

EXPLORE!

Family Yellowstone Adventure
12 days

USA - Trip code FYS



Family Yellowstone Adventure

This adventure discovers some of the most beautiful National Parks in America as we follow scenic park trails through spectacular scenery from waterfalls and rivers, to hot springs and canyons. Watch geysers spout water hundreds of feet in the air in Yellowstone National Park, meander along the shores of dramatic glacial lakes in Grand Teton, explore the old western towns of Cody and Jackson and glimpse dinosaur fossils and petroglyphs in Dinosaur National Monument.

Trip highlights

- ★ **Yellowstone NP** - Explore the spectacular scenery, mud volcanoes and geysers
- ★ **Grand Teton NP** - Soaring peaks and glacial lakes
- ★ **Cody** - Experience the Wild West with cowboy music and the Buffalo Bill Center
- ★ **Dinosaur National Monument** - Uncovering America's Jurassic past
- ★ **Salt Lake City** - Mormon Capital of Utah

ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

Simple

These are often small, family run establishments or campsites which provide a no-frills experience with adequate amenities and service standards. Sleeping arrangements are simple, sometimes with en suite facilities.

TRIP PACE:**Moderate**

Moderate pace tours are ideal if you want a holiday which combines exciting activities and experiences with plenty of time to relax and unwind. Typically you'll be active and busy for part of the day but then also have time to rest and recharge your batteries.

GROUP SIZE:**8 - 13**

Maximum group size ranges from between 6 to 20 people, depending on the type of trip, the transport and accommodation used and activities included. We rarely have groups that are smaller than five or six people and the average is 12 people plus an Explore leader.

Itinerary

Itineraries on some departure dates may differ, please select the itinerary that you wish to explore.

DAY 1 - Join trip in Salt Lake City

Join trip in Salt Lake City. Salt Lake City, Utah's capital, is bordered by the Great Salt Lake and the snow-capped peaks of the Wasatch Range. The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (or Mormon) followers have their headquarters in the city and we visit various sites on our return.



Accommodation: Salt Lake Plaza Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: None

DAY 2 - Drive to Yellowstone National Park via Idaho Falls

We journey north towards the Rockies, aiming to reach Yellowstone National Park by mid-afternoon. The scenery as we travel north is on a par with Yellowstone itself and we plan to stop off at the town of Idaho Falls for lunch which is often featured in various publications' as one of the best places to live in America. We drive by the skyline of the Teton Range, which at 2,135 metres is a very dramatic mountain range that rises from the plains with the impressive Big Bend Ridge, a volcano that erupted 1.3 million years ago, being most prominent. We reach West Yellowstone later in the day.



Accommodation: Madison Arm Resort Campground (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Lunch & Dinner

DAY 3 - Exploring Yellowstone with its geysers, hot springs and mud volcanos

We have a few days to thoroughly explore the wonderland of Yellowstone National Park by vehicle and on foot. Sitting on an average altitude of 2,400 metres (which can make the nights cold) and surrounded by five different mountain ranges of the Middle Rocky Mountains, Yellowstone is a gigantic park covering almost 9,000 square kilometres. Although the scenery is the primary draw of this area, the park is also known for its wildlife and as it is protected from hunters, bear, moose and elk are frequently seen. One of the main attractions is visiting the geysers, hot springs and mud volcanoes within the Firehole basin. An amazing 60% of the world's geysers are in Yellowstone's Upper Geyser Basin and today we watch some of the most famous; Old Faithful which spouts water over 30 metres in the air every 2-5 minutes, Castle Geyser and Norris Geyser as well as gurgling hot springs including the Grand Prismatic which is the largest hot springs in the park and the third largest in the world. The volcanic activity frightened the natives who believed this to be the land of evil spirits, and so the wilderness remained unexplored until it was declared the first National Park in 1872. We walk along beautiful trails passing by alpine meadows and explore areas where wildlife roam (total walking is between 6-10km). There are two half day walks in the park over the next few days although the itinerary is flexible depending on local conditions and the ability of the group.



Accommodation: Madison Arm Resort Campground (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 4 - Discover the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone and walk up Mount Washburn

Today we continue exploring more of Yellowstone National Park with an easy walk for around 3 hours including the Grand Canyon of Yellowstone which is 32 km long and in places 400 metres deep with its beautiful waterfalls that plunge water over 100 metres into the river below. We also have the possibility of hiking for around 4 hours up to the summit of Mount Washburn which at 3,116 metres, is a prominent mountain peak in the Washburn Range within the park (10 Km roundtrip). The walk is well worth the effort with great views over Yellowstone from the summit.



