



# SMALL GROUP ADVENTURES ACROSS NORTH, SOUTH AND CENTRAL AMERICA

## TRIP DOSSIER

### Western Dream



#### Tour Overview

After a morning visit to the spectacular Golden Gate Bridge and a brief tour of San Francisco, we head east through California's historic gold country. The scenic Yosemite National Park region is 'home' for the next three nights. After a visit to the Giant Sequoias, Yosemite Valley beckons. You may bicycle, take a dip in the Merced River or wander the meadows. Everyone will enjoy hiking one of the many trails that allow you to leave the crowds behind. The famous sites situated along these trails include Yosemite Falls, Nevada Falls, Vernal Falls, Mirror Lake and Half Dome. The views are breathtaking from every vantage point - the granite formations of Half Dome, El Capitan and Cathedral Rocks will forever be etched on your mind. From Yosemite's towering sequoias we continue through the Sierra Nevada to our campground located in the high desert.

Next, Zion National Park, and two days in the park to hike to Emerald Pools, ford the Narrows or climb to Angel's Landing. Bryce Canyon National Park follows with its unique turrets and spires, and a chance to explore the area with a hike on the Queen's Garden, Navajo Loop or Peekaboo Loop trails, before a short drive to our lovely campsite at Kodachrome Basin State Park. From here we continue to beautiful Lake Powell for a day of fun in the sun. The next camp is on the Navajo Tribal Lands of Monument Valley, and is a true photographer's paradise. We will discover some of the area's hidden secrets on our included 4x4 and walking tour with Navajo guides. There is also ample time to relax, shop for native wares and view the valley's surreal sunset.

The awesome Grand Canyon is sure to be a stop to remember. Take a scenic flight or a ranger guided nature walk along the rim, experience the wonder of IMAX or, for the really active, hike into the canyon to get a better appreciation of its scale and grandeur.

Leaving nature behind, we head into Las Vegas and all of its neon splendour. Here you'll have time for some last minute bargain shopping or to relax by the pool before a big night of bright lights, casinos and world class shows. On our final day we drive across the great Mojave Desert to say our fond farewells in Los Angeles.

#### Tour Itinerary

- 1 San Francisco >> Yosemite NP
- 2 Yosemite NP
- 3 Yosemite NP
- 4 Great Basin Desert
- 5 Zion NP
- 6 Zion NP
- 7 Bryce Canyon NP
- 8 Lake Powell
- 9 Monument Valley
- 10 Grand Canyon NP
- 11 Grand Canyon NP
- 12 Las Vegas (HP)
- 13 Las Vegas >> Los Angeles

(HP) Indicates included hotel

#### Is This Tour For Me?

Leave behind the big city life of San Francisco, a total contrast to the tranquil National and State Parks visited. From the alpine forests of Yosemite, the chasm of the Grand Canyon, deep waters of Lake Powell to the glitz of Las Vegas, you truly will be living the western dream!

This is one of Grand American Adventures' most diverse tours on the West Coast, making it ideal for both adventure and nature lovers.

#### Included Highlights

- ✓ Navajo guided 4X4 tour of Monument Valley
- ✓ Grand Canyon sunrise or sunset
- ✓ City tour of San Francisco
- ✓ Walk amongst Giant Sequoias
- ✓ Tour of Las Vegas Strip
- ✓ Scenic walks and hikes
- ✓ National parks and monuments – Yosemite, Zion, Bryce, Lake Powell, Monument Valley and the Grand Canyon
- ✓ All meals whilst camping
- ✓ Professional tour leader, equipment and private transportation

#### Tour Matrix

Please find below our Tour Matrix, designed to rate the focus of this tour. We hope this will help you to choose the tour that is right for you.

Western Dream	Mild Focus	Moderate Focus	High Focus
National Parks Visited			
City Sights			
Activities			
Hiking Opportunities			
Native American Culture			
Adventure Level			
Fun, Freedom & Flexibility			



# Western Dream Tour Information

## DESTINATIONS

Please find below more detailed information on the destinations this tour visits. In alphabetical order:

**Bryce Canyon National Park** - Bryce Canyon is a fascinating landscape of thin spires of pink and orange stone. The Navajo Loop trail enables you to hike right in amongst these unique formations. Or perhaps you would prefer to remain on the rim, photographing the change of colours and shadows as the sun moves across the sky.

**Grand Canyon National Park** - This incredible spectacle is difficult to comprehend, even as you stand at the rim or hike down into the canyon. Carved over millennia, this massive wonder of nature is 277 miles long, up to 16 miles wide and 1 mile deep. We highly recommend a scenic flight over the canyon and the IMAX film to obtain perspectives you cannot achieve on foot.

