

Call of the Wild

The World's Longest Running Adventure Travel Company for Women
Since 1978



Beginning Yosemite Backpack *May Lake & Raisin Lake* **July 9 - 11, 2010**

Rating: Easy Backpacking (with optional day hike)

Group Size Limit: 13

Cost: \$450; Reservation Deposit \$250. Balance due 3 months before start date of trip.

This very easy backpacking trip is a great introduction to backpacking in the High Sierra. Our route takes us past May Lake, with its spectacular views of the mountains, to Raisin Lake, a warm swimming hole with pleasant campsites to reward you at the end of the day. On our layover day, we'll travel cross-country to a nearby ridge and show you how to use a topographical map and introduce you to compass navigation. This pleasant backpack is specifically suited to the novice backpacker. The very easy trail will give you the opportunity to learn the basics of backpacking while providing awe-inspiring vistas of the granite mountains and glacial lakes that make Yosemite famous.

Day 1, Friday ~ Backpack to Raisin Lake; 3 miles; Elevation change 8847'-9200'-8880'

9:00 AM. Meet at May Lake trailhead (8847') (see directions following itinerary). Please arrive with your water bottles already full as there is no water source at the trailhead. We'll organize our backpacks, talk about backpacking techniques, and then hike 1.5 miles through forest and over granite slabs to May Lake (9060'). Along the way, we will be treated to views of Tenaya Canyon, Half Dome and the Cathedral Range. We'll lunch at May Lake, a glacially carved lake against the awesome cliffs of Mt Hoffman. We will then continue 1.5 miles over a small ridge (9200') and down to Raisin Lake (8880'). We'll make our camp near the lake and you can enjoy a refreshing afternoon swim. After a delicious dinner, we'll enjoy an evening campfire. (*Lunch, Dinner*)

Day 2, Saturday ~ Optional Day Hike; About 3 miles

After breakfast, we'll take a day hike in the area. You will not need to carry your backpack, only a small daypack. The hike is optional, and you can take it easy and relax by the lake today if you choose. Back in camp at Raisin Lake, we'll enjoy another excellent dinner and campfire. (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Day 3, Sunday ~ Backpack out to May Lake trailhead; 3 miles; 8880'-9200'-8847'

After breakfast, we'll retrace our route on the 3-mile trail back to our cars at the May Lake trailhead by early afternoon. (*Breakfast, Lunch*)

Note: Itinerary subject to change at leader's discretion due to weather and other contingencies.

Mileage: *3 miles each way with backpacks*

Elevation Changes: *8847'-9200'-8847'*

Topographical Maps: *Tuolumne Meadows (15 Minute)*

WHAT YOUR TRIP INCLUDES:

- Experienced leadership
- Excellent food (provided meals are noted on itinerary)
- Tents and community camping equipment, including bear Can
- Camping fees and permits

NOT INCLUDED:

- Transportation (Some participants may be interested in carpooling--call us.)
- Entrance fee to Yosemite National Park (\$20 per car)
- Trail snacks
- Personal gear (See equipment list mailed in your registration packet)
- Optional tips for your guides

About tipping: People on our trips often ask us about gratuities, so here are some guidelines: Each person usually tips \$5-\$10 per day for each guide depending on the level of service and the number of guides assigned to the trip (people do not usually tip any guide interns.) If Carole Latimer is leading your trip she, as the owner of the business, does not accept tips, but our other guides do. They cook and serve your meals and take care of many extra details to give you a safe and fun trip. Tips at the end of the trip are a way of showing your special appreciation if you feel that your guides have given very good service to you.

QUALIFICATIONS

We are rating this trip very easy so it is specifically geared to beginners. We expect trip participants to be in good physical condition. You should have hiking boots already broken in. Everyone should be equipped with a spirit of adventure, the sensitivity to recognize the needs of the group, a willingness to undergo the potential hardships of outdoor living, and a sense of humor!

HOW TO REGISTER

First, call (650-265-1662) or use the Online Quick Reservation Tool to make a reservation and complete your deposit payment with a Visa or MasterCard. We also take checks.

Next, send in completed and signed Trip Application. The Trip Application is available by fax, mail, or from our Web site at www.callwild.com. After receiving your deposit and application, we will send you confirmation of your reservation and an information packet on your trip.

TRIP CANCELLATION INSURANCE

We strongly suggest that you take out trip cancellation insurance. Call of the Wild does not issue cash refunds, no matter what the circumstances of your cancellation may be. Depending on the

time of your cancellation, you may or may not be eligible for a credit for another trip, please read our refund and cancellation policy at www.callwild.com. To sign up for Travel Guard insurance call us for a brochure or visit www.callwild.com.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PLANNING

We will meet at the May Lake trailhead at 9 AM Friday morning. We advise that you travel to the Yosemite area on Thursday to avoid a very early morning wake up! See Accommodations section below. If you need more details about possible carpooling or accommodations, please don't hesitate to contact us.

Note: There is no water source at the trailhead. Therefore, you need to arrive with your water bottles already full. There are also no bathrooms at the trailhead. There are bear lockers at the trailhead to store any food or garbage you will not be taking with you on the trail. You cannot leave anything with a scent or any coolers in your car as bears will destroy cars to get at food.

DIRECTIONS

Start with a map of California to locate Yosemite National Park.

From the Bay Area: It takes approximately 4 1/2 hours to drive to the May Lake trailhead.

