



TRAVEL & GEAR RENTAL TIPS

Welcome to Yosemite Conservancy Art Programs! We hope you'll enjoy your Art Retreat and want to help you prepare. We've provided this list to help you navigate different travel and gear rental options, as needed. Please be sure to allow extra travel time as traffic and luggage delays can impact your arrival time!

TRAVEL TIPS:

Nearest Airports:

- **Fresno International Airport (FAT):** Approximately [2-hours driving distance to Yosemite Valley](#). From Fresno International Airport, you can take the [YARTS](#) (a public transportation bus that travels into Yosemite National Park) or rent a car.
- **San Francisco International Airport (SFO):** Approximately [4-hours driving distance to Yosemite Valley](#). From San Francisco International Airport, you can rent a car or take [Amtrak](#) to Merced, CA where you can connect to the [YARTS](#) bus that will take you to Yosemite National Park.
- **Sacramento International Airport (SMF):** Approximately [4-hours driving distance to Yosemite Valley](#). From Sacramento International Airport, you can rent a car or take Amtrak to Merced, CA where you can connect to the [YARTS](#) bus that will take you to Yosemite National Park.

Renting a Car vs. Public Transportation:

- **Renting a car** will likely be more expensive but provides you with ultimate flexibility if conditions change! Road closures can occur for many different reasons (including rockfall and other natural events) and alter the route you may need to take to get to Yosemite National Park. Having a car is also a great option if you're attending a Backpack & Paint Retreat because there will be a drive involved from the campground for your first night's camp to the trailhead for the backpacking portion of your trip.
- **Using public transportation** can help lower travel costs and carbon footprint! Just keep in mind that extra time should be allotted for traveling when using public transportation as delays can occur. Using public transportation may involve multiple segments of buses and trains to get to your destination within Yosemite National Park. Please make sure you understand where exactly your art retreat meets and takes place to ensure that you get to the correct destination.
- **Carpooling** is another great option for participants traveling from similar areas to share the cost of gas! If you are interested, please reach out to our staff via art@yosemite.org and we can connect you with current retreat participants to see if this is an option.

Public Transportation Options:

- **Amtrak:**
 - Some Amtrak locations are located at, or nearby airports so be sure to try entering the name of the airport into the “From” field. If the Amtrak station is not located directly at the airport, make sure to do a quick Google search so you are familiar with how to get to the nearest Amtrak station.
 - If you type “Yosemite” into the “To” field, you’ll notice multiple options for Yosemite National Park! Keep in mind that Amtrak contracts with YARTS to deliver you to your destination within Yosemite National Park. Depending on where you are lodging or camping for the night: Curry Village, Yosemite Valley Visitor Center, or Yosemite Valley Lodge may be the most convenient drop off locations for you. If you are attending a Backpack & Paint Retreat, Wawona or Crane Flat may be the best drop off locations.
- **YARTS:**
 - There are four separate routes from different gateway communities that bring you into Yosemite National Park (HWY 140, HWY 41, HWY 120, & HWY 395). Please bear in mind that depending on where your retreat meets, it may require multiple YARTS rides to get to your destination within Yosemite.
 - Not all routes run year-round. Be sure to check the [Routes & Schedules page](#) to best plan your trip. If the schedule for your intended route is not yet published, you can take a look at the route schedule from this past year to get a glimpse of what this might look like for 2024.

GEAR RENTAL OPTIONS:

Don’t have your own camping or backpacking gear? Not to worry! There are lots of different rental options to choose from:

1. **REI Gear Rental Program:** For a fraction of the cost of buying, you can rent the major necessities to give camping or backpacking a try: backpack, lightweight tent, sleeping pad, cook stove kit, trekking poles. You can also toss a few backpacking meals and bars into your cart. Check the [REI website](#) to find a store with gear rentals near you!
2. **Echo Adventure Cooperative:** This local outfitter is another great gear rental option especially if you are passing through Groveland, CA (along highway 120) on your way to Yosemite National Park! Echo’s Yosemite Basecamp Outfitter has a limited number of backpacking kits available to rent for a weekend’s adventure. Visit the [Echo Coop website](#) for more information.
3. **Don’t want to stop on your way into the park?** If you’d rather have the items at home and well in advance of your trip, [Kit Lender](#) offers complete camping and backpacking kits! These kits will mail straight to your door (with free shipping & returns) so you’re ready to go at a moment’s notice.