**Lake Powell** - Created by the Glen Canyon Dam on the Colorado River, Lake Powell has a shoreline that stretches longer than the western coast of the USA! Many say that Glen Canyon was even more spectacular than the Grand Canyon before the 500-ft dam was built. Now the lake is a haven for watersports or just relaxing in one of the many sandstone coves.

**Las Vegas, Nevada** - Las Vegas is the fastest growing city in the United States and the "tacky capital of the world", home to pirates and pyramids, weddings and waterfalls. If it is gambling you want, you have come to the right place. Nowhere else in the world will you find as many casinos. But if you really want to try your luck, stop in at one of its countless wedding chapels.

**Monument Valley** - In the heart of the Navajo Nation, Monument Valley is sacred land to those who call it home. The red sandstone monoliths have been the backdrop to countless 'westerns' featuring cowboys riding off into the sunset. Explore the incredible array of rock formations on an optional guided Jeep tour and learn the magic and myth of the rich Native American culture.

**Yosemite National Park** - Yosemite National Park sits nestled in the Sierra Nevada Mountain range of Northern California. Here green forest meets granite walls measuring several thousand feet in height. Rock climbers come from all over the world to scale rocks named Half Dome and El Capitan. Hike to the base of some of the largest waterfalls in the world or rest on the banks of the Merced River.

**Zion National Park** - Just a few hours northeast of Las Vegas, lies Zion Canyon, named by the early Mormon settlers of Utah. Some of the best hiking in the desert Southwest can be found here in the fertile Virgin River Gorge. Ascend 2500 feet to experience unbeatable views from atop Angels Landing, take a short hike from the valley floor to view the Emerald Pools, or cool off from the summer sun by exploring the Narrows section of the Virgin River.

## ARRIVAL / DEPARTURE HOTELS

Our arrival and departure hotels are conveniently located and serve as your tour's start and end points. Rooms are comfortable and spacious, with two double beds and en-suite facilities. They make good bases for sightseeing and offer an opportunity to informally meet with your fellow trekkers.

The tour begins at 07:30hrs in the hotel lobby, where you will meet your group and tour guide. You should have packed your bags and eaten breakfast so that you are fresh and ready to start the journey.

The tour ends between 17:00-18:00hrs on the final day. Please do not reserve flights until at least 21:00hrs or the following day.

If you would like to reserve additional nights in our hotel before or after the holiday, or if you would prefer to have your own room throughout, please contact our sales team for additional information and associated costs.

## CAMPING ACCOMMODATION

Camping allows us to stay in the heart of the most breathtaking natural scenery, away from fast food outlets and the encroaching development; and Grand American Adventure's experienced tour leaders and top quality equipment will surely enhance your experience.

Your comfort is important to us and we know that starts with using high quality camping gear. We only use top of the range, spacious two-person tents and thick (air/foam-filled) sleeping pads to ensure your evenings are comfortable and restful. Sturdy camp chairs are always available for those evening chats as the group prepares delicious meals (using state of the art camping stoves). All you need to bring is a warm sleeping bag and a sense of adventure and you will be sure to enjoy the trip of a lifetime!

Nearly all of our local campgrounds provide modern conveniences and amenities such as hot showers (paid locally approx \$2) and flush toilets; whilst others will have swimming pools, shops and launderettes. On special occasions, our groups may utilize rustic, wilderness sites in order to fully appreciate more remote areas' natural surroundings. That said, waking up at camp to the smell of fresh brewed coffee provides a truly intimate natural experience and one that eludes conventional tourists.

**A sleeping bag is required for this tour.** Make sure your sleeping bag is warm enough for the time of year you are travelling.



# Western Dream Tour Information

## FOOD & DRINK

Grand American Adventures include all meals while camping (alcohol/drinks purchased locally) and you will be sure to create and enjoy regular international dinner parties on the road. Incidentally, our professional guides are great in the kitchen and they will assist the group in preparing delicious, healthy meals so that you can take the path less travelled... with a full stomach.

We prepare plenty of good fresh food on our camping trips and anticipate hearty eaters. Breakfasts often include fresh fruits and cereal, toast, juice, coffee or tea. Fried bacon or sausage, pancakes or eggs may also be available on more leisurely mornings. Lunches are typically picnic style and consist of a selection of delicatessen meats, cheeses and salads. Dinners are filling and main dishes include pastas, grilled meats/chicken/fish, as well as regional specialties such as Mexican fajitas or BBQ's and are accompanied with cooked vegetables or fresh salads.