North or East Bay: you will most likely enter the park at Big Oak Flat Entrance on Highway 120, 1 1/2 hours from the trailhead. Turn left onto Tioga Road (Highway 120 east) at the Crane Flat gas station. This is a major junction so it will be well marked. Continue on Tioga Pass Road (Highway 120 east). Turn left onto the side road sign posted May Lake just before Tenaya Lake. Continue to the May Lake trailhead at the end of the road.

South Bay: you will most likely use the Arch Rock Entrance on highway 140, 1 hour from the trailhead. Turn left onto Big Oak Flat Road and head up until you get to Tioga Road (Highway 120 east). Turn right onto Tioga Road at the Crane Flat gas station. This is a major intersection and is well sign posted. Continue on Tioga Pass Road (Highway 120 east). Turn left onto the side road sign posted May Lake just before Tenaya Lake. Continue to the May Lake trailhead at the end of the road.

East of the Sierras: From Highway 395, turn onto Highway 120 and enter the park at the Tioga Pass Entrance. Continue on 120 west until you reach the May Lake sign posted road, a side road on your right shortly after you pass Tenaya Lake. Turn here and continue to the May Lake trailhead at the end of the road.

ACCOMMODATIONS

For those of you wishing to drive to the area on Thursday, there are hotel/motel accommodations in Groveland (minutes outside the Big Oak Flat entrance on highway 120) Lee Vining (minutes outside the Tioga Pass entrance on highway 120, and El Portal (minutes outside the Arch Rock Entrance on highway 140). There are also a few Bed and Breakfasts we can recommend outside the park. Call us and we can help with more suggestions. There is also first-come, first-serve camping inside the park at Porcupine Flat campground.

WEATHER

We will most likely experience sunny, benign weather (with perhaps scattered evening showers). However, there is always the chance of experiencing dramatically changing mountain weather. It is important to be prepared for all kinds of weather, including sun, wind, rain or lightening. The

Sierras in summer are especially prone to afternoon thunderstorms. Your guides will inform you of what to do in the case of a thunderstorm.

CONDITIONING

The best aerobic and strength conditioning for backpacking is backpacking! If possible, hike with your pack on steep, rocky trails. Start with a low weight of 15-20 lbs and gradually add weight. Of course, most of us can't hike on wilderness trails every day. So, the next best alternative is to spend time running and hiking on inclined trails with a daypack. If you can't get to a trail, Stairmasters, Nordic trainers, and treadmills are good for your aerobic capacity and weights are good for your strength. You want especially to strengthen your quadriceps, also your back, and upper body. How many months ahead of your trip you start conditioning depends on your general level of fitness. Someone with a good level of fitness should begin conditioning at least 8 weeks before this trip.

ALTITUDE ACCLIMATION

This is not a high altitude trip, but it will likely be higher elevation than you are used to at home. There are a few things that you can do to help you acclimate. First, have a high level of fitness (see above for aerobic and strength conditioning). Second, drink lots and lots of water, at least two days before the trip starts! It gives your body and muscles the water it needs to be well hydrated to facilitate acclimation. Also, a sign of acclimation is frequent urination. So if you are not drinking enough water, it is hard to tell if you are acclimating properly. Third and most effective, spend significant time at altitude. This includes sleeping and exercising at altitude. Some people arrive a couple of days early for this trip. The first day they exercise moderately (a hike) and sleep at altitude (about 8000-9000') and the second day, they rest and sleep at altitude. This does wonders for acclimation. Be aware that altitude will increase your heart rate. You may also feel lassitude, nausea, shortness of breath, headache, no desire to eat. All these can be symptoms of what is known as acute mountain sickness (the effects of not being acclimated to altitude), or AMS. For most people, the symptoms of AMS abate in 12-48 hours.

SHARING TENTS / WILDERNESS CAMPING

Our tents are Sierra Designs Comets or Meteorlights, designed for 2-3 people. On backpacking trips, we have 2 or 3 people in each tent depending on the number of people in the group. If you prefer not to share a tent, you can bring your own *small* tent or rent one from us. However, if you choose this option, keep in mind that on a backpacking trip you will have to carry the weight of a whole tent rather than just your portion of a shared tent. Be sure to let us know if you will be bringing your own tent.

ABOUT OUR GUIDES

Call of the Wild guides have extensive wilderness experience and bring proven leadership to your wilderness trip. We pride ourselves on giving women safe opportunities to venture into the wilderness and do something they've never done before. Our guides are certified Wilderness First Responders and they'll go the extra mile to make you feel at home in the wilderness. They are interesting people and include a pilot, a former paramedic, a personal trainer, an exercise physiologist, a glacier guide, and the owner of a wild mustang. They share a love of the wilderness and an enjoyment of people's company.

ABOUT OUR FOOD

Our menu features hearty, healthy meals made with recipes from Carole Latimer's cookbook *Wilderness Cuisine*. You'll feast on dishes such as Pad Thai, Anasazi Stew, Truffled Porcini Potato Soup, and fresh-baked Coffee Cake. Our meals tend to be higher in carbohydrates and lower in fat for hiking trips, and we dehydrate some food in order to preserve freshness and decrease weight. Meals are often vegetarian, but we serve meat dishes as well. We avoid processed food, but you won't get a strict brown rice and wheat germ regime either, and we think there's nothing wrong with an occasional backslide to decadently rich food after a hard day on the trail.

Most people love our food and much care and effort goes into preparing your meals. However we are not able to accommodate each person's preferences. Often we are cooking in the wilderness and our menus are limited by weight, fuel, refrigeration, space, and so on. We cannot make separate meals or bring different provisions for individual diets and preferences. Therefore, if you have food allergies, if you are vegan, or if you don't eat certain foods we suggest that you call us. You can then plan your own food to supplement our menu.