Accommodation: Madison Arm Resort Campground (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 5 - Explore Mammoth Hot Springs and Lamar Valley before driving to Cody

Today we enjoy walks of around 6km in length around Mammoth Hot Springs which is a large complex of hot springs on a hill of travertine. The most well-known is the Minerva Terrace which boasts a wide range of bright colours and ornate travertine formations (light-coloured calcareous rock deposited). We also drive to the Lamar Valley which is home to wolves, elk, bison and eagles before continuing on to Cody where we check into our cabins for the next two nights. The cabins are located a few miles from downtown Cody, set in a beautiful location with panoramic views of the Rocky Mountains. The bathrooms are shared and are in a communal block.



Accommodation: KOA Campground - Cody (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 6 - Exploring Cody including a cowboy show and Buffalo Bill museum

We spend a full day exploring Cody which was founded in 1896 by the legendary Colonel William F. 'Buffalo Bill' Cody. The town is the place to experience the Wild West with attractions that include a nightly gun fight re-enactment, listening to cowboy music and visiting the world-class Buffalo Bill Center. Cody's downtown area boasts a range of restaurants, art galleries and the historic Irma Hotel which was built by Buffalo Bill. We visit the Buffalo Bill Center which is a complex of five museums and a research library featuring art and artefacts of the American West. The museums show how Buffalo Bill rose to fame, how artists interpreted and defined this time, gives stories from the Plains Indians on how they were affected by the settlers and identifies how firearms shaped the culture and image of the American West plus there is a museum dedicated to the natural beauty and amazing animals of the Greater Yellowstone region.

We also visit the 'Old Trail Town' which is a collection of historic western buildings and artefacts that date from 1879 when the 'Old West' was in its prime. These include; the original cabins used by Old West outlaws Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid, the saloon frequented by Cassidy's 'Hole-in-the-Wall Gang' and the log cabin of 'Curley' Crow Indian who was the army scout that helped guide Lt Col. George A. Custer and the U.S. 7th Cavalry in the battle of the Little Big Horn in 1876. Tonight is another highlight as we experience a cowboy show with live 'foot-stompin' music, dinner and even a gunfight in traditional cowboy fashion.



Accommodation: KOA Campground - Cody (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 7 - Visit Lake Yellowstone and Hayden Valley as we drive through Grand Teton NP to Jackson

Today we travel back through Yellowstone National Park via Yellowstone Lake which is the largest freshwater lake above 2,300 metres in all of North America. This large crystalline lake is a hotbed of geothermal activity and also contains underwater hot springs. We also visit Hayden Valley which is centrally located in Yellowstone National Park and is a great place to go to see wildlife. As we drive along this beautiful valley, we are likely to see herds of bison, scattered elk, and the occasional grizzly bear. West Thumb is considered to be one of the most scenic parts of the park and has numerous hot springs, pools, mud pots, fumaroles and lake shore geysers.

Crossing over into neighbouring Wyoming, we head next to the mountain town of Jackson, lying in the heart of the Jackson Hole Valley of Teton County. The drive takes us through Grand Teton National Park and at the foot of these mountains lies several large lakes providing wonderful photo opportunities.

Then we continue to the lively cowboy village of Jackson and after setting up camp where we stay for the next three nights, we will have time to explore this historic mountain town and enjoy a local meal.



Accommodation: KOA Campground - Jackson (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 8 - Hike in the Grand Teton National Park

The Grand Teton area is blessed with some of the most dramatic mountain scenery anywhere in North America - 10 summits carved by glaciation tower three kilometres above the valley floor. At the foot of the mountains lies numerous sparkling lakes. These jagged pinnacles are the inspiring back-drop for our hikes in the park. We begin the day at Jenny Lake, from where we'll take the trailhead from Spring Lake and on towards South Jenny Lake. On reaching the misty cascades at Hidden Falls, we follow the easier eastern path that leads to South Jenny Lake. The hike takes approximately 4 hours. We return by boat, boarding at Inspiration Point and crossing the lake to a pick up on the eastern shore. After a picnic lunch, we will continue to explore the park looking for wildlife and strolling around one of the many glacial lakes such as Taggart and Bradley.



Accommodation: KOA Campground - Jackson (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 9 - White water rafting with optional mountain biking

Our last day in Jackson takes in one of the many activities the area has to offer, white water rafting along grade 3 rapids on the Snake River. The afternoon is free for optionals including hiring a bike for some independent sightseeing or walking along the numerous trails.



