activities. Open from early June to late September. Call (307) 344-2109 for more information.

The **West Thumb Information Station** offers park information and a bookstore. It's also a meeting place for interpretive walks and talks. It is open late May through late September. The **West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center**, located outside the park on U.S. 20 in West Yellowstone, is open year-round (weekends in winter). Please call (307) 344-2876 for more information.

The **Yellowstone Tribal Heritage Center** highlights Native American artists and scholars, providing an opportunity for Indigenous peoples to engage visitors formally and informally. It is located between Old Faithful Lodge and Visitor Education Center. For a schedule of activities and operating hours visit yellowstone.org/yellowstone-tribal-heritage-center.

OUTSIDE THE PARK

The **West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce Visitor Center** is located at

30 Yellowstone Avenue in West Yellowstone.

The **Montana Historical Society** in Helena, Montana, has exhibits related to Montana's history, culture, art, and landscape.

The **Museum of the Rockies**, in Bozeman, houses one of the world's largest collections of dinosaur skeletons, permanent exhibits on Western history and American Indians, the Martin Children's Discovery Complex, and a planetarium.

Interest in fine art and wildlife can be explored at the **National Museum of Wildlife Art** in Jackson, Wyoming.

The **Buffalo Bill Center of the West** in Cody, Wyoming, tells the story of the American West in five museums under one roof, including The Draper Museum of Natural History, which takes you on an interactive journey through the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem. At the **Buffalo Bill Dam Visitor Center** near Cody, you can look straight down a 353-foot drop to the Shoshone River.

In Pinedale, Wyoming, the **Museum of the Mountain Men** focuses on the life of Jim Bridger and tells the story of other fur trappers and early explorers. The museum has a \$10 entry fee and is open from May 1 to October 31. Children under 12 are free.



IMPORTANT NUMBERS

Emergency	911
NPS General Information	(307) 344-7381
Road Updates	(307) 344-2117
Park Tip Line (to report crime)	(307) 344-2132
NPS Campground Update (recorded message)	(307) 344-2114
NPS TDD	(307) 344-2386
NPS Accessibility Coordinator - ♿	(307) 344-2314
Sign Language Interpreters for NPS programs (3 weeks in advance)	(307) 344-2251
Yellowstone National Park Lodges (Lodging, Dining, Camping, Activities)	(307) 344-7901
Reservations	(307) 344-7311
TTY	(307) 739-3301

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Lodging & Dining



Reflecting the natural surroundings of Yellowstone, televisions, radios and air conditioning are not available at in-park lodging. Wi-Fi is available for a fee at some lodging/dining facilities in the park; free Wi-Fi is available at the Albright Visitor Center in Mammoth Hot Springs. There is limited cell phone service at Old Faithful, Mammoth, Grant Village, Yellowstone Lake and Canyon areas.

One of the best ways to experience Yellowstone National Park is by participating in a ranger program, which are offered throughout the park year-round. Check the newspaper or the NPS App for daily activities and at visitor centers for local announcements for special pop-up programs. Guided tours and private custom trips are available with transportation at yellowstonenationalparklodges.com. Wheelchair-accessible accommodations are available on a limited basis. **Pets** are allowed in the park and can stay with guests in cabin-type accommodations for a fee. They must be on a leash, and are not allowed on boardwalks, hiking trails, in the backcountry, or in thermal areas. All park accommodations are **non-smoking**.

Yellowstone National Park Lodges, Yellowstone's principle concessioner, offers dining at hotels and lodges in the park, ranging from historic, full-service dining rooms to casual cafeterias and quick-service outlets. Due to renovation projects, Yellowstone National Park is modifying their food service as well as operating dates and times at various locations. Details can be found at yellowstonenationalparklodges.com/alerts.

Children's menus are always available. Suggested dress is casual. Dinner **reservations** are required at some dining rooms; breakfast and lunch seating is first come, first

served. Deli lunches to go are available from dining rooms throughout the park. Place your order the day before. **Quick-service** options are also available at cafeterias, fast food outlets, and Yellowstone General Stores located throughout the park.

Lodging, dining and activity reservations are strongly recommended. For reservations, call **Yellowstone National Park Lodges** at (307) 344-7311 or visit yellowstonenationalparklodges.com. If you are already at Yellowstone, front desk staff at park lodges can make lodging and activity reservations for you. Be sure to ask about availability and openings, as some dining options may have modified operations. American Express, VISA, MasterCard, Diners Club, Discover, Carte Blanche and JCB are accepted.

Roosevelt Lodge Cabins, historic and rustic, are located in a favorite area of Theodore Roosevelt. The Roughrider Cabins have wood-burning stoves, but no private baths. The Frontier Cabins are heated and have private baths. The **Roosevelt Dining Room** continues the cowboy atmosphere—specialties include mouthwatering baby back ribs, Roosevelt baked beans and crispy fried chicken. Ride out to Yancey's Hole on horseback or wagon for a **Roosevelt Old West Dinner Cookout**. Enjoy Western entertainment and a hearty dinner of steak, corn, coleslaw, cornbread muffins, homemade Roosevelt baked beans, watermelon and fruit crisp from June 7 to September 14, 2025. Dinner cookouts begin service on June 8.

Canyon Lodge and Cabins has opened five new lodges over the past few years, adding to its existing lodge rooms and Western cabins. With more than 500 rooms and cabins, Canyon Lodge and Cabins now feature

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the most accommodations in the park. The **M66 Grill & Lounge** has a full-service restaurant and bar that serves soup, salads, and traditional American fare, with a lounge offering drinks and appetizers. Meals are all first come, first served. The restaurant is open daily from May 16 to October 26, 2025. **Canyon Lodge Eatery** will be open daily from May 16 to October 26, 2025, and features quick, hot entrées that are customizable, with a focus on local ingredients. **Canyon Lodge Ice Creamery** serves Montana-made ice cream from Big Dipper Ice Cream and is open daily from May 16 to September 10, 2025.

Old Faithful Lodge Cabins are located near Old Faithful Inn and include a one-story main lodge built in the 1920s featuring massive logs and stone pillars. Tremendous views of the Old Faithful Geyser can be seen from the lobby. Frontier Cabins have private bathrooms; budget cabins do not. Old Faithful Lodge Cabins are open May 9 through October 5, 2025. The **Old Faithful Lodge Cafeteria** offers quick meals including hot entrées, deli sandwiches, pastas, salads and grab-and-go items. Want a snack? Visit the **Old Faithful Lodge Bake Shop** for fresh muffins, bagels, sandwiches and ice cream.

The **Old Faithful Inn**, a National Historic Landmark, opened in 1904 and was built of local logs and stone, adjacent to its namesake geyser. The lobby features a stone fireplace and a handcrafted clock. A variety of room types are available. The **Old Faithful Inn Dining Room's** specialties include beef, pork, seafood, chicken and vegetarian options. Buffet also available. Reservations are required for dinner only. Advance online dinner reservations are available only to overnight in-park lodging and campground guests. Guests

with reservations at the Old Faithful Inn can make reservations up to 60 days prior to arrival. Guests with reservations at other Yellowstone National Park lodges and campgrounds can make reservations up to 30 days prior. Guests will receive an email with additional information within the booking time frame that includes an exclusive link for access to make dinner reservations online. Non-lodging guests can visit the host stand for same-day availability. Breakfast and lunch are first-come, first-served. **Bear Paw Deli** is perfect for on-the-go options—sandwiches, salads and ice cream for the road.

Old Faithful Snow Lodge and Cabins is an award-winning hotel with 100 lodge rooms and is open summer and winter. Its nearby Frontier and Western Cabins offer modern cabin-style accommodations. All have private baths. Custom chandeliers accent the **Obsidian Dining Room** where hearty meals are served. Dinner reservations are required in the winter. **Geyser Grill** serves breakfast sandwiches, burgers and deli selections.


Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel and Cabins was completed in the 1930s. It's historic hotel's Map Room contains a large, wooden map of the United States made of 15 types of wood from nine countries. Daily guided tours depart from Mammoth Hotel to popular in-park hot spots like, Lamar Valley, Yellowstone's Grand Canyon, Old Faithful and more depart from Mammoth Hotel. The Bear Den ski shop, located in the gift shop, offers equipment, lessons, tips, and tours for cross-country skiers and snowshoe enthusiasts who stay in the winter. Recently renovated facilities include hotel rooms and cabins with private baths. The first four-star green restaurant in the National Park system, the **Mammoth Hotel Dining Room** is known for its value-priced entrees

with occasional views of elk and bison grazing nearby. Dinner reservations accepted only in winter. Swing by the **Mammoth Terrace Grill** for breakfast sandwiches, fast food, soup, salad and ice cream and stop at the **Mammoth Hotel Map Room** for a full selection of espressos, coffee, and tea. In the evening, enjoy a signature or classic beverage from the full bar.

The **Grant Village** lodging complex is comprised of six two-story buildings, each with 50 rooms, all with private baths. The village is situated on the southwestern shore of Yellowstone Lake, about 20 miles from Old Faithful. NPS visitor center and Yellowstone Lake are nearby. **Grant Village Dining Room** serves a buffet breakfast, sandwiches and salads for lunch, and a range of value-priced dinner items like smoked bison bratwursts and wild Alaska fish & chips. Reservations are required for dinner only. **Grant Village Lake House** is ideal for casual dining with a view of Yellowstone Lake.

Lake Yellowstone Hotel and Cabins is a designated National Historic Landmark and a Colonial Revival masterpiece. Facilities include classically appointed hotel rooms and comfortable cabins. All have private baths. **Lake Hotel Dining Room** serves specialty sandwiches and entrée salads are served at lunch, while dinner includes fresh and savory entrees. Menu focuses on local and sustainable cuisine. Dinner reservations required. Stop by the **Lake Hotel Deli** for sandwiches, soup, snacks, desserts and Starbucks coffee.

With a rocking chair-rich porch, **Lake Lodge Cabins** delivers photo-worthy views of shimmering reflections of the mountains on Yellowstone Lake. Cabins with private baths are grouped nearby. The **Lake Lodge Cafeteria** offers hot entrees, salads, sandwiches and to-go items. **Wylie's Canteen at Lake Lodge** is newly remodeled and will serve lunch and dinner, starting in mid-June 2025.

