



YOSEMITE RANGE OF LIGHT: LODGE-BASED GUIDED HIKING TOUR

GUIDE:	Matt Brown
MEET:	Sunnyside Lodge - West Shore Lake Tahoe, California
VISIT:	Lake Tahoe, Mono Lake, Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite Valley
ACCOMMODATION:	Sunnyside Lodge, Ahwahnee Grand Hotel, Tuolumne Lodge
LENGTH:	Six nights, seven days
HIKE RATING:	Moderate to Strenuous

Our hiking tour begins at the Sunnyside Lodge on the West Shore of Lake Tahoe. Nestled in the Tahoe Basin at 6200 feet Lake Tahoe is the highest lake of its size, and at 1600 feet deep, the second deepest in the country. From the lakeside lodge our journey will take us along scenic highways with jaw dropping vistas and world class hiking trails all the while exploring one of the most breathtaking natural wonders on Earth, Yosemite National Park.

From Tahoe we will travel south on historic Highway 395 along the east side of the Sierras, making a stop at one of the oldest lakes in North America, Mono Lake. Once threatened and nearly destroyed by the growing water demands of Los Angeles, Mono Lake was thankfully saved by heroic conservation efforts. The lake is a vital stop on the Pacific Flyway and migratory birds like the Eared Grebe are abundant in the early fall.

We continue to head west via the highest trans-sierra route in California, crossing Tioga Pass at 9,945'. We enter the Eastern gate of the park and the "high country" of Yosemite passing thru Tuolumne Meadows, the largest sub-alpine meadow in the Sierras, and at roughly 8,600', substantially cooler than Yosemite Valley 4,600' below.

Tuolumne is also where we will spend our final two nights at the rustic Tuolumne Meadows Lodge. The cozy canvas-covered tent cabins recall the early days of Yosemite with no electricity, candles for lighting, and wood stoves! Hiking stories are shared as hearty family-style breakfast and dinners are served in a central dining tent a stone's throw away from the Tuolumne River.

Cathedral Peak, first climbed by John Muir in 1869, is clearly visible and we soon pass the shallow shores of Tenaya Lake as we wind our way down in anticipation of what locals simply call "The Valley." We are not disappointed as we get our first glimpses of the mighty El Capitan, three thousand feet of vertical granite towering above the valley—the largest monolith of granite in the world. The sheer magnitude is simply surreal.

We pass Bridalveil Falls and the Sentinel as we follow the tranquil Merced River making our way to the Ahwahnee Hotel. Our accommodation for the next three nights, the Ahwahnee was specifically designed to highlight its natural surroundings, featuring Yosemite Falls, Half Dome and Glacier Point. The destination of queens and presidents alike, the Ahwahnee offers a perfect balance of history, hospitality and elegance.

A typical day starts with breakfast at our hotel. You will be handed a lunch to carry, and at a mid-point along the way we will choose a beautiful spot to enjoy a picnic. We get a lot of compliments on our imaginative lunches—making them something to look forward to as well!

We should finish our hikes and explorations each day around 4 pm, giving you time to wash up and relax. We will enjoy dinner together at our lodge and perhaps a starlit stroll or evening ranger show to cap off the day.



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DAY ONE

Arrive in Reno, transfer by shuttle to our meeting point at Sunnyside Lodge. Arrive early, take a dip in the Lake or shop in nearby Tahoe City before settling in for dinner.

DAY TWO

From Tahoe we will travel South on historic highway 395 along the East side of the Sierra's making a stop at one of the oldest lakes in North America, Mono Lake. We head West via the highest trans-sierra route in California, crossing Tioga Pass at 9,945 feet in elevation. We enter the Eastern gate of the park and the "high country" of Yosemite passing thru Tuolumne Meadows, the largest sub-alpine meadow in the Sierras, and at roughly 8,600', substantially cooler than Yosemite Valley 4,600' below. This afternoon we will take a stroll to Mirror Lake/Meadow. At the stone bridge, we will choose to turn right and take the five-mile loop around the meadow or stay our current course for a shorter but just as scenic option. Exhibits detail the area's lake-to-meadow succession and it is a great area for spotting wildlife. (The Ahwahnee)

DAY THREE

Today we have the option of hiking a full loop, roughly 13 miles, along the Valley floor or taking a shorter 6 mile option—following many of the Valley's first east-west trails and wagon roads. The half-loop trail crosses the Merced River on El Capitan Bridge. We continue on to Bridalveil Fall for the full loop. Much of the Valley floor loop provides solitude as we hike through meadows, forests, and along the Merced River. We'll enjoy views of Sentinel Rock, Cathedral Rocks, El Capitan, Three Brothers, Bridalveil Fall, and Yosemite Falls. (The Ahwahnee)

DAY FOUR

This is one of Yosemite's must do hikes. While many of

Yosemite's trails are popular due to having a single spectacular destination, the Mist Trail has fabulous views scattered all along it, beginning at the bridge overlook, progressing to two unforgettable waterfalls that fall a combined total of more than 900 feet (270 meters), and ending with a spectacular view of Nevada Fall, Liberty Cap and the backside of Half Dome. (The Ahwahnee Hotel)

DAY FIVE

Today we head back to the "High Country" of Yosemite and beautiful Tuolumne Meadows. Our hike passes through Lyell Canyon, along the Lyell Fork of the Tuolumne River once again on a section of the famous John Muir Trail. There are several creek crossings, including Rafferty Creek and Ireland Creek. We have a good chance of seeing some Bears. In the afternoon we have the option to hike to the 9400' summit of Lembert Dome and catch some afternoon glows and watch the shadows begin to creep into the Meadow. (Tuolumne Meadows Lodge)

DAY SIX

Our destination today is the high saddle above the shores of Budd Lake and separating the Mathis Crest from Cathedral Peak. We follow the John Muir trail toward Cathedral Lakes before turning off on a much quieter path along Budd Creek. The uniquely shaped peak comes into view with its pointy summit and will be our constant companion to the 10,000' saddle. We are not disappointed as the knife edged ridge of the Mathis Crest is before us, Cathedral Peak behind, and a spectacular view of Tuolumne Meadows and the many Granite Domes scattered throughout. (Tuolumne Meadows Lodge)

DAY SEVEN

After breakfast we will drive to Reno International Airport for our post-trip destinations around 12:00pm.