

# EXPLORE!



## Western USA National Parks Explorer

From the vast landscapes of Yosemite and Zion National Parks to the lively cities of San Francisco and Las Vegas, this is a journey through some of the many highlights of America's southwest. Each day takes us through mindblowing scenery, from marvelling at the Grand Canyon and discovering the spectacular rock formations of Bryce Canyon, to standing on the Golden Gate bridge and walking the trails at Yosemite. We also bask in the rosy sunset glow over the 2000s arches and towering spires of Arches National Park.

If two-weeks aren't enough, we have longer itineraries available which also include visits to the ancient cliff dwellings at Mesa Verde, and watching the sun set over Arches National Park. From the drop-down menu below, select the 'Inc Moab & Mesa Verde' itinerary.

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## Trip highlights

- ★ **National Parks** - Hike in Bryce, Zion and the Grand Canyon; explore the unique landscapes of Canyonlands, Capitol Reef and Arches national parks
- ★ **San Francisco** - Explore the city highlights including the Golden Gate Bridge
- ★ **Yosemite National Park** - Fabulous scenery of the world's first protected area
- ★ **Route 66** - Drive along one of the most historic highways in America
- ★ **Monument Valley** - Incredible landscapes and Navajo culture
- ★ **Mesa Verde National Park** - Visit the UNESCO ruins of the Anasazi
- ★ **Las Vegas** - America's surreal and extravagant playground

### ACCOMMODATION GRADE:

#### Standard

Our standard, mid-range accommodation offers a good level of service, often with other amenities such as a restaurant, bar, garden or swimming pool. Generally rooms will be comfortable with en suite facilities.

### TRIP PACE:

#### Full on

Full on paced trips are for travellers who like their holidays packed with activities and experiences, moving on quickly from place to place with lots of early starts and long, busy days. Some may find them tiring, but others get a buzz from packing their precious holiday-time as chock-a-block full of new experiences as possible!

### 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.



14 day itinerary map (summer)



17 day trips including Moab and Mesa Verde

## Trip vehicles

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. There is an image in our gallery showing you one of our vehicles.

# What's included?



## Transport

Maxiwagon



## Trip staff

Explore Tour Leader / Driver

# 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.

There are a number of exciting optional excursions you can do on tour. These activities are booked and paid for direct with the supplier and do not form part of your Explore holiday contract.

Page - Antelope Canyon jeep or boat excursion US\$ 45 - \$78 (depending on seasonal peak hours and availability).

Monument Valley - Jeep excursion US\$ 45-75 including dinner.

Grand Canyon - Helicopter overflight approximately US\$ 254-284; IMAX cinema US\$ 13.

San Francisco - If you want to visit Alcatraz, we strongly recommend that you book your tickets in advance, especially during August. Please visit [www.alcatrazcruises.com](http://www.alcatrazcruises.com) for tickets.

## Clothing

For departures in spring and autumn, temperatures could possibly reach freezing at night, so make sure you bring warm layers including a fleece and thick jacket. A lightweight waterproof jacket, long-sleeved shirt, warm trousers, swimwear and sun hat are also essential.

## Footwear

Lightweight walking/hiking boots with good ankle support, trainers and/or sandals for travelling (ones that can get wet).

## Luggage

20kg

## Luggage: On tour

Bring only the bare essentials - one main bag plus a small daysac for walking and for personal items. Main luggage cannot be accessed during the day. Soft luggage is more practical as it is stored in the trailer during travel. Bring plastic bags to keep things dry. Laundry facilities are available at various points during the trip.

## Equipment

Bring a water bottle (1-2 litre capacity), high factor sunblock, plastic bags to keep things dry and a (head) torch and a towel. You may find a walking pole useful. You may need insect repellent especially in June and July.

## Tipping

### Explore leader

Tour 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

USDollars.

##### 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

## 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 01 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>

Canada (in transit): An electronic travel authorisation (ETA) is required by British citizens transiting via Canada. For more information see the official Canadian government website: <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/visit/eta.asp>  
Other nationalities should consult their local embassy or consular office.

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](http://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.

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