FOR DINING INFORMATION, PLEASE SCAN QR CODE		Meals	Espresso Service	Reservations required	Lounge	Lobby Bar	Stage Coach Rides	Guided Trail Rides	General Store	ATM	Coin Laundry	Interpretive Tours	Post Office	Wheelchair Access	Medical Clinic	Service Station
																
Roosevelt Lodge Cabins		•			•	•	•	•	•							•
Canyon Lodge and Cabins		•		•	•		•	•	•	•	•			•		
Old Faithful Lodge Cabins		•	•		•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Old Faithful Inn		•	•		•		•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Old Faithful Snow Lodge and Cabins		•	•		•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel and Cabins		•	•		•		•		•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Grant Village		•	•		•			•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•
Lake Yellowstone Hotel & Cabins		•		•	•			•	•	•		•	•	•		•
Lake Yellowstone		•	•		•	•			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

Park Regulations & Safety



Make the most of your visit by becoming acquainted with these safety precautions and park rules. Carefully read park regulations listed here, in park newspapers and posted at visitor centers and ranger stations.

DRONES

Drones are strictly prohibited in the park.

FIREARMS

Firearms regulations vary by park. Check with the NPS at the park before your trip for most up-to-date information.

FIRES

Campfires are restricted to designated campgrounds and picnic areas with permanent fire grates. You may use any dead, downed and detached material as firewood. Chainsaws are prohibited. Some campgrounds sell firewood. Please use extreme caution with all fires and smoking materials and check fire restrictions in advance. You must completely extinguish fires before leaving an area.

SPEED LIMIT

The maximum speed limit in the park is 45 mph, or slower where posted, or as conditions warrant. Use caution especially in late evening and early morning, and during rain or snow, when wildlife is more difficult to see. Always err on the side of caution.

INVASIVE SPECIES AND BOATING

All watercraft must be inspected for Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) before entering Yellowstone's waters and it is illegal to use live bait. Motorized boats are only allowed on Lewis and Yellowstone lakes. Boats intended

for use on Yellowstone Lake must have a permit and undergo inspection. Motorized and non-motorized watercraft can obtain permits and inspections from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. daily during the summer at Bridge Bay Ranger Station, Grant Marina, Lewis Lake Ranger Station (re-inspection only), Bechler Ranger Station (Angler float tubes only). Inspection station contact information: Grant Marina (406) 581-9040; Bridge Bay Marina (406) 823-9006. For more information, visit nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/boating.htm.

PERMITS

Permits are required for boating, fishing, overnight hiking or camping in the backcountry. Permits are available from visitor centers or ranger stations. To ensure safety, read the accompanying information you receive with the permit. Talk to park rangers about trail conditions, bear sightings, wildlife migrations, weather warnings and stream crossings.

PETS

Pets must be leashed at all times and are prohibited on trails, in the backcountry and at all thermal areas. Pets are allowed in campgrounds and cabin units of the park's lodging facilities, but may not be left unattended. There are no kennels in the park. Guests are charged a one-time \$25 fee for each unit occupied by an animal during the stay. For information about pets in park lodging, visit yellowstonenationalparklodges.com/stay/plan/traveling-with-pets.

SWIMMING

Bathing, wading, or swimming in any thermal feature or stream whose waters flow exclusively from thermal features is prohibited because

it can damage the hydrothermal system. The NPS discourages swimming in park rivers, streams and lakes due to extremely cold temperatures and the risk of hypothermia.

TECHNICAL CLIMBING

Park mountains are not well suited for climbing due to loose and broken rock. For your safety, climbing is discouraged. Climbing in Yellowstone's Grand Canyon is illegal.

VANDALISM

It is illegal to deface, damage or remove any plants, animals or minerals. With your help, Yellowstone can be protected.

WILDLIFE

Feeding wildlife is strictly prohibited. Do not tease, crowd or frighten animals. Startled animals may charge—bison can sprint 37 miles per hour! Stay at least 25 yards from most animals and 100 yards away from bears and wolves.

STAYING SAFE

In wilderness areas, remember that you will experience the land on its own terms. Talk with park rangers before hiking to learn about survival and seasonal hazards. Be alert and know your limits. For hiking safety tips, see the "Walking & Hiking" chapter; for bear safety tips, see the "Nature & Wildlife" chapter. *Note: Staying overnight in the backcountry requires a permit.*

BLISTERS

To prevent blisters, wear comfortable shoes or boots that suit your needs and the terrain. Likewise, wear quality outdoor socks to cushion and protect your feet.

FALLING TREES

Avoid areas with dead trees, including areas that have burned. Dead trees may fall

without warning, especially on windy days. Heed park rangers' warnings about areas to avoid and be alert, even in your car and especially on windy days.

GEYSERS AND SCALDING WATER

All thermal pools are near or above boiling temperature. Venturing off marked trails or boardwalks is hazardous and prohibited; the thin crusts around thermal features may suddenly break. Scalding hot water inflicts serious and possibly fatal burns. Keep small children safe in these areas.

GIARDIASIS

Giardia lamblia is present in streams and lakes at Yellowstone, and renders water non-potable unless boiled or treated. If you develop symptoms such as diarrhea, cramps and bloating, consult a physician. Carry adequate filtered or bottled water for short hikes and, on longer trips, boil water for at least one minute before drinking or for use in cooking.

HYPOTHERMIA

Hypothermia is a potentially fatal condition that occurs when you are so cold your body can no longer warm itself. You can even experience hypothermia if you are tired and wet on a breezy summer day. If you find yourself shivering and feeling disoriented, seek shelter and drink warm liquids. This serious condition may require medical assistance.

LIGHTNING

If you see a storm developing while hiking, retreat to a lower elevation to reduce your risk of being struck by lightning. Avoid water, ridges, isolated trees and boulders. If you feel the tingle of an electrical charge building up, crouch down, lean forward and place your hands on your knees. Do not seek refuge under rock overhangs.

Visitor Services



Park facilities begin opening in early May, with all services open by early June. Services and facilities begin closing after Labor Day. Please contact NPS or visit nps.gov/yell for current dates and hours.

BANKING SERVICES

ATMs are located at Old Faithful Inn, Old Faithful Snow Lodge, Lake Yellowstone Hotel, Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel, Grant Village, Canyon Lodge and general stores throughout the park. There are banks in Gardiner and West Yellowstone in Montana, and in Jackson and Cody in Wyoming.

CAMPING SUPPLIES

Yellowstone General Stores have camping and fishing equipment, groceries, sundries and souvenirs. The Mammoth Hot Springs store is generally open year-round. The Fishing Bridge RV Park also carries a limited stock of RV supplies. For more camping information, see the "Camping" chapter.

DINING & SERVICES

Yellowstone National Park Lodges' hotels, restaurants, cafeterias and quick service outlets have food service. Opening and closing dates are subject to change. Yellowstone General Stores operate several snack bars and sell groceries and grab-and-go items. The Kids Activity Book, full of games and puzzles, as well as valuable coupons for parents, is available at all Yellowstone National Park Lodge dining rooms. See the "Lodging and Dining" chapter for more information. Download the free National Park Service app (and offline content) before you arrive in the park for interactive maps, self-guided

tours, and information on food, restrooms, and shopping.

EMERGENCIES AND MEDICAL SERVICE

Dial 911 for emergency, fire, medical or ranger assistance or to report accidents or injuries. To contact a park ranger, call **(307) 344-7381**. The NPS emergency medical technicians and park medics are on duty 24 hours a day, year-round.

Medcor, Inc. operates three patient-care facilities within the park. Patients requiring advanced medical care are transported to area hospitals or medical centers.

The Mammoth Hot Springs Clinic is open daily from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. between May 27 and September 28. Please call **(307) 344-7965** for more information. The **Old Faithful Clinic** is open seasonally from mid-May to October 27. Between mid-May through the end of September the clinic is open daily from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. For appointments or assistance, please call **(307) 545-7325**. **Lake Clinic**, located at the north end of Yellowstone Lake, is open seasonally from mid-May through September. It is open daily from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. For more information, call **(307) 242-7241**.

GIFT SHOPS

Gift shops are located throughout the park at all lodging facilities and at Yellowstone General Stores. Yellowstone National Park Lodges' gift stores, located in the hotels, sell apparel, gifts and souvenirs. Inspired by nature and shaped by history, exclusive products reflect the park's heritage. Convenience items such as camera memory cards, videos, sundries

and regional books are also available. Regional specialties, including pottery, carvings, gourmet foods and art prints, focus on the Yellowstone lifestyle. At Old Faithful, **artists-in-residence** display their work, which is available for sale.

At Mammoth Hotel, an award-winning gift store (renowned for its devotion to the impact of climate change) focuses on locally sourced, regional products, "Made in USA," and sustainable and upcycled merchandise. Book signings, food tastings and artist demonstrations are scheduled at various locations throughout the summer. Pick up an *Experience Planner* for a list of stores and their locations in Yellowstone.

Visit the Yellowstone General Store in Grant Village or *Yellowstone Adventures* in Canyon Village for camping and fishing gear, hiking apparel and footwear. At the historic Yellowstone General Store in Fishing Bridge, the *Spirit of Yellowstone* showcases Native American and Western jewelry, artwork, curios and gifts. Note that gift shops will open with their corresponding lodging. For more information, visit yellowstonenationalparklodges.com/shop.

LAUNDRY AND PUBLIC SHOWERS

In summer, Grant Village Campground, Fishing Bridge RV Park and Canyon Campground offer coin-operated laundries and pay showers. Lake Lodge and Old Faithful Snow Lodge have laundry only. Old Faithful Inn, Old Faithful Lodge and Mammoth Hotel have showers only. In winter, Old Faithful Snow Lodge has laundry facilities.

LOST AND FOUND

You can turn in or trace lost and found articles at any visitor center, ranger station or hotel front desk.

You can also submit an online form at nps.gov/yell/lostandfound.htm or tinyurl.com/y7f6zzd7

POSTAL SERVICES

The park's main post office is located at Mammoth Hot Springs. In summer, there are post office facilities at Old Faithful, Lake Village, Canyon Village, and Grant Village.

RELIGIOUS SERVICES

Religious services are held at many in-park locations and in nearby communities during summer and on religious holidays. For times and locations of in-park services, ask at visitor centers or lodging front desks.

SPECIAL SERVICES

The official NPS app includes up-to-date accessibility information for facilities and trails. Download it for free before you arrive. Visitors can request a printed accessibility guide at nps.gov/yell/contacts.htm. For trip planning information, contact the **Park Accessibility Coordinator**, Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190; **(307) 344-2251** or visit nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/accessibility.htm.

SERVICE STATIONS

Yellowstone Park Service Stations operates seven full-service gas stations and four auto-towing and repair shops in the park. Gas, auto accessories, tire repairs, oil changes and routine maintenance are available only during summer. LP propane gas bottle-filling plants are at Grant Village and Fishing Bridge. Towing and repair facilities are located at Old Faithful, Grant Village, Fishing Bridge and Canyon Village. Repair services are only available from the end of May to beginning of September. Call **(406) 848-7333** or **(406) 848-7548**.