Accommodation: KOA Campground - Jackson (or similar)



Simple Camping



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Dinner

DAY 10 - Drive to the Flaming Gorge Area


We travel through the Gros Ventre range, heading down through the rich red-hued rock of Flaming Gorge. Once a hideout for Butch Cassidy, Flaming Gorge is now home to wildlife such as osprey which are often spotted nesting on craggy rock pinnacles and cliff-tops and here we explore the Canyon Rim Trail on foot (1.5 hours walk). Tonight we stay near the town of Vernal in rustic cabins.



Accommodation: KOA Campground - Vernal (or similar)



Simple Camping

 Meals Provided: Breakfast, Lunch & Dinner

DAY 11 - Dinosaur National Monument and drive to Salt Lake City

We explore the Dinosaur National Monument, where these creatures once roamed and their embedded bones are still visible in the rocks as are petroglyphs rock art images carved by ancient man.

We return to Salt Lake City, with time to take a stroll around the centre. Founded by a group of believers of the Church of the Latter Day Saints (Mormons) in 1847, the city is now their international headquarters and some of their finest buildings are ecclesiastical. The setting, below the Wasatch Mountains and beside the Great Salt Lake, is superb and makes this a pleasant city to explore on foot.



Accommodation: Salt Lake Plaza Hotel (or similar)



Standard Hotel



Swimming pool available



Meals Provided: Breakfast & Lunch

DAY 12 - Trip ends

The trip ends today with a transfer to Salt Lake City airport.



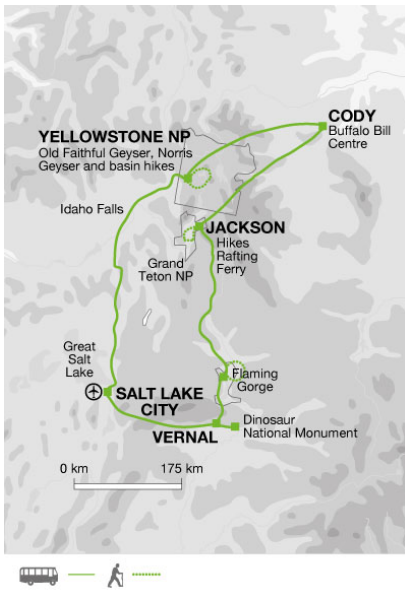
Meals Provided: None

Family information

Vehicle information: The vehicles that we use on our USA trips are either low-roof or high-roof transit vans. Where possible, we aim to get the high-roof ones, allowing that little bit of extra comfort. Although not flashy, these small-group vehicles are perfect for exploring the US as they allow greater flexibility to get to those more off the beaten track places. Your Explore Leader will rotate seating positions regularly within the van. Please see the image gallery for further details.

Minimum age

7



What's included?



Included meals

Breakfast: 9
Lunch: 8
Dinner: 7



Transport

Maxiwagon



Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader / Driver



Accommodation

9 nights simple camping
2 nights standard hotel

Trip information

Country information

USA

Climate

There are great variations in the altitude and terrain of the areas visited and this is reflected in the temperatures. Desert areas can be extremely hot in the summer months (49°), though temperatures can drop dramatically at night. The mountains are cooler and wetter especially in the north of the Rockies. At the beginning and end of the season there may still be some snow around in the high passes and it can be cold, whereas in mid-summer the day time temperatures can soar.

Time difference to GMT

-9

Plugs

2 Pin Flat

Religion

Christian

Language

English

Budgeting and packing

Optional activities

The following excursions and/or activities are usually available and may be arranged locally. Estimated costs are provided below for guidance only, are on a per person basis unless shown otherwise, and may depend on the number of participants. Prices quoted are correct as of the date these tour notes were originally issued but may change at any time due to currency fluctuations. Please note: These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

A selection of optional activities are listed below to help you budget for your Family adventure. Whilst the basic tour price you pay before you travel includes a great selection of highlights, we have also built in free time to allow you the flexibility to choose from a carefully selected range of additional excursions and activities or take time to relax, the choice is yours. At certain destinations along the way there may be several options to choose from and it may not be possible to fit all the activities in; your Explore Leader will be able to give advice on which are the most suitable for your family.

Day 8: Jackson

Mountain biking - \$50 per person for ½ day of rental. Guided tours are \$75 per person

Fishing - a non resident fishing licence costs \$14 per day alternatively a fully guided fishing trip starts at \$400 for 2 people.

Day 12: Salt Lake City

There are a number of options available in Salt Lake City including Temple Square guided tour, Liberty Park where its possible to rent e-bikes, Clark Planetarium and the Discovery Gateway Children's Museum.

Clothing

Pack layers! Please note that temperatures in this area can be high during summer - sometimes over 40°C. Please bear this in mind when packing for your trip. Dress is informal. A warm fleece or sweater is essential for cooler nights in the desert or at higher altitudes. Include a long sleeved shirt, warm trousers, a lightweight waterproof jacket, swimwear, sunglasses and a sun hat.

