

Call of the Wild

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



South Lake to North Lake Sierra Backpack *California's Finest Sierra Backpacking* **August 31 – September 7, 2010**

Rating: Challenging

Accommodations: 7 nights camping

Cost: \$1,295; Reservation Deposit \$500. Balance due 3 months before start date of trip.

Group Size Limit: 12

Please note: Price subject to change until your deposit is received

This 50-mile trek is arguably California's Finest Sierra backpack adventure. It begins near Bishop and crosses three nearly-12,000 foot passes. Along this hike you will enjoy the most splendid scenery the High Sierra has to offer. Our hike begins with a steep climb over Bishop Pass into Dusy Basin. Our route takes us into Sequoia National Park, King's Canyon and along the John Muir Trail. We'll cross Muir Pass and camp by exquisite Evolution Lake in the shadow of Mt. Darwin and Mt. Mendel. We'll then head along the San Joaquin River and Piute Canyon to the area near Humphreys Basin. Finally we'll descend Piute Pass to finish our loop hike of the High Sierra. If your spirit is drawn to high places and you're a strong, experienced backpacker—don't miss this premiere High Sierra adventure.

Day 1 ~ Bishop, California/North Lake Campground

You have the option of meeting at 12 noon in Bishop, CA or meeting at the North Lake Campground, 25 miles west of Bishop at 2 pm. (located just south of Mammoth and about a 7-hour drive from San Francisco and also 7 hours from Los Angeles). Upon arrival in North Lake, we will weigh your packs and help answer any questions you may have about gear or itinerary. We'll have a good dinner and spend the night at 9,500'. This is immensely important and the best thing you can do to get used to high altitude.

(Dinner)

Day 2 ~ Begin Backpacking, South Lake to Dusy Basin; 8 miles

Before we start, we'll move all cars to the Piute Pass parking lot and then shuttle to our starting point at South Lake. From there we'll hike over Bishop Pass (11,972') and down into Dusy Basin. We'll camp tonight in Dusy Basin with its many high lakes and views of 12,000' to 13,000' peaks: Thunderbolt Peak, Isosceles Peak, Columbine Peak, Giraud Peak, Mt. Agassiz and Mt. Winchell. *(Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner)*

Day 3 ~ Le Conte Canyon and Big Pete Meadow; 7 miles

Today's hike takes us through Dusy Basin, down into Le Conte Canyon and along the middle fork of the King River. Tonight we'll camp near Big Pete Meadow where we can have a campfire and enjoy a good dinner. We'll go to bed early in preparation for our trek up to Muir Pass. (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Day 4 ~ Muir Pass and Evolution Lake; 12 miles

Early start. This may be the most beautiful day of hiking you've ever experienced. We begin climbing up the very steep and rocky 5-mile trail to Muir Pass (11,955'). Our route takes us through incredibly wild and beautiful country. We'll pass by Lake Helen and then to Muir Pass with its beehive-shaped stone hut. After pictures and lunch on Muir Pass, we'll continue down past Lake Wanda (John Muir named Lakes Helen and Wanda after his daughters) and gorgeous Sapphire Lake and to our camp at Evolution Lake—possibly the most lovely spot in the entire Sierra. Mountaineer Walter Starr said that the Evolution Region is “where the grand crescendo of the Sierra touches at once the hearts of the mountaineer and the artist.”

(*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Day 5, Friday ~ Rest Day at Evolution Lake

Rest Day. You can stroll around Evolution Lake or hike back up to the pristine lakes we passed yesterday, or do a hike up into Darwin Canyon. From the northeast end of Evolution Lake you can see down into Evolution Valley and all around us are the towering peaks of Mt. Mendel (13,710'), Mt. Darwin (13,830'), Mt. Spencer (12,131), Mt. Haecker (13,418). Another fun thing to do today might be our famous “garbage bag bath.” If the day is sunny you can have a hot bath by putting water in a large black garbage bag, leave it in full sun for a few hours, then crawl in the bag and luxuriate in the hot water! There are plenty of private spots above the lake behind our campsite to do this. (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Day 6 ~ Evolution Valley; 9.5 miles