History & Culture



Throughout its dynamic history, Yellowstone has inspired awe in all its visitors—American Indians, mountain men, explorers and modern-day travelers.

THE EARLIEST HUMANS IN YELLOWSTONE

The human history of the vast Yellowstone region goes back more than 11,000 years. How far back has yet to be determined, but their presence probably coincided with the end of the last period of ice coverage, approximately 12,000 years ago. Human occupation of the greater Yellowstone area seems to follow environmental changes of the last 15,000 years. Glaciers covered most of what is now Yellowstone Park. They receded and left behind rivers and valleys that people likely followed in pursuit of Ice Age mammals such as the mammoth and the giant bison.



The first people arrived in this region sometime before 11,000 years ago. Archaeologists have found little physical evidence of their presence other than distinctive stone tools and projectile points. From these artifacts, scientists surmise that they hunted mammals and ate berries, seeds and roots.

As the climate in the Yellowstone region became warmer and drier, the animals, vegetation and human lifestyles also changed. Large Ice Age animals that were adapted to cold and wet conditions became extinct. People, who could no longer rely on large mammals for food, depended on smaller animals, such as deer and bighorn sheep. Plants such as bitterroot and prickly pear also became important staples.

HISTORIC TRIBES

Tribal oral histories indicate extensive use of the Yellowstone area during the Little Ice Age. **Kiowa** stories place their ancestors here from around C.E. 1400 to C.E. 1700. Ancestors to contemporary Blackfeet, Cayuse, Coeur d'Alene, Bannock, Nez Perce, Shoshone and Umatilla, and other tribes continued to travel the park on the already established trails. They visited geysers, conducted ceremonies, hunted, gathered plants and minerals and engaged in trade. Some tribes used the Fishing Bridge area as a rendezvous site.

The **Crow** occupied the country generally east of the park, and the **Blackfeet** occupied the country to the north. The **Shoshone**, **Bannock** and other tribes of the plateaus to the west traversed the park area annually to hunt on the plains to the east. Other Shoshonean groups hunted in open areas west and south of Yellowstone.

In the early 1700s, some tribes in this region began to acquire horses. Some historians believe the horse fundamentally changed lifestyles because tribes could now travel faster and farther to hunt bison and other animals of the plains. The horse, however, does not seem to have changed the tribes' traditional use of the Yellowstone area.

THE "SHEEP EATERS"

Some groups of Shoshone who adapted to a mountain existence chose not to acquire the horse. These included the Sheep Eaters, or Tukudika, who used their dogs to transport food, hides and other provisions.

Sheep Eaters acquired their name from the bighorn sheep whose migrations they followed. Bighorn sheep were a significant part of their diet, and they crafted the carcasses into a wide array of tools and implements. For example, they made bows from sheep horn made pliable from soaking in hot springs. The tribe traded these bows, clothing and hides to other tribes.

THE EXPLORERS

The written history of Yellowstone dates back to a vague and superstitious journal entry written by **William Clark** when he interviewed an American Indian after his return to St. Louis nearly 200 years ago: "There is frequently heard a loud noise like thunder, which makes the earth tremble; [Indians] state that they seldom go there because [their] children cannot sleep—and conceive it possessed of spirits, who were adverse that men should be near them." American Indians laugh at this; they were not afraid. Explorers Lewis and Clark did not venture into the land, even for a look, during their expedition across the northwest region of the continent from 1804 to 1806.

A member of their expedition, **John Colter**, however, hadn't had his fill of the wilds when Lewis and Clark headed back to St. Louis, Missouri, after their epic journey. He spent a full winter, probably during 1807–1808, trapping and wandering through what is now the park, looking for American Indian trading partners. Three years later, he related his discoveries in St. Louis, but his stories of the region were mocked and called "mad hallucinations."

Talk of this strange, almost alien, landscape resisted verification. Most of the eyewitnesses, fur trappers and traders, gave up their profession when the beaver hat went out of style around 1840, and Yellowstone was abandoned by the European Americans again and left to the American Indians.

Recounting doubtful tales of wonder became a mountain man's game, a form of pure entertainment far removed from the serious matters of daily life. No one seemed to enjoy the storytelling more than the notorious trapper **Jim Bridger**. His very real contribution to the mapping of the West was often a side note to his many outrageous "Bridger Stories," which still live on as part of Yellowstone's legendary past.

After the Civil War, people turned their attention once again to the western frontier where gold miners were just giving up their mostly futile search for gold in Yellowstone. Called lies or delusions of drink, the miners' tales nevertheless fanned curiosity in the local saloons. A group of eager adventurers, **Folsom**, **Cook** and **Peterson**, tired of the speculation, were determined to experience it all for themselves. Upon seeing the eruption of the Great Fountain Geyser, "We could not contain our enthu-

siasm; with one accord we all took off our hats and yelled with all our might."

NATIONAL PARK STATUS

Fortunately, one of the friends of those early adventurers would become the park's first superintendent, **Nathaniel P. Langford**. Recalling Bridger's tall tales, he rallied a distinguished group of local leaders, including the surveyor general of Montana, and set out the next year, in 1870, to sort fable from fact. These men, in awe of the landscape, plotted out the campaign that would help protect this magical place from private ownership and exploitation.

At their urging, **Dr. Ferdinand V. Hayden**, director of the U.S. Geological & Geographical Survey of the Territories, mounted an official exploration. Knowing Congress would have to see proof to believe it, Hayden brought along **Thomas Moran**, a renowned artist, and **William Henry Jackson**, the famous landscape photographer. Their visual accounts and a 500-page land survey confirmed the incredible truth. Congress voted to set aside 2.1 million acres for Yellowstone National Park on March 1, 1872.



The establishment of Yellowstone marked a revolution in the human relationship with nature. For the first time, preservation of America's most remarkable landscapes became a common national and international goal. Exhibits at the **Albright Visitor Center** bring the fascinating story of Yellowstone's history to life. Visit daily from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

■ Preservation



Finding a workable balance between preserving a unique ecosystem and accommodating its visitors is, at best, a trial and error process. NPS management is based upon agency mission, guided by science, and balanced with visitor experience goals.

During the park's early history, laundries were sometimes located near the geysers and hot pools. At one time, visitors tried injecting soaps to set off geyser eruptions. Predators were hunted and roads were built. The balance had tipped, all in good faith, toward a public amusement park.

Gradually, the NPS moved toward minimal interference with the park's natural state.

Yellowstone, large as it may be, is not a self-contained ecosystem. It is dynamically related to an area far beyond its boundaries. **Three massive river systems**, the Snake, the Yellowstone and the Missouri, originate in the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem. The underground geologic structure and processes that sustain the complex hydrothermal features in the park extend beyond park borders. Animals also migrate through adjacent public and private lands in search of food and water.

Programs were initiated to better protect the park, its wildlife and its resources. Park programs, exhibits and literature educated visitors about the park's fragile ecosystem.

Boardwalks help to preserve the delicate hydrothermal areas and wildlife management programs protect bears, trout and trumpeter

swans. Regulations that protect natural and cultural resources also keep visitors safe. The process of maintaining the balance of nature, however, is an ongoing one. Park officials, scientists, and others continue to study Yellowstone for clues that will help them preserve what may be one of the last wildland ecosystems remaining in the world's Temperate Zone.

FIRE-A NATURAL PROCESS

In 1988, the park experienced the greatest ecological event in the history of national parks. With raw, unbridled power, several fires raged in and around the park, affecting an area of 793,880 acres in the park. The extent of the 1988 fires focused worldwide attention on Yellowstone.

In its aftermath, forests began to regrow and other fires have occurred. Most biologists and naturalists believe that naturally-caused wildfires are inevitable processes, part of the complex and intertwined natural forces that recycle nutrients back into the earth.

Fires broke out in the early 1700s and the mid-1800s, and evidence shows that this has happened 300 times in the last 10,000 years. There are programs and publications about fires at the visitor centers. The exhibit, "Yellowstone and Fire," can be viewed at Grant Village Visitor Center. Stop by—it's an amazing story.

RECYCLING

Yellowstone National Park recycles aluminum and steel cans, plastic containers, glass and paper products. Please place

BUFFALO SOLDIERS OF THE 25TH INFANTRY



This famous photo features the **Buffalo Soldiers of the 25th Infantry Regiment Bicycle Corps** who volunteered to test if bicycles could replace horses in the U.S. Army. Stationed at Fort Missoula, the soldiers embarked on the trip on single-speed bicycles that weighed more than 30 pounds without the benefits of modern features—no shocks or knobby tires. The soldiers carried a full kit—provisions, parts that weighed more than 100 pounds and rode on unpaved roads, riding 300 miles over an eight days to reach Fort Yellowstone. The soldiers faced discrimination and inequities, but were ultimately recognized as among the best troops in the service. Their ride to Yellowstone was a precursor to their extraordinary 1,900-mile expedition from Fort Missoula to Saint Louis, Missouri, in 1897.

FUN FACTS



Q. WHEN WERE WOLVES REINTRODUCED INTO YELLOWSTONE?

A. Wolves were reintroduced into Yellowstone in the 1990s. The wolves that were reintroduced flourished and there are now over 300 of their descendants living in the Greater Yellowstone Area.

recyclable materials in marked receptacles located in most developed areas; all lodges areas and campgrounds.

SUSTAINABLE LODGING & DINING

Yellowstone National Park Lodges is committed to providing "Legendary Hospitality with a Softer Footprint," which aims to reduce environmental impacts through its business practices. "Our Softer Footprint" focuses on saving energy and water, reducing fossil fuel use, promotion of alternative energy sources and increasing healthy and sustainable cuisine offerings throughout the park.

Recently, Yellowstone National Park Lodges has been able to divert more than 60 percent of its waste from landfill disposal through innovative recycling, composting, reuse and source-reduction programs. Additionally, more than 50 percent of its total food purchases are sustainable—including locally sourced, third-party certified and sustainably harvested ingredients and products.

DO YOUR PART IN THE PARK

On Earth Day 2022, Yellowstone Forever and Yellowstone National Park announced new sustainability efforts to meet the challenges of the future while setting the standard for resource conservation and stewardship worldwide. You can help too! While visiting the park, you can help protect Yellowstone's fragile environment. Please recycle, take advantage of the linen reuse program, turn down the heat, turn off the lights and make sure all water faucets are shut off before leaving your room. When dining in park restaurants, consider ordering one of the many sustainable menu items. In gift shops, look for products made in the USA and for labels which denote sustainable products.

Stewardship does not end at national park borders. You can help protect Yellowstone and other national parks from the impact of climate change and pollution by adopting green practices at home. Visit yellowstonenationalparklodges.com/sustainability for a list of green-living tips and more information about climate change in the national parks.

