



Yosemite Conservancy Outdoor Adventures and Custom Adventures COVID-19 Safety Precautions

Thank you for your interest in participating in a Yosemite Conservancy Outdoor Adventure or Custom Adventure.

After careful consideration, we have decided to offer select modified group activities in the park during the 2020 season. We look forward to helping visitors connect with Yosemite and creating opportunities for people to enjoy the invaluable benefits associated with enriching outdoor experiences. We also recognize the risks associated with group activities at this time, and we are taking every precaution to keep participants and instructors safe.

According to medical experts, outdoor environments pose a low transmission risk compared with indoor spaces. We have consulted with health officials on ways to lessen the potential for disease transmission even further.

If you are considering participating in one of our programs, please read the following information thoroughly. Participating in our Outdoor Adventure and Custom Adventure programs involves traveling to Yosemite, participating in a group experience, and hiking on trails with other visitors, which inherently puts you at higher risk for contracting COVID-19. We are implementing strict protocols, developed in consultation with medical experts and in accordance with local, state and federal guidelines, to mitigate that risk.

Before Your Trip: Preparing to Participate

- Before you participate in a Conservancy program, we request that you seriously consider your own COVID-19 risk factors and consult with your physician.
- All participants must sign a Participant Agreement confirming that you will follow all safety procedures, including allowing temperature checks and reporting Covid-19 symptoms at the start of the program.
- We request that you limit your travel and interactions before your trip to Yosemite.
- If you experience any COVID-19 or flu-like symptoms, or if you have been in contact with anyone with COVID-19, at any point within 14 days before the start date of the program, you must cancel your registration. If you need to cancel, you will receive a full refund.
- All participants will need to bring their own face masks or cloth face coverings, as well as hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) or a hand-washing set-up that conforms to Leave No Trace principles.

During Your Trip: In-Park Program Procedures

Safety Education: At the beginning of your program, your naturalist guide will address the group on key safety procedures, including:

- How to maintain a physical distance of at least 6 feet throughout the trip, including when hiking on a trail with others, standing in a circle to listen to a guide, or pausing for water and snack breaks.
- How to keep hands clean in a wilderness setting. Your guide will confirm that each participant has adequate hand sanitizer or a hand-washing set-up that conforms to Leave No Trace principles.

Health Checks: Guides will check in with participants at the start of the program and on a regular basis throughout the trip to ensure everyone is staying healthy.

- At the start of the program, your guide will ask if you have any flu-like or other COVID-19 symptoms. For the safety of the group, please answer truthfully. If you are experiencing any Covid-19 symptoms, you will need to leave the program and will be issued a full refund.
- Guides will take each participant's temperature at the start of the program and each day of the trip. If your temperature is 100.4 F or higher you will need to leave the program and will be refunded proportionately.

Physical Distancing and Facial Coverings: Guides and participants must practice physical distancing and be prepared to wear a facial covering when maintaining a safe distance is not possible.

- Stay at least 6 feet away from your guide and from fellow participants, unless the other participants are members of your family, household or other vector group.* Learning is different in a physically distant environment. At times it may be hard to hear your guide, but the need for physical distancing remains.
- Give other hikers at least a 6-foot gap when you encounter them along the trail. If you need to step off the trail to allow another hiker or group to pass, use caution and find a safe footing, and try to be gentle on trailside vegetation. Do not hike parallel to the existing trail.
- Guides and participants must wear a mask or cloth facial covering whenever they cannot be at least 6 feet from fellow group members or other hikers. Masks and facial coverings will not be provided for participants; please bring your own.

Hygiene: Guides and participants must adhere to hygiene procedures to keep hands clean, avoid coughing or sneezing on others, and limit contact with shared surfaces and objects.

- Maintaining proper hand hygiene can be challenging in a wilderness setting. Bring adequate hand sanitizer and/or a portable set-up to clean your hands for the duration of your trip. Participants are responsible for providing their own hand sanitizer or hand-washing equipment.
- All participants must adhere to the following personal hygiene behaviors:
 - Cough and sneeze into a bent elbow or disposable tissue.

* In this document a "vector group" refers to a group of individuals who have been in proximity with one another prior to the start of their Yosemite Conservancy program, such as housemates or friends who have mutually agreed to interact with each other without maintaining physical distance.

- If you touch a shared surface, wash your hands or use hand sanitizer soon after.
- Do your best not to touch public surfaces while traveling to and within the park.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Do not share snacks, cameras, field guides, binoculars and other supplies with anyone outside your family, household or other vector group,* including your guide and fellow participants. It is okay NOT to help someone with pick up their dropped hat or adjust their trekking poles. If you do touch a shared surface or object, keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth, and wash or sanitize your hands as soon as you can.

Overnight Program Procedures

In addition to the above practices, overnight programs require some additional procedures.

- Participants and guides must stay at least 6 feet apart from one another, from fellow hikers outside their vector group,* and from others on the trail.
- When camping, each participant or vector group* will have their own tent and designated cooking area, set up at least 6 feet from other participants' areas.
- Unless a companion is within your family, household or other vector group,* do not share bear canisters, water filters, lighters and other gear. It is okay NOT to help someone put on their pack, set up their tent, pick up their dropped hat or adjust their trekking poles. If you do touch a shared surface or object, keep your hands away from your eyes, nose and mouth, and wash or sanitize your hands as soon as you can.
- As always, all participants will be educated on, and asked to follow, Leave No Trace practices. COVID-19 precautions do not alter LNT principles, but they do add a layer of extra consideration to some elements of wilderness travel.
 - **Personal hygiene:** Wash or sanitize your hands before cooking and eating, after using the bathroom, and after touching any shared surfaces or objects. As always, if you use soap — even biodegradable soap — wash at least 100 feet away from lakes, streams, and other water sources.
 - **Human waste:** Research shows that the novel coronavirus can persist in human feces. As always, dispose of feces in adequately deep, well-buried catholes.
 - **Treating water:** Boiling water and UV light treatment are the best ways to sterilize drinking water from viruses. Iodine and chlorine are effective but not perfect. Some water filters remove viruses, most do not. Bring a water purification system you have researched.
 - **Washing dishes:** As with handwashing, stay at least 100 feet from a water source when using soap to clean dishes, utensils, cooking equipment or any other gear.

We look forward to welcoming visitors to Yosemite for safe, enriching outdoor experiences in 2020. Before you register for one of our programs, you will be asked to sign an agreement confirming your willingness to adhere to the above protocols. We are doing everything possible to keep our participants and guides safe, and we can't wait to see you in the park!

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