Today we'll hike down into Evolution Valley, which is a series of meadows surrounded by peaks with Evolution Creek meandering through this peaceful valley. We'll continue our hike down, following Evolution Creek with its inviting pools and waterfalls. Tonight we'll camp near a gorgeous swimming hole on the San Joaquin River. (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Day 7 ~ Piute Canyon; 8 miles

Today's hike takes us along Piute Creek in impressive Piute Canyon. We'll steadily climb in the canyon and then turn eastward and walk along Piute Creek with its many little pools. We'll take the "old trail" past a cataract waterfall near our camp. (*Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner*)

Day 8, Monday ~Piute Pass, North Lake Trailhead; 5.5 miles

Today we finish our Sierra Loop hiking over Piute Pass with its jagged red crags. Along the way, we'll pass the Golden Trout Lakes and see lovely views of Mt. Humphreys, the highest peak in the area at 13,986 feet. We'll exit at the North Lake Trailhead. Optional celebratory lunch at a restaurant in Bishop before we say our goodbyes and drive home. (*Breakfast*)

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

Mileage: 50 backpacking miles

Topographical Maps: Wilderness Press, 15-Minute Maps: Blackcap Mountain, Mt. Goddard;
OR Tom Harrison Maps: Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks

WHAT YOUR TRIP INCLUDES:

- Experienced leadership
- Excellent food (dinner on Day 1 to breakfast on Day 8)
- Tents (double-occupancy) and community camping equipment
- Camping fees and permits

NOT INCLUDED:

- Transportation to/from trip starting point (some participants may be interested in carpooling. Call us if you want to carpool.)
- 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.) Guides 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. Tips are not required, but appreciated.

DAILY MILEAGE AND ELEVATION CHANGES

Day 1 ~ Arrival and shuttle

Day 2 ~ Mileage: 8 miles. Elevation Change: 9768'-11,972'-10,800'

Day 3 ~ Mileage: 7 miles Elevation Change: 10,800'-9200'

Day 4 ~ Mileage: 12 miles. Elevation Change: 9200'-11,955'-10,850'

Day 5 ~ Rest day

Day 6 ~ Mileage: 9.5 miles. Elevation change: 10,850'-8480'

Day 7 ~ Mileage: 7.5 miles. Elevation Change: 8480'-10,300'

Day 8 ~ Mileage: 5.5 miles. Elevation Change: 10,300-11,423-9,500'

QUALIFICATIONS & PACK WEIGHT

Hiking boots (well broken in) will be needed on this trip, and full packs may weigh up to 40 lbs at the beginning, even more if you do not pack carefully. You can expect Call of the Wild to give you about 10-12 pounds of food, group equipment, and part of a tent. For this reason, we ask you to arrive with your pack contents weighing only about 25 pounds, including your snacks, camera, water, and so on. For more information see the Equipment List, Notes About What You Need to Bring, and Choosing a Backpack & Packing for a Trip, materials included in your trip packet.

Trip participants must be aerobically fit, highly motivated, and experienced backpackers. 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! This challenging trip is always interesting and lots of FUN! However, please make no mistake, you must be tough and in good shape to do this trip. You must have the stamina and the mind set to carry a backpack at high altitude over rocky trails for several days. We hope you'll join us on this exciting High Sierra adventure!

HOW TO REGISTER

First, call (650-265-1662) or fill out our quick reservation form on our website at www.callwild.com. We will hold your space for 7 days while you are completing the application process, making travel arrangements, and mailing your deposit check.

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, whatever circumstances may cause a cancellation. 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 under "Trip Terms and Conditions." We also include a copy in our trip packets; or you may phone our office. You may be committed to going on your trip, but people have been forced to cancel due to circumstances beyond their control or because of a completely unexpected misfortune. To sign up for Travel Guard insurance call us for a brochure or visit www.callwild.com or phone 1-800-826-4919. For certain coverage, you must purchase insurance within 14 days of making your initial deposit with Call of the Wild.

Please Note: Call of the Wild provides Travel Guard insurance brochures and a link to their website for your convenience, but there are many other travel insurance companies. It is your responsibility to know the restrictions and provisions of your policy.