Footwear

Lightweight walking/hiking boots with good ankle support, trainers and/or sandals for travelling.

Luggage

20kg

Luggage: On tour

Bring only the bare essentials - one main bag plus a small daypack for walking and for personal items. Main luggage cannot be accessed during the day. Soft luggage is more practical than a hard shell suitcase. Bring plastic bags to keep things dry. Please only pack what you can carry.

Laundry facilities are available at various points during the trip.

Equipment

Bring a water bottle (3 litre capacity), high factor sunblock, plastic bags to keep things dry, a (head) torch and a towel. Please also bring a 2 or 3-season (temperature -5°C to 0°C) sleeping bag (a sleeping sheet is useful). A thermal ground pad is provided. You may find a walking pole useful. Please note: Sleeping bags can be purchased from a store for as low as US \$50. Please ask your Tour Leader on arrival.

Tipping

Explore leader

At your discretion you might also consider tipping your Tour Leader in appreciation of the efficiency and service you receive.

Local crew

In North America tipping 15%-20% is a recognised part of life across the service industry, including restaurants, activity suppliers,

taxis and guides. Local staff will look to you for personal recognition of particular services provided.

Unlike other Explore trips, during our trips in North America our Explore leaders will not operate a tips kitty. However, they will be more than happy to provide guidance throughout the trip on who to tip when and to suggest appropriate amounts.

Country Information

USA

Food and drink

The costs for meals may vary depending upon location, type of restaurant and number of courses eaten and so the prices given are an average guide. Local restaurants located off the beaten track may be less expensive, whereas an upmarket restaurant located in the centre of a major city may charge more.

Lunch price

£15

Dinner price

£21

Beer price

£Varies for different towns, average £4.00

Water price

£1.1

Foreign Exchange

Local currency

US Dollars.

Recommended Currency For Exchange

Bring your money in US\$ cash.

Where To Exchange

Banks or 'Forex' offices in main towns/cities. Your tour leader will advise you on arrival.

ATM Availability

Widely available.

Credit Card Acceptance

Widely accepted just about everywhere.

Transport, Accommodation & Meals

Transport Information

Maxiwagon

Accommodation notes

Booking a Single Room

All of our group tours are planned and operated on a twin-share basis, meaning that the standard cost is based either on individual travellers sharing accommodation with another group member of the same sex, or people who book together sharing accommodation. Please refer to the tour notes where the single room option availability is detailed on a night by night basis for this tour, and the price for the available nights is detailed on the dates & prices tab by departure date. For Self-Guided trips the Single Room supplement offers the option of a single room each and is charged per person. The Single Room supplement also applies to the third person in a party of three that will be accommodated in a single room.

All equipment is provided except a sleeping bag. Like many adventures of this type, much of the team spirit and camaraderie is developed through mucking in and helping out with basic responsibilities which may include help with meal preparation, washing and clearing up, loading and unloading of trailer. Be prepared for some early starts and some long days - there is an enormous amount to see!

Essential Information

FCO Advice

We strongly recommend that you check your government's travel advisory for up-to-date information and advice about your destination: safety and security, entry requirements, health, local laws and customs. For UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice click [here](#).

For more information from Explore about travel advice, click [here](#)

Under 18 immigration guidance

Please note that some countries require proof of parental consent when travelling overseas with under 18s. Please check requirements with the relevant embassy or consular office well in advance of travel if this applies to your party.

Price Guarantee

Once your booking has been confirmed we guarantee the price will not increase, whatever the circumstances. Before booking please ensure you have read our important tour pricing information. [Booking Conditions](#)

Visa and Passport Information

USA: (Including those in transit) Citizens of the UK, New Zealand, Australia, and passport holders from several EU countries can enter the United States under the Visa Waiver Program (VWP). You must apply online for an ESTA (Electronic System for Travel Authorisation), here <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> no later than 72 hours prior to travel. Travellers who have not registered before their trip may be refused boarding.

You must have an electronic passport with a digital chip containing biometric information about the passport owner. UK passports which are biometric feature a small gold symbol (camera) at the bottom of the front cover.

If you have visited Libya, Iran, Iraq, Somalia, Sudan, Syria or Yemen since March 2011 or are dual nationals of these countries, you cannot travel with an ESTA. If you are a citizen of a country not included in the VWP you cannot apply for an ESTA. In both cases, you will instead need to apply for a visa from the nearest US Embassy or Consulate. If you are unable to provide a valid visa before boarding flights to the US, or entering via another method, you may not be permitted to travel.