THE WOLVES OF YELLOWSTONE

Following an absence of more than 70 years, wolves once again inhabit the park. In March of 1995 and again in 1996, a total of 31 gray wolves were released in Yellowstone National Park. The goal of the wolf restoration program is to maintain 30 breeding wolf pairs with an equitable distribution throughout the three Rocky Mountain recovery areas including greater Yellowstone, central Idaho and northwest Montana.

Winter Wolf Discovery Package—

Join a Yellowstone Forever Educator for an opportunity to spot wolves in the

Lamar Valley. Package includes 4 nights lodging, all meals, and expert instruction by a Yellowstone Forever Field Educator. For more information, visit yellowstonenationalparklodges.com or call (307) 344-7311.

VOLUNTEER PROGRAMS

Each year Yellowstone welcomes full-time volunteers from the **Student Conservation Association (SCA)**, a national non-profit organization. The volunteers, who may be high school or college students or other adults, assist with vital activities from trail maintenance or bear management to backcountry patrol or assisting park visitors. In return, they receive valuable training and experience, have some expenses paid and are able to live and work in one of America's premier national parks. For information about the SCA program, call (603) 543-1700 or visit thesca.org.

The **Youth Conservation Corps (YCC)** is a summer employment program for young people ages 15-18. Through work projects done in the park, this program provides enrollees with a better understanding of their environment and management of our natural resources, and introduces them to the spectrum of career possibilities with the NPS. This residential program runs from June through August, and is based at Mammoth Hot Springs. YCC gives participants opportunities to explore park wilderness while working on projects focusing on rehabilitation of trails and backcountry areas, bridge reconstruction, resource management, maintenance and research. For more information visit nps.gov/yell/learn/management/yccjobs.htm.

For information about the **NPS Volunteer Program**, and other volunteer opportunities, visit volunteer.gov.

WHERE
WE COME
ALIVE

Sign up for **Tree-Mail™** and stay connected to inspiring stories about recreation and restoration in National Forests and Grasslands.

National Forest Foundation

Ashley National Forest by Alex Butterfield

Things To Do



Listen to the sound of long summer days calling you to experience adventure in Yellowstone's mountain wilderness. The backcountry beckons anglers to streams teeming with fish, and hikers to trails winding through meadows undulating with wildflowers. Whether fishing on the Madison River, taking a guided tour or riding horseback through fields of wildflowers, you will enjoy exploring all the park has to offer.

WHAT TO WEAR

When preparing for any outdoor activity, program, or guided tour in Yellowstone, dress in layers, wear comfortable walking shoes or boots, always carry a jacket or sweatshirt, and bring rain gear and plenty of water and extra food.

PARK PROGRAMS

Yellowstone Forever is the park's non-profit partner for education and operates the Yellowstone Forever Institute, a field school that offers year-round learning adventures on subjects such as geysers, wildlife, photography and park history. Courses are based at the Lamar Buffalo Ranch Field Campus, the Yellowstone Overlook Field Campus, at park hotels and in the backcountry. They also offer private tours including wildlife watching, day hiking and geology exploration.

When visiting the park, please check at the local visitor center or message boards to see what activities are being offered.

FIELD SEMINARS & PRIVATE TOURS

Many **authorized guides and outfitters** are ready to show you the wonders of

Yellowstone—there is truly something for everyone! Contact the National Park Service at **(307) 344-7381** or visit **nps.gov/yell** to learn more.

BICYCLING

Pedaling through Yellowstone can be a memorable, but potentially dangerous, experience. Very few bike paths exist, there are no bicycle lanes along roadways, and bikes are prohibited on boardwalks and backcountry trails. Wear safety gear, including a helmet and high-visibility clothing, because park roads are narrow and winding. Be especially mindful of mirrors protruding from campers and RVs that may pass you from behind. A rear-view mirror on your bike and a helmet can be life-saving essentials. Bicycle rentals are available at Old Faithful Snow Lodge, where you can bicycle on roads and paths in and around the Upper Geyser Basin.

FISHING

Understandably, fly fishing is popular throughout the park on Yellowstone's crystal-clear lakes, rivers and streams. In 2025, fishing season begins the Saturday of Memorial Day weekend and continues through October 31. In November 2024, Yellowstone National Park extended its fishing access to year-round at two spots: the Madison River from Wyoming/Montana state line to the park boundary near West Yellowstone, Montana, and the Gardner River from Osprey Falls to the Yellowstone River confluence near Gardiner, Montana (certain park waters have different seasons or regulations; learn more at park visitor centers). All anglers ages 16 and older must possess a valid Yellowstone National Park fishing permit (\$40 for three days) to fish in the park;



IT FEELS SO NATURAL WITH YOU

The southern Caribbean island of Curaçao welcomes you with the warmest embrace. From the moment you arrive, you're immersed in a world of vibrant color, rich culture, and a blend of European and Caribbean flair. Beyond its unique personality and charm, the island boasts endless adventures above and below the sea. Water lovers can enjoy scuba diving, snorkeling, jet skiing, boat trips, the ultimate beach day on one of over 35 beaches, and more. Back on land, activities include museums, spas, tours, biking, safari excursions, golf courses, festivals and beyond. Wherever you turn, you can count on a vibe like no other on an island that is sure to capture your heart.

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state permits are not valid. Anglers ages 15 and younger may either fish under direct supervision of an adult who has a fishing permit or obtain a free permit and fish without supervision. Fishing permits may be obtained at ranger stations, visitor centers, Yellowstone General Stores and Bridge Bay Marina. You can purchase fishing tackle from Yellowstone General Stores throughout the park.

BOATING

Bridge Bay Marina on Yellowstone Lake is the hub of boating activities. Lake cruises, boat rentals, guided charters, boat slips, marine supplies and ranger services are available. The Scenic-Cruiser boat tours on Yellowstone Lake run from mid-June to mid-September. You can rent a **rowboat** or **motorboat**, or charter a guided boat to take up to six passengers to cast a line at the hottest fishing spots or explore the expansive and beautiful Yellowstone Lake. Rentals are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Please note that guided fishing/sightseeing charter boats are not bookable online. Please contact Central Reservations at (307) 344-7311 between 7 a.m. and 7 p.m. MT, seven days a week. Fishing rods and tackle are provided on charters.

Boats, canoes, kayaks and rafts are not allowed on park rivers and streams, except the waterway between Lewis and Shoshone lakes, where only hand-propelled vessels are permitted. Launching facilities are located at Lewis Lake and on Yellowstone Lake at Bridge Bay Marina and Grant Village Campground. All water vessels (including float tubes) must have a permit, which can be obtained at Bridge Bay Marina or at ranger stations in the lake area. Non-motorized vessels are \$20 for seven days or \$30 for the season. Motorized vessels are \$40 for seven days or \$60 for the season. Each person on a vessel must have a Coast Guard-approved "wearable" personal floating device. This year, boating season begins May 31 and extends through October 31, 2025.

WILDLIFE WATCHING

During spring, summer and fall, wildlife is best spotted in the early morning and evening. In summer, **bears, bison** and **coyotes** are often seen in Hayden Valley, while mule deer inhabit the southern regions of the park. **Elk** often wander through meadows in Mammoth Hot Springs, the Upper and Midway geyser basins and the Lewis River area. Bighorn sheep sometimes con-

gregate in the Gardner River Canyon. You may also see **beavers, weasels, foxes, marmots** and other animals. **Wolf-watching** is a popular activity in Lamar Valley. You will see more of an animal's natural behavior and activity if you are sensitive to its need for space. Don't approach wildlife, especially those with offspring. View them from the safety of your vehicle. If an animal reacts to your presence, you are too close.

Each year a number of park visitors are injured by wildlife when they approach animals too closely. Always stay at least 100 yards (91 meters) away from bears and wolves and at least 25 yards (23 meters) away from all other large animals—bison, elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose and coyotes.

INTERPRETIVE SIGHTSEEING TOURS

Various interpretive sightseeing tours and activities are available through Yellow-

stone National Park Lodges, including photo safaris, wildlife tours, lake cruises, horseback trail rides, stagecoach adventures, tours in refurbished historic Yellow Buses and old west cookouts. Most tours and activities can be reserved in advance.

For information about all tours and activities, including schedules and rates, visit yellowstonenationalparklodges.com or call (307) 344-7311.

SUMMER ADVENTURE PACKAGES

Yellowstone National Park Lodges also offers a series of packages with well-planned itineraries that include many of the park's popular tours and activities, along with lodging and meals. Packages include: *Yellowstone for Families*, *Yellowstone Couples Adventure* and *Discover Yellowstone Adventure Package*. These can be booked by calling (307) 344-7311.



YELLOWSTONE FOREVER

Yellowstone Forever is the official education and fundraising nonprofit partner of Yellowstone National Park. They partner with the NPS to create opportunities for all people to experience, enhance and preserve Yellowstone forever.

Educational programming, products and services help people enjoy, understand and appreciate the wildlife, geology and cultural history of the park, while the opportunities Yellowstone Forever provides for volunteerism and community relations develop and

engage new stewards for the park. Through thoughtful cultivation and stewardship, Yellowstone Forever is building a network of philanthropic supporters dedicated to preserving the park.

Yellowstone Forever's mission of engagement and support through education and fundraising will ensure Yellowstone remains for generations to come. For more information or to join the community, contact Yellowstone Forever at yellowstone.org or call (406) 848-2400.



Winter Activities



Visit Yellowstone in winter to enjoy a truly spectacular landscape where snow blankets the park and geysers spout towering plumes of steam and water through cold, crisp air. Enjoy snowy scenery on snowcoach and snowmobile tours, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing and many other winter park programs. All snowcoach access is through guided tours only. As of 2022, Yellowstone visitors can now apply for the Non-commercially Guided Snowmobile Access Program which permits people to snowmobile in Yellowstone without the presence of a commercial guide. Permits are awarded through a lottery system hosted by [recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov). They cost \$40 per day plus a \$6 application fee. Lottery applications are accepted August 1 to 31. Permits are awarded in mid-September.

WHAT TO WEAR

Winter temperatures can range from well below 0°F throughout the day, to occasional highs in the 20s to 30s. Guard against frostbite by dressing warmly. When preparing for any park activity, dress in layers and wear a hat, gloves, sunglasses, sunscreen and comfortable boots.

WINTER LODGING AND SERVICES

Old Faithful Snow Lodge: This award-winning lodge is accessible in winter by over-snow vehicles only. A full-service dining room, the Geyser Grill quick-service restaurant, the Firehole Lounge, a gift shop and ice skating are available. Special events include Christmas and New Year's Eve dinners. The full-service Bear Den ski shop rents ski equipment and snowshoes, and offers ski guides, lessons and a repair shop. Snowcoach excursions run daily.

Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel: The only winter lodging accessible by car, the hotel features a dining room, espresso cart and lounge, ski shop, ski and snowshoe rentals, lessons, ski supplies, guided snowmobile tours and ice skating. Special events include Sunday breakfast buffets, a New Year's Eve dinner and themed dinners in January and February. As of fall 2019, remodeled rooms now feature private baths.

ROAD INFORMATION

All park roads are restricted to tracked, over-snow vehicles like snowmobiles and snowcoaches, except for the road from the North Entrance to Cooke City and the part of U.S. 191 that passes through the park's west side, which are open year-round. Yellowstone National Park Lodges offers shuttle service between Bozeman and Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel. *(See information below.)*

WINTER ADVENTURES

Whether you decide to join knowledgeable guides or explore the park on your own, you will treasure your memories of Yellowstone in winter. For details and rates on guided activities, contact Yellowstone National Park Lodges or pick up a *Winter Rates and Packages* brochure at any park hotel. Call (307) 344-7311 to book.

Cross-Country Skiing and Snowshoeing:

There are machine-groomed and skier tracked trails throughout the park. Miles of trails wind through the Old Faithful and Mammoth Hot Springs areas, where skiers can see hot springs, geysers, elk and bison. Ask at lodge ski shops for information about shuttles to and from trails. Ski rentals, waxes, trail maps and other equipment are available

at both hotel ski shops. In addition to regularly scheduled guided ski tours, there are also private and group lessons and ski tours. Ski maps are available at ski shops, visitor centers and hotels.

Ski/Snowshoe Shuttles:

Old Faithful Snow Lodge provides various convenient shuttles to other areas of the park. Call To make a snow coach reservation, please call (307) 344-7311. Ski Conditions Hotline: (307) 344-5699.

Snowcoach Shuttles:

Round-trip snowcoach transportation is available daily between Mammoth to Old Faithful Snow Lodge and can be reserved through the reservation office by calling (307) 344-7311.

Ski Tour:

Journey by snowcoach with opportunities for viewing wildlife to the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. A guide will lead you to the frozen, sculpted Lower Falls where glistening snow dusts the golden canyon walls. Custom ski trips available with advance notice.

Snowshoe Tours:

Certain sights are best enjoyed via the quiet strides of snowshoes. Even with no previous experience, "shoeing" over a glistening snowfield seems effortless. Feast your eyes on the unearthly plumes of geysers, stunning scenery, and wild creatures. Tours visit the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone or the backcountry and thermal basin of Old Faithful. Snowshoes are available at Old Faithful Snow Lodge.

Snowcoach Tours:

Yellowstone National Park Lodges' heated over-snow vehicles transport you into the heart of this snowy paradise of frosty bison, sculpted ghost-trees, steamy thermal pools and angelic trumpeter swans, while your guide reveals

the various chapters of the park's winter story. Choose between wildlife tours or day trips through Yellowstone's iconic landscapes.

LODGING & LEARNING

Active and engaging Lodging & Learning Packages allow you to explore the park with a knowledgeable instructor from the Yellowstone Forever Institute by day and then return to historic park hotels at night, where you can enjoy excellent meals, comfortable accommodations, and evening programs. Choose between the Old Faithful Winter Expedition or the Winter World Discovery Packages. All packages include transportation, accommodations, meals and instruction by a naturalist guide. To learn more about these award-winning programs, please visit [yellowstone.org/experience/lodging-learning](https://www.yellowstone.org/experience/lodging-learning) or call (307) 344-7311.

WARMING HUTS

Warming huts are located throughout the park for snowshoers, skiers, and over-the-snow travelers. Snacks, sandwiches, hot items and beverages are available at Madison, the only staffed hut. Vending machines and restrooms are located at the Canyon Visitor Education Center. There are no services at the Indian Creek and West Thumb warming huts.

PARK PROGRAMS

When visiting the park, check visitor center bulletin boards, the park newspaper, **Yellowstone**, or [nps.gov/yell](https://www.nps.gov/yell) for schedule of programs and activities.

For all reservations, scan the QR code or call (307) 344-7311. Lodging reservations are available up to 13 months in advance.

Scan the QR code for more information



Sights To See



During the summer, visit Yellowstone's most popular sights during the quieter times of the day, in the morning, or late afternoon and evening. You'll streamline your visits (and see even more) if you take advantage of the park's interpretive sight-seeing tours. And though many of the most popular sights that follow will be on your must-see list, don't overlook the many park attractions just off the beaten path. Inquire at any hotel front desk or visitor center for information about park activities.

GRAND PRISMATIC SPRING

Yellowstone's largest hot spring, at 370 feet in diameter, can be accessed by taking the Midway Geyser Basin boardwalk. The deep blue color of the pool and the rings of yellow- and orange-colored thermophiles surrounding it combine to produce a beautiful prism effect. For views above Grand Prismatic, take Fairy Falls Trailhead to The **Grand Prismatic Overlook Trail**.

HAYDEN VALLEY

This broad, rolling valley is a remnant lakebed formed when glaciers created a dam that backed up water, flooding the valley. The Yellowstone River meanders through the valley, forming marshes where you may see swans and Canada geese. Elk, deer and bison graze in the meadows and sagebrush flats, while bears and wolves patrol the area in search of prey.

MAMMOTH HOT SPRINGS

Few of Yellowstone's hydrothermal features have the sheer grace and beauty of **Mammoth Hot Springs**. Mineral-laden

hot water from beneath the Earth's crust finds its way to the surface and builds tier upon tier of terraced travertine deposits. The sculpting of the terraces continues as thousands of gallons of water well up and deposit travertine daily.

MORNING GLORY POOL

This thermal pool got its name because of its resemblance to the morning glory flower. Unfortunately, it is no longer as profoundly blue as it was in the past because debris thrown by visitors has clogged its vent.

NORRIS AND FIREHOLE RIVER GEYSER BASINS

Norris Geyser Basin, 21 miles south of Mammoth Hot Springs, and **Upper, Midway and Lower geyser basins**, located along the Firehole River, have the largest display of geysers. Steamboat Geyser, at Norris, is the world's tallest active geyser (a new record was set in 2018!) and has infrequent, unpredictable eruptions reaching 300–400 feet. Echinus Geyser, once predictable, now varies widely. When it does erupt, it can spray the viewing platform.

PETRIFIED FORESTS

Yellowstone's "forests of stone" contain well-preserved specimens of ancient plants and standing trees. Volcanic eruptions buried subtropical plants and cold-climate trees like spruce, fir and sequoia, petrifying them in the process. To view petrified redwoods, take the Petrified Tree spur road 1.5 miles west of Tower Junction.



GRAND CANYON OF THE YELLOWSTONE

The turbulent Yellowstone River roars and foams for 20 miles through the **Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone**. The most colorful sections of the Canyon are found near the Canyon Village area and at overlooks along the road near Tower Junction. At 109 feet and 308 feet respectively, Upper and Lower falls are truly emblematic of the power of nature.

Of the 10,000 or so hydrothermal features in the park, the best known and most recognizable is **Old Faithful Geyser**. Thousands of gallons of steaming water thunder into the sky with each eruption. The time between eruptions varies from 51 to 120 minutes; on average, the geyser erupts every 92 minutes. Old Faithful is easy to access, located adjacent to the Lodge named for it.

WEST THUMB GEYSER BASIN

Located on Yellowstone Lake's shore, this thermal area holds lakeshore geysers, hot springs and bubbling paint pots. **Fishing Cone** is one of many lakeshore geysers submerged here until the water level drops in late summer. Fishing Cone gets its name from the fact that visitors used to catch trout in the lake and then promptly drop them into the geysers boiling waters to cook.

YELLOWSTONE LAKE

Yellowstone Lake is the largest high elevation lake in North America. The shoreline is 141 miles long! The lake is so large that it can even create its own weather, forming cumulus clouds during the day that often shower the area by evening. A portion of the lake sits within a large caldera that was formed by a volcano and then carved and filled by glaciers some 14,000 years ago.

Camping



Of Yellowstone's 12 campgrounds, only nine will be open for the 2025 season (see chart). Campsites operated by the NPS can be reserved through **Recreation.gov**. Five other campgrounds, encompassing more than 1,400 sites, are operated by Yellowstone National Park Lodges and may be reserved up to 13 months in advance. In addition, Fishing Bridge RV Park has more than 300 RV sites, all with full hookups. This RV park is restricted to hard-sided vehicles only. For campsite or RV park reservations, visit **yellowstonenationalparklodges.com** or call (307) 344-7311.

REGULATIONS

Since food and odors attract bears, items such as cooking stoves, utensils, coolers, trash bags, food and toiletries may not be left outside or in tents or tent trailers, unless they are in immediate use!

Food must be stored in bearproof lockers or in a hard-sided vehicle. All campers must adhere to storage regulations. Do not disturb wildlife and vegetation. Only dead, downed and detached wood may be used for campfires; firewood is sold at some campgrounds from mid-May through mid-September.

FACILITIES

Yellowstone campgrounds have tables, fire grills, drinking water, garbage cans, and flush or pit toilets. The five campgrounds operated by Yellowstone National Park Lodges have restrooms, fire grates, flush toilets and some tables accessible to persons with disabilities. Fishing Bridge RV Park does not have fire grates or picnic tables.

RESTRICTIONS

Camping is permitted only in designated campgrounds (this includes backcountry campsites). You may camp at any combination of campgrounds for up to 14 days total between July 1 and Labor Day (first Monday in September), and up to 30 days the rest of the year. This rule does not apply to the Fishing Bridge RV Park.

BACKCOUNTRY CAMPING

Yellowstone has implemented an overnight backcountry permit fee to defray the program's costs. Anyone obtaining a backcountry permit to stay in one of the more than 300+ backcountry sites will have to pay a \$5 per person, per night fee plus a \$10 non-refundable reservation fee. These fees are charged year-round for permits secured through both **Recreation.gov** and in-person at the backcountry office. A \$10 non-refundable application fee is charged for all applications to the Early Access Lottery regardless of success.

Stock users (limited to horses, burros, mules, ponies, and llamas) can obtain their free permits on the park's website or by calling the Central Backcountry Office. You must possess proof of a negative Coggins test performed within the last 12 months for all equine entering Yellowstone. Reservations for backcountry campsites are available on **Recreation.gov**. All overnight hikes and camping require backcountry permits. Call (307) 344-2160 for more information. See "Nature & Wildlife" for details about being responsible in the backcountry and reducing your risk of bear encounters.