AIR TRAVEL AGENT

For air travel, please contact Wendy Fazio at Skyline Travel 510-530-1100 or e-mail wendyatskyline@aol.com. Let her know that you are traveling with Call of the Wild.

ARRIVAL AND DEPARTURE PLANNING

Our trip starting point is near the town of Bishop, CA on Highway 395, which runs along the Eastern side of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

From the San Francisco Bay Area: It is a 6-hour drive to Bishop (300 miles). Be aware that if you go through Yosemite National Park there is a \$20 entrance fee that is good for one week. You may go through Sonora Pass to the north but this will add about 1 hour to your travel time. The North Lake Campground is another 45 minutes from Bishop.

From the Los Angeles Area: It is a 6-7 hour drive to Bishop (270 miles).

From Reno, Nevada airport: It is a 4-5 hour drive to Bishop (200 miles).

DIRECTIONS TO NORTH LAKE CAMPGROUND

You are going to North Lake Campground off Hwy 168. It is a 45-minute drive to North Lake Campground from Bishop. Use Hwy 395 to get to Bishop and head west on Hwy 168 (toward the mountains). You'll head west out of town toward the Sierra ridgeline and Lake Sabrina. Before you get to Lake Sabrina, you'll take a right turn to North Lake onto a road which is alternately paved and gravel. The road winds high around the side of the mountain until you get to North Lake and Bishop Pack Outfitters. The campground is past the Pack Station.

For those who wish to meet in Bishop, CA, we will send you the meeting location in your trip packet. You must indicate to us that you wish to meet in Bishop, or we will otherwise plan to meet you at the campground at 2 pm.

ACCOMMODATIONS IN BISHOP

There are many motels and restaurants on Main Street (Highway 395) in Bishop.

If you are interested in a less expensive hotel, we recommend the Comfort Inn at 805 N Main St (760-873-4284). A very nice hotel chain (but more expensive) is the Holiday Inn Express at 636 N Main St (760-872-2423, Toll Free: 877-395-2395). For breakfast, try Schatt's Bakery; Amigo's Mexican Food or Whiskey Creek Café are good for dinner.

WEATHER

We will most likely experience summer, benign weather. 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, lightening, and hail. The Sierras in summer are especially prone to afternoon thunderstorms and there have been instances of lightening strike on Piute Pass. Guides will inform you of what to do in the case of a thunderstorm.

CONDITIONING

This is rated a challenging trip. We will be hiking lots of miles a day and there will be many slopes to climb and descend. You need to be prepared for the physical demands of this trip. The two main aspects to your physical conditioning include aerobic and strength conditioning and altitude acclimation (see below for altitude information). The best aerobic and strength conditioning for backpacking is backpacking! Spend time with your pack on your back on steep, rocky trails. Of course, we can't do this everyday. So, the next best alternative is to spend time running and hiking on inclined trails with a day pack. 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 to strengthen your quadriceps, 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 6-8 weeks before this trip. Call of the Wild is happy to help you with a training program to help you get ready for this demanding trip.

ALTITUDE ACCLIMATION

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 on this trip. The first day they exercise moderately (a hike) and sleep at altitude (about 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.

LEAVE NO TRACE

Call of the Wild adheres to and promotes the principles of Leave No Trace. With your information packet you will receive guidelines which we expect our trip participants to follow, and your guides will be happy to talk with you about how to properly follow LNT practices. They include proper disposal of waste, not using soap (even biodegradable soap) in streams or lakes, and minimizing campfire impact. LNT principles help ensure the sustainable use of the wilderness for years to come. Please take a few minutes to read over the **Wilderness Living/Leave No Trace** material in your information packet. It reviews proper camping practices and provides tips that will make your wilderness trip easier and more fun.

ABOUT OUR GUIDES

Call of the Wild guides have extensive experience and bring proven leadership to your trip. We pride ourselves on giving women safe opportunities to venture out 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 comfortable. They all share a love of the wilderness and an enjoyment of people's company. You may read more about our guides on our website at www.callwild.com.

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 don't eat certain foods we suggest that you call us. You can then plan your own food to supplement our menu.