Please note for your ESTA application you will be required to supply Point of Contact information. Explore's USA contact information will be listed on your final documentation which you will receive approximately 3-4 weeks before departure. If you are leaving for the USA before this, please call the Explore team to get this information. (This is not necessary if only transitting through the USA)

I-94 - This is only required for completion if entering the USA by land through an official border crossing. For anyone entering by air or sea, you will be advised about this form during your journey if applicable. The i94 is a history of entries and exits to the US. You can get this for free online here: <https://i94.cbp.dhs.gov/i94/#/home>. Each i94 accessed is only valid for border crossing for 7 days after printed.

Entry requirements for the USA can change regularly, therefore, please ensure you have the most up to date information before you travel by checking the US embassy website. Visa applications - <http://london.usembassy.gov/niv/apply.html>

If you do require assistance in obtaining a visa then you may consider applying through Explore's recommended visa service in the UK, Travcour. See www.travcour.com to download the relevant visa application for your trip, if applicable (UK citizens only), along with details of how to apply for your visa through Travcour. The Team at Travcour will be happy to answer specific questions relating to visa applications, please call them directly on 0208 5431846.

It is your responsibility to ensure that you are in possession of a full passport, with the correct validity for your chosen destination.

Booking conditions

Before booking your Explore trip, please ensure that you read both our Essential Information and Booking Conditions.

Transfers

[Find out more about Trip Transfer Terms and Conditions before you book.](#)

Booking a land only package with Explore

Customers who have chosen to book on the 'Land Only' arrangements of our tour, please ensure that you have checked your tour specific 'Joining Instructions' prior to booking your own travel arrangements. Your joining instructions can be found below in the dates and prices information.

You may also be eligible for the Free Explore Transfer.

Joining Tour Abroad

Customers booked on the 'Land Only' arrangements will now receive a Free Transfer, provided you arrive and depart on the tour only itinerary start and end dates. The transfers will be from the Explore designated airport or train station to the joining point of your tour, and then back from the ending point to the designated airport or train station. The exception to this rule is customers who are booked on a tour where the joining and ending point is at the designated airport or train station.

Free transfers are not available for Self-Guided, Polar, Tailormade or Tours for Churches customers.

If you are not eligible for the Free Transfer then you will need to make your own way through to the joining and ending point. On a majority of our tours Explore will be able to provide a private transfer at an additional cost. Please ask for a quote at the time of booking.

For more information regarding the Explore Free Transfer [click here](#)

Insurance

It is a condition of booking with Explore that you have adequate valid travel insurance. It is your responsibility to arrange appropriate travel insurance and ensure you have read and understood the full terms and conditions of your travel insurance policy to ensure that you are covered for all activities you intend to undertake whilst on the tour, including all optional activities. Your Insurance Policy must fully cover you for medical expenses and emergency repatriation to your home country. Please ensure your policy includes medical emergency helicopter evacuation in the event of illness or injury and covers the entire duration of your holiday. If you are trekking at altitude please ensure that there is no upper altitude limit which may limit or exclude cover for your trip. The cost of many of our Polar Voyages will exceed the capped amount covered by standard insurance premiums and you will be required to pay an additional premium to cover the full value of your trip. Please ensure that you are covered for the full amount of your holiday cost, as insufficient cover could invalidate a claim under the policy. Medical and repatriation insurance cover is not mandatory for UK residents who are travelling on trips within the United Kingdom.

Read more information about what travel insurance is required.

Flight information

Explore offers a wide range of flexible flying options to make joining and leaving our trips easy. [Read more about them here.](#)

Flight Information

You are able to book this tour on a 'land only' basis or as a 'flight inclusive' package. Your flight inclusive package will be fully protected by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) ATOL protection scheme.

Booking a flight inclusive package with Explore

We have a good selection of flights not only from London but from many regional airports around the UK allowing us to compare fares between scheduled carriers as well as low cost and charter airlines. Our dedicated flights team will match the best flight options to your arrival and departure airport.

On our website we display a UK flight inclusive package guide price which is generally based on a London departure. To avoid paying supplements or to secure your preferred flight option, we recommend booking as early as possible, especially for peak travel dates.

Non refundable permits

USA

Vaccinations

Nothing compulsory, we recommend protection against typhoid, tetanus, diphtheria, polio and hepatitis A. Please check the latest requirements with your travel clinic or doctor prior to departure. The above is not an exhaustive list. Further information regarding vaccinations and travel health advice can be found by following the NHS and NaTHNaC links at [Explore Travel Health](#) and from your local healthcare provider. Visa and vaccination requirements are subject to change and should be confirmed by you before travelling.