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YELLOWSTONE CAMPGROUNDS

Campground Operating schedule • Location	FEE	NUMBER OF SITES	FIREWOOD SOLD	FLUSH TOILETS	DISPOSAL STATION	BOAT ACCESS	PAY SHOWERS
Indian Creek Closed for 2025 • Eight miles south of Mammoth Hot Springs	-	-					
Mammoth Open year-round, partial closure for winter (Reservation only April 15 - October 15) • Mammoth Hot Springs	\$25	82	•	•			
Norris Closed for 2025							
Madison* May 2 to October 12 • Madison	\$33+	276	•	•	•		
Bridge Bay* May 16 to September 1 • Three miles southwest of Lake Village near Bridge Bay Marina	\$33+	431	•	•	•	•	
Fishing Bridge RV Park* May 9 to October 12 • One mile east of Fishing Bridge Junction; hard-sided camping units only—no tents	\$89+	310		•	•		•
Grant Village* June 6 to September 14 • Southern end of Yellowstone Lake	\$39+	429	•	•	•	•	•
Lewis Lake June 15 to October 13 • Off South Entrance Road	\$20	84				•	
Pebble Creek Closed in 2025	-	-					
Slough Creek June 15 to October 13 • Ten miles northeast of Tower-Roosevelt Junction	\$20	16					
Tower Fall May 23 to September 27 • North side of the road to Dunraven Pass	\$20	31					
Canyon Village* May 30 to September 21 • 0.25 miles east of Canyon Village	\$39+	272	•	•			•

Rates are subject to change. Tax and utility fees may apply. *Plus tax; operated by Yellowstone National Park Lodges; call (307) 344-7311 for reservations. Rates at Fishing Bridge RV Park, Grant Village and Canyon Village include two showers per site per night. Interagency Access and Senior Pass holders may receive a 50% discount at certain locations.

Nature & Wildlife



More plants and wild animals live in Yellowstone, in their natural habitat, than anywhere else in the lower 48 states.

PLANTS

Lodgepole pine (*Pinus contorta*), the most common tree in the park, is tall and straight, reaching up to 75 feet in height. Some American Indians used it to make frames for their teepees or lodges, hence the name. In thick groves, only treetops have branches; trees that stand alone often have lower branches because sunlight can reach their entire length.

Engelmann spruce (*Picea engelmannii*) and **sub-alpine fir** (*Abies lasiocarpa*) grow in the park, although lodgepole pines, which thrive in the rhyolitic soil not suited to spruce or fir, monopolize more than 80 percent of Yellowstone's forests.

The **Wyoming paintbrush** (*Castilleja linariæfolias*) is one of more than 200 species of Indian paintbrush found in America.

The **yellow monkeyflower** (*Mimulus guttatus*) thrives in wet areas, such as the channel run-offs near hydrothermal features. The shape of the flower's bloom resembles a monkey's face.

BEARS

Black bears and grizzlies live in the park. Look for **bear signs** like overturned or torn apart logs, excavated burrows, broken branches, claw marks on trees, scat (droppings) or tracks. **Be cautious and alert. Make noise** by talking or singing, as to not surprise bears. Hikers in bear country should carry **bear pepper spray**, have it within reach, and know how to use it.

IF YOU SEE A BEAR

If you spot a bear, do not approach it. Female bears with cubs or bears defending a carcass are especially dangerous. **Do not run** or make abrupt moves. Bears are hunters and instinctively chase anything that flees. A bear may "**bluff charge**" and stop short of touching you. If possible, stay still until the bear calms down, then slowly back away. If you cannot detour, wait until the bear moves away from your route. If the bear knocks you down, curl into a ball and protect your stomach and neck.

Report bear sightings to a park ranger. The safety of others may depend on it!

DON'T FEED THE BEARS

A fed bear is a dead bear. When bears become accustomed to eating human food and garbage, their role in the natural environment is altered. They can become annoying or aggressive intruders who must be killed if they become a threat to visitors. Be responsible and safe by bear-proofing all food and related supplies. **To protect yourself and the bears:**

- Never leave food, trash or other scented items unattended.
- Store all food and odorous items in storage boxes where provided, sealing items in air-tight containers to minimize odors. This includes grocery bags, garbage and scented articles like soap, sunscreen, hairspray and toothpaste. Clean fire grills and picnic tables after use.
- Follow all park rules on bear-proofing your food. For more information about bear safety, ask at any visitor center.

WATCHABLE WILDLIFE



BISON

Often referred to as buffalo, bison can be seen in the Firehole River and Old Faithful thermal basins and in the Lamar and Hayden valleys. Each August, males charge each other, banging heads in competition for mates. Stay well out of a bison's way, especially during this time. •

Height up to 6.6 ft • **Length** up to 10 ft • **Weight** 900-2,200 lbs.



ELK

The second largest member of the deer family, elk live in and near forests, feeding on leaves and other plants. During the rut (mating season), the bull elk bugle a combination of shrill whistles and grunts in an effort to attract females. Elk are most active at dusk and dawn. •

Weight 450-1,090 lbs • **Size** 6.5-10 ft long • **Active** in winter.



OSPREY

Osprey feed almost entirely on fish, using their barbed talons, nostrils and reversible toes to capture prey. Osprey usually mate for life and take part in five-month partnerships to raise young. They have white heads and their wings are dark brown on top and white below. • **Size** 21-24 in long, six ft wingspan •

Active in winter.



MOOSE

These reclusive animals are most active at dusk and dawn. Moose eat aquatic vegetation and woody plants. They are excellent swimmers and can stay under water for more than 30 seconds. With few natural predators, moose can live up to 20 years! Look for them near lakes and rivers •

Weight 700-1,400 lbs • **Size** 6-9 ft long • **Active** in winter.



RIVER OTTER

Often seen sliding down snow banks or riding waterfalls, it may seem otters don't have a care in the world. But they must avoid predators like bald eagles, and keep their hard-caught fish from coyotes. Near the rivers, they're safe—in the frigid water, otters are the top of the food chain. • **Length** 2-3.5 ft •

Weight 6-31 lbs • **Active** year-round.



TRUMPETER SWAN

This snow-white bird can be seen gliding over streams, trumpeting its horn-like call, an unforgettable sound that resembles a French horn. These are some of the most imperiled birds in the park, and the swans are very sensitive to humans—be cautious near nests. • **Weight** 22-26 lbs • **Size** 60-72 in • **Active** in winter • Migratory

IDENTIFYING YELLOWSTONE'S BEARS

GRIZZLY BEAR



Prints

Color

Size

Height

Body Shape

Face

Claws

Life Expectancy

Behavior

Grizzly bears vary from blonde to black in color. They are typically medium to dark brown. Their long guard hairs often have a lighter tip, giving the bears their 'grizzled' appearance.

Males weigh 500 pounds on average (225 kg) and can weigh up to 900 pounds. Sows average 375 pounds.

3.5 feet (1 meter)

The grizzly has a distinctive shoulder hump that is actually muscle mass.

Grizzlies have a concave profile with a depression between the eyes and the end of the snout. Ears are round and proportionately small.

Grizzly claws are long, between 2-4 inches (5-10 cm), and formidable. They are often clearly visible in the tracks.

15-20 years in the wild; more than 30 years in captivity.

- Usually more aggressive than black bears. Females will aggressively protect cubs.
- Day beds in dense vegetation are used to rest and escape the summer's heat.
- Mostly active during dusk and dawn, although can be active any time of day.
- Strength is exceptional. They routinely roll huge rocks and logs looking for food.
- Powerful digging ability allows them to feed on roots, bulbs, and rodents and dig dens on steep mountain slopes.

BLACK BEAR



Black bears actually vary in color from black to brown, cinnamon, or blonde, and have a distinctive tan snout.

Males weigh between 210-315 pounds (95-143 kg), sows between 135-160 lbs (61-73 kg).

3 feet (0.9 meter)

Black bears lack the grizzly's hump and their rumps are higher than front shoulders.

Black bears have a straight facial profile with a relatively long muzzle. Ears are long, pointed and prominent.

Black bear claws are less than two inches long, usually dark colored, sharp, curved, and good for climbing.

15-20 years in the wild; more than 30 years in captivity.

- Usually less aggressive than grizzly bears.
- Often den in open spaces under tree roots and rocks at low to middle elevations.
- Active mainly during the day, but may be active any time of day or night.
- Excellent tree climbing ability is used to escape predators and other bears. Threatened mothers send cubs climbing to feed on nuts and fruit in trees.
- Cubs weigh about one-half pound at birth and stay with their mother for up to 1.5 years.

Walking & Hiking



Most of Yellowstone's 2.2 million acres is backcountry interspersed with approximately 1,000 miles of trails that traverse a variety of terrain.

Be prepared before setting out on a day hike. Park rangers can help you plan your outing and will provide current backcountry conditions, but you must ultimately assume responsibility for yourself in the wilderness. There are no guarantees concerning weather changes or encounters with wildlife—especially bears! Being informed is the best way to reduce potential risks. Find out which stream crossings are unsafe, which slopes are loose with “rotten rock,” and what to do if you encounter a bear (see the “Nature & Wildlife” chapter of this guide and inquire at a visitor center for more information). Dogs, except service animals with required permits, and bicycles are not allowed on any trails.

BACKCOUNTRY PERMITS

The process for reserving backcountry campsites and obtaining backcountry permits changed as of 2022. Reservations for backcountry campsites are available on [recreation.gov](https://www.recreation.gov). All overnight hikes and camping require backcountry permits. A \$10 fee is charged for all applications, except for the Early Access Lottery regardless of success. The fee for a backcountry recreation permit is \$5 per person, per night plus the \$10 non-refundable reservation fee (if the reservation is a walk up and not booked through the lottery system), early access lottery no longer requires a fee. Stock users (limited to horses, burros, mules, ponies, and llamas) can obtain their free permits on the park's website or by calling the Central Back-



country Office and must possess proof of a negative Coggins test performed within the last 12 months for all equine entering Yellowstone. Call the Central Backcountry Office at (307) 344-2160 for more information. When you receive your permit, carefully read the backcountry guidelines and regulations and talk with a park ranger. Entry into Yellowstone National Park requires a fee or pass.

HIKING ETIQUETTE

Minimize your impact by following a few simple rules. Stay on the well-marked trails. Use designated campsites and eliminate the need for fires by using a backpacking stove. Wash yourself and any personal articles with biodegradable soaps away from the streams and lakes. Use toilets or bury waste six to eight inches beneath the surface. Pack out every single thing you packed in. Take photos as your only mementos and leave only your footprints behind.

HIKING SAFETY TIPS

Every year, major search and rescue missions are undertaken to assist lost or injured hikers in Yellowstone National Park. To avoid becoming a statistic, consider these safety tips offered by park rangers:

- **Wear sturdy, comfortable hiking boots or shoes** and outdoor socks to prevent blisters, the most common ailment on the trail. Hiking boots or shoes are recommended for all trails, especially those requiring steep ascents.
- **Know your own capabilities and limits.** On average, plan one hour for every two miles, and add an hour for every 1,000 feet you climb. Study a topographical map (available at park ranger stations and visitor centers) and plot your course according to your pace.
- **Be prepared and carry ample supplies,** whether you are taking a day hike or going on an extended backpacking trip for several days. Carry a trail map, wristwatch, knife, matches, flashlight, water, food, insect repellent, rain gear, a compass and a first-aid kit.
- **Always maintain a safe distance of at least 100 yards between you and a wild animal.** Consider carrying bear spray

as a precautionary measure. It is available for rent and purchase at the Bear Aware kiosk in Canyon Village or the Yurt south of the Yellowstone Tribal Heritage Center at Old Faithful. Please call (307) 828-1885 or visit for information.

- **Hike with a partner** and leave an itinerary and emergency contact information with a responsible person.
- **Stay on the trail so you won't get lost.** If you do become lost, exhausted or injured, keep calm and stay on the trail. Ask passing hikers for assistance. Do not bushwhack or travel in darkness. Should evening fall, stay where you are and wait for help to arrive.

FURTHER READING

If you'd like to learn more about hiking in the park, we suggest the following book “Hiking Yellowstone National Park: A Guide To More Than 100 Great Hikes,” Schneider, Bill. Falcon Press, 2019.



You can help protect the places you love to hike.

To learn more and to give a gift today visit AmericanHiking.org/donate.

Just For Kids



A host of ranger-led activities are specially designed for young visitors. Fun, educational films are also shown daily at most visitor centers. For more information about park programs, pick up a copy of the park newspaper, **Yellowstone**, at any visitor center or visit nps.gov/yell/learn/kidsyouth.

Kids 11 and under stay free at park lodges, and discounts for youngsters are available for most Yellowstone National Park Lodges activities and tours. For information, call **(307) 344-7311** or ask at any park lodge.

BECOME A JUNIOR RANGER

Participants, typically between the ages of 5-13, are awarded an official Yellowstone Junior Ranger badge after completing the age-appropriate requirements described inside the Junior Ranger booklets available at park centers. Have their work reviewed with a ranger at any visitor center.

HEAR TALES AROUND A CAMPFIRE

At family campfire programs, hear tall tales about mountain men and American Indians, as well as stories about bison, elk and bears. Ask at a visitor center for times and locations.

EXPLORE A VISITOR CENTER

Visitor centers feature many exhibits of interest to kids. Kids love the animal displays and the trapper exhibit at Albright Visitor Center at Mammoth Hot Springs, which includes all the tools of the trade. The Old Faithful Visitor Education Center contains an entire area for kids and the young at heart known as the Young Scientist Exhibit

Hall. Enjoy interactive scientific explorations and learn how to predict Old Faithful Geyser while enjoying a geyser model that erupts all day long.

SEE OLD FAITHFUL ERUPT

No trip to Yellowstone is complete without this magnificent live show, which may be caught, on average, every 92 minutes.

GO ON A PHOTO SAFARI

Take photos of animals, geysers and amazing scenery, learn more about your camera and photography, and share special shots with family and friends.

PICK UP A FREE ACTIVITY BOOK

The "Kids Activity Book," available at hotel dining rooms, includes games and activities that kids can complete to earn prizes!

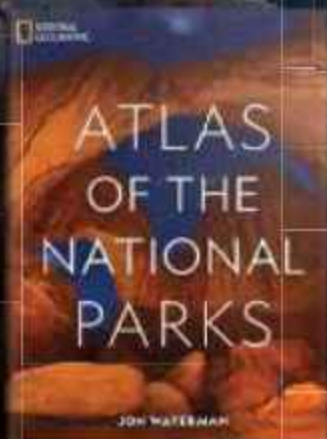
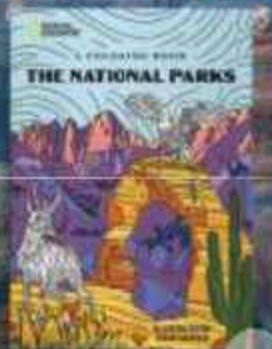
HOP ON THE STAGECOACH AT ROOSEVELT

Take a ride in a stagecoach accompanied by the cloppety-clop of horse hooves. Rides leave several times a day. For more information, call **(307) 344-7311** or stop at front desks or activities desks at any park lodge.

JOIN THE YOUNG SCIENTIST PROGRAM

Self-guiding booklets for the Young Scientist Program are available at the Old Faithful Visitor Center and the Canyon Visitor Education Center for \$5. Children ages 5 and older can receive a patch or keychain for unraveling scientific mysteries.

EXPLORE THE WILD YOUR GUIDE TO THE NATIONAL PARKS



AVAILABLE WHEREVER BOOKS ARE SOLD

NatGeoBooks

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NATIONAL
GEOGRAPHIC

Photography



Exploring our national and state parks is one of the best ways to reconnect with nature—and bringing along a camera or binoculars can elevate your experience. Whether you're a seasoned photographer, a casual wildlife or bird watcher, or a first-time visitor hoping to spot something special, a few tips can help you get the most out of your time on the trail.

Photography isn't just snapping images—it's a way to tell a story, capture fleeting moments, and preserve the atmosphere of a place. In our parks, images can reflect the splendor of a landscape, the subtle beauty of wildlife, or the unbridled energy of a waterfall. Whether you're aiming to document your journey, make art, or simply share your experience with others, thoughtful technique makes a big difference. To get the most out of your park visit:

- **Time it right:** Shoot during golden hours (early morning or late afternoon) when the light is soft and warm. Avoid harsh midday sun when shadows are strongest.
- **Pack light but smart:** A mirrorless or DSLR camera with a wide-angle lens for landscapes and a zoom for wildlife covers most situations. Bring extra batteries!
- **Use a tripod:** For steady sunrise or night shots, use a lightweight tripod for better stability.
- **Compose carefully:** Follow the "rule of thirds" to add depth to your images.

A good pair of **binoculars** is the perfect companion for your trip—they don't just bring distant wildlife into view—it enhances your awareness of your surroundings, helps you spot elusive creatures, and allows you to witness natural behaviors without threatening them. Whether you're birding, watching

predators from afar, or scanning the treetops for movement, using binoculars skillfully can turn a simple hike into a rich, immersive experience. Here's how to get the most from them:

- **Choose the right specs:** An 8x42 pair offers a great balance of magnification, brightness, and stability for most users.
- **Adjust for your eyes:** Use the center focus wheel and diopter ring to fine-tune clarity.
- **Stabilize your view:** Rest your elbows on a surface or use a trekking pole for added support.
- **Scan with purpose:** Look for movement or color changes in the landscape. Animals are often camouflaged and reveal themselves through motion.

To protect both the environment and wildlife, always stay on marked trails to avoid damaging fragile ecosystems. Give animals plenty of space by using zoom lenses or binoculars, and follow all park regulations regarding restricted areas and seasonal closures. Moving quietly and minimizing noise not only reduces stress on wildlife but also increases your chances of witnessing natural behaviors without human interference.

ENHANCE YOUR EXPERIENCE

Using cameras and binoculars encourages observation and you'll begin noticing subtle things—a fox's behavior at dusk, the changing texture of bark in different light, or a flash of color in the canopy. These tools sharpen your senses and help you build a stronger connection with the outdoors.

From photographing fog rolling through a valley to spotting a hawk soaring overhead, the combination of thoughtful observation and the right gear brings national and state park adventures to life.

HELP US SUPPORT THE PARK YOU LOVE

Yellowstone Forever is the official nonprofit partner of Yellowstone National Park. We protect, preserve, and enhance Yellowstone National Park through education and philanthropy.

Support priority projects in Yellowstone from sustainability efforts and trail restoration, to protecting a diverse ecosystem of wildlife, to visitor safety and youth education programs. With an annual gift of \$35 or more, Yellowstone Forever members receive exclusive benefits as our way of thanking you for your commitment.

EXPERIENCE A DEEPER CONNECTION TO THE PARK.

Through our Yellowstone Forever Institute, we offer in-depth educational programs that help foster lifelong connections to Yellowstone and the natural world.



Yellowstone.org
406.848.2400



Visit our educational Park Stores in and around Yellowstone, or shop online at shop.yellowstone.org.

Proceeds benefit Yellowstone National Park.

If You Only Have A Day

To make the most of your day, start out at one of the ten visitor centers or information stations in the park. Maps, books, relevant park updates and park rangers or their assistants are available to answer your questions before you set out on an adventure-filled day in the park! Yellowstone comprises more than 2 million acres (larger than Delaware and Rhode Island combined)—plan ahead to make the most of your experience.

If you're looking for an easy way to tour the most popular sights in the park, try a full-day interpretive motorcoach tour offered by Yellowstone National Park Lodges. Tours depart daily from all park hotels and include all the major natural highlights of the park. Information, schedules and rates are



available by calling **Yellowstone National Park Lodges** at (307) 344-7311 or visiting yellowstonenationalparklodges.com.

Or try a combination of both—individual outdoor exploration supplemented by a partial day or evening **Historic Yellow Bus Tour**. Step back in time and view the park from a past perspective by touring in a refurbished yellow bus that toured Yellowstone beginning in the 1930s.

If you want to see the park on your own, visit **Hayden** and **Lamar valleys** to search for wildlife or spend some time exploring the **Midway Geyser Basin**. On July 23, 2024 a hydrothermal explosion occurred at Biscuit Basin resulting in the closure of the parking lot and boardwalk at this location. Yellowstone possesses most of the world's active geysers and the Upper Geyser Basin is home to the most in the park, including world famous **Old Faithful**. Hop out of the car and hike as little or as much of the trail as you like—the three-mile round-trip route showcases more than 150 hydrothermal features, including numerous hot springs and a recently developed mudpot! While you're there take a few minutes to check out the **Old Faithful Inn**, which has been welcoming guests to the park for over 110 years.

With **over 1,000 miles of trails**, wilderness envelops park visitors. Head into the back-country and take a step back in time. Stop at a visitor center for trail condition updates, safety tips and suggestions for hikes that suit your abilities and those of your group. Be sure to pack food and water, along with other items suggested by rangers. Then hit the trails and have some fun!



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The Yamaha Outdoor Access Initiative champions responsible recreation by funding sustainable access, safety education, and trail stewardship projects across America's public lands.

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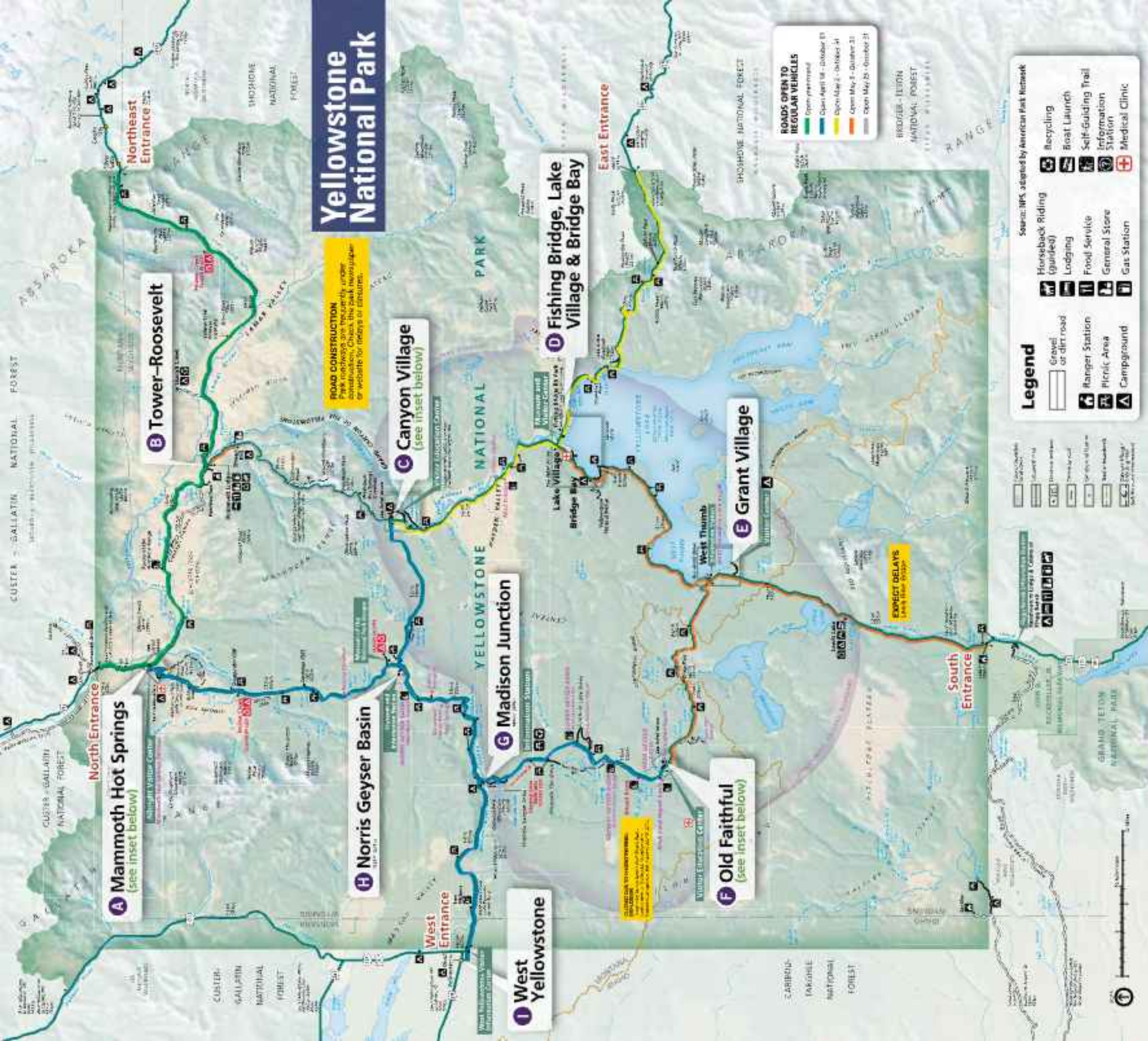
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KEY

A Mammoth Hot Springs

- Amphitheater
- Auto repair & service
- Camping
- Chapel
- Dining
- Gift shop
- Horseback riding
- Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel & Cabins
- Medical clinic
- Park headquarters
- Post office
- Photography tours
- Sightseeing bus tours
- Visitor center
- Yellowstone General Store

B Tower-Roosevelt

- Auto service
- Camping
- Dining
- Gift shop
- Horseback riding
- Roosevelt Lodge Cabins
- Stagecoach outings
- Western cookouts
- Yellowstone General Stores (2)

C Canyon Village

- Amphitheater
- Auto repair & service
- Camping
- Canyon Lodge & Cabins
- Dining
- Horseback riding
- Laundry
- Post office
- Gift shop

- Showers
- Sightseeing bus tours
- Visitor center
- Yellowstone General Stores (2)

D Fishing Bridge, Lake Village, & Bridge Bay

- Amphitheater
- Auto repair & service
- Boat rentals
- Camping
- Dining
- Gift shop
- Lake cruises
- Lake Lodge Cabins
- Lake Yellowstone Hotel and Cabins
- Laundry
- Marina
- Medical clinic
- Photography tours
- Post office
- RV park

E Grant Village

- Amphitheater
- Auto repair & service
- Camping
- Dining
- Laundry
- Grant Village Lodge
- Post office
- Gift shop
- Showers
- Sightseeing bus tours
- Visitor center
- Yellowstone General Stores (3)

F Old Faithful

- Auto repair & service
- Dining
- Medical clinic
- Old Faithful Inn
- Old Faithful Lodge Cabins
- Old Faithful Snow Lodge & Cabins
- Post office
- Shopping
- Shower facilities
- Sightseeing bus tours
- Visitor center
- Yellowstone General Stores (2)

- Yellowstone General Stores (2)

G Madison Junction

- Art center
- Camping
- Museum

H Norris Geyser Basin

- Airport
- Auto repair and Service
- Bookstore
- Camping
- Chapel
- Dining
- Information Station
- Giant Screen Theatre
- Lodging
- Museum
- Post office
- Outfitters
- West Yellowstone Information Center

I West Yellowstone

- Airport
- Auto repair and Service
- Camping
- Chapel
- Dining
- Giant Screen Theatre
- Lodging
- Outfitters
- Post office
- West Yellowstone Information Center

Winter road closures: From early November to early May most park roads are closed. The exception is the road in the park between the North Entrance and Cooke City. It is open all year.

Backcountry use: Get permits required for backcountry camping and trail maps at most ranger stations. Do not use this map for backcountry hiking. There are almost 1,000 miles of trails.

Note: In 2025 Indian Creek, Pebble Creek, and Norris Campgrounds will be CLOSED

Drive Safely: Traffic-related accidents are the most common cause of injury and death in the park. Don't let the scenery distract you; drive cautiously and watch for animals. If you need to stop for any reason, use a pullout; do not block traffic. The speed limit in Yellowstone is 45 mph unless posted otherwise. Expect drive times much longer than expected. Other road hazards include soft shoulders, potholes, and frost heaves.

In 2025, construction continues at Lava River Bridge (South entrance road) and Yellowstone River Bridge (Northeast entrance road at tower junction). Expect 20 to 30-minute delays and plan accordingly. * Other construction zones with anticipated traffic delays from 15 to 30 minutes include Bridge Bay, Gibbon River Bridge #5 (Madison Junction), and Old Faithful Interchange Approaches.



A Mammoth Hot Springs



C Canyon Village



F Old Faithful



Yellowstone National Park

ROADS OPEN TO REGULAR VEHICLES

- Open year-round
- Open April 18 - October 31
- Open May 2 - October 31
- Open May 8 - October 31
- Open May 25 - October 31

Legend

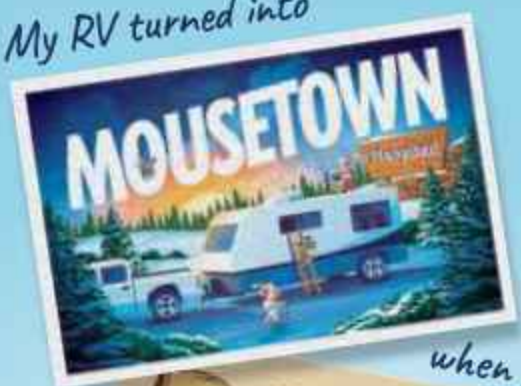
- Gravel or dirt road
- Ranger Station
- picnic Area
- Campground
- Horseback Riding (guided)
- Lodging
- Food Service
- General Store
- Gas Station
- Boat Launch
- Self-guiding Trail
- Information Station
- Medical Clinic

Source: NPS, adapted by American Park Network

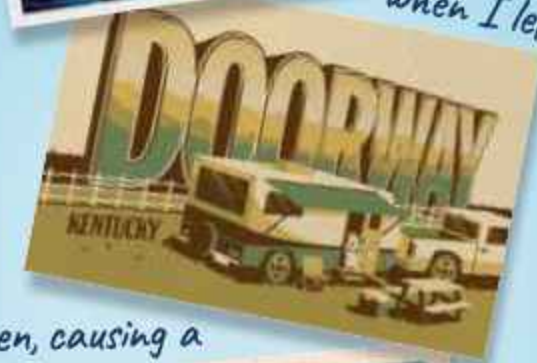


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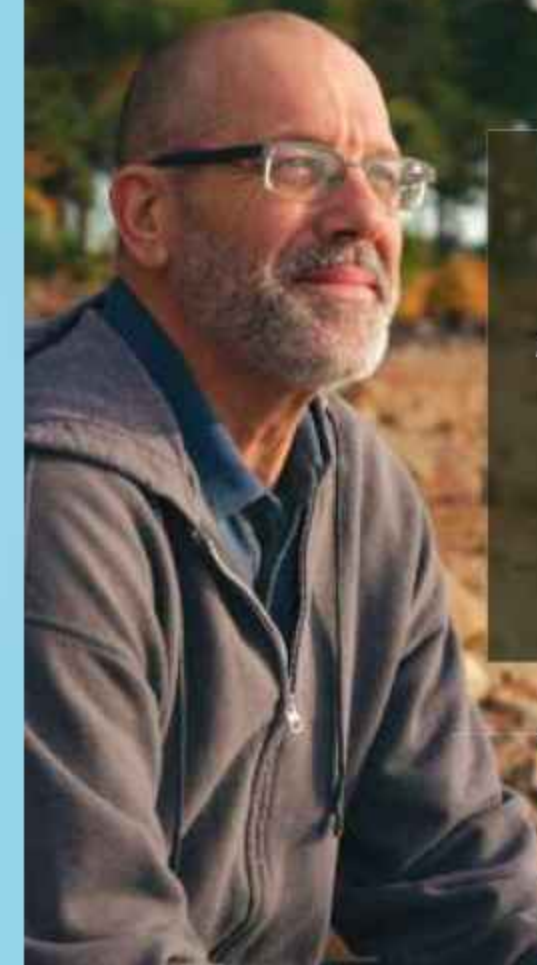
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