Meals consist of a variety of balanced dishes and, aiming for universal appeal, we avoid highly spiced foods. Vegetarians are certainly welcome and are always accommodated. Please let us know of any dietary concerns at the time of booking.

On occasion, meals are taken in local restaurants where passengers pay individually for food and drinks en route. Average breakfasts cost from \$6-\$12, lunches from \$8-15 and dinners from \$13-\$30; this does not include alcoholic beverages. Wine costs approximately \$5 per glass and beer \$4 per bottle. Please be aware that a tip of approximately 20% is added to group meals in restaurants in North America and applicable taxes will also be added to all listed menu prices.

## GROUP PARTICIPATION

An essential part of a Grand American Adventures camping holiday is helping out around the campsite. Our tents are easy to set up and with guidance from your tour leader, everyone will assist with the setting up and packing of the campsite. As a team, it only takes approximately 20 minutes before setting up your "home with a view" in the great outdoors!

Your tour leaders will organize daily activities and guided hikes, as well as coordinate and assist the group when shopping for food, preparing the daily meals and washing up.

As this is a participatory trip, group members will assist with the preparation of meals and with the washing. That said, often the best meals on the road are created when individuals offer to cook up one of their specialties from home!

## GROUPS

The maximum group size is 13 passengers.

Passengers come from a range of countries worldwide (average of 4 nationalities per group) and many will be solo travellers. You will find you have many things in common with your fellow trekkers, including a passion for adventure and a strong interest in exploring the national parks.

Grand American Adventures tours are designed for adults over 18 years old. While most passengers are aged 25-55, every year we get many people both above and below this age range. All travellers over the age of 55 will be requested to complete a self-declaration of fitness.

## OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES/SPENDING MONEY

There are many opportunities for optional activities during the holiday. Your tour guide will organize these on your behalf and you will pay locally in cash. Featured activities and approximate prices are listed below:

★ Hiking opportunities	Included
★ Horse riding	US \$45-119
★ IMAX theater - Grand Canyon	US \$12
★ Mountain biking	US \$55-145
★ Scenic flight over Grand Canyon	US \$100-275
★ Navajo jewellery market	Free

ATM/Cash points are widely available in all major cities and small towns. Please ensure that your credit or debit cards have international access and a PIN number to access your funds.

We recommend you take at least US \$35 dollars per day to cover local expenses, but it's better to bring more than you need rather than run short on tour. Your spending money needs to cover optional activities, film, souvenirs and snacks along the way.

Additionally, tipping is a way of life in North America and, whilst not compulsory, it is expected. We recommend a tip of approximately US \$5 per passenger / per day to be given in cash to your tour leader at the end of your holiday.

## CLIMATE & CLOTHING

Keep in mind that our dress tends to be informal. Take a practical selection of clothes for both warm and cool climates to suit the season. You may encounter a wide variety of temperatures en route due to altitude and unforeseen weather conditions - so be prepared! Make sure to pack a warm fleece and a waterproof jacket/coat in case of rain.

Approximate year-round temperatures are listed on the following page.

## TRANSPORTATION

All of our private vehicles are designed to ensure your safety, comfort and enjoyment of the tour. In North America, our new 15-seater Fords feature raised ceilings for more headroom, individual captain seats for more comfort and an open centre aisle floor plan, making it easier when getting in and out at those many photo opportunities. All our vehicles are equipped with CD stereo systems, often iPod-compatible, and air-conditioning, to make travelling a pleasure.

## PASSPORTS & VISAS

This tour visits the USA only and it is your responsibility to obtain the proper passport and visa(s). More details are provided in our Trek Tips pre-departure information at

[http://www.grandamericanadventures.com/tour\\_info\\_online.html](http://www.grandamericanadventures.com/tour_info_online.html)



# Western Dream Tour Information

## HOW TO BOOK YOUR TOUR

Contact Grand American Adventures by telephone, email or via our website to check availability on the tour you want to join. We can normally hold you a seat on 'option' for up to 3 days to allow you time to finalise your flight arrangements and send us your booking form with a deposit payment.

If you are ready to book and pay your deposit, we have a secure, online booking facility where you can pay in most major currencies with a credit or debit card. Check availability early to avoid disappointment.

Check Availability at:

<http://www.grandamericanadventures.com/>

## PAST PASSENGERS SAY?

When asked, "what was the best part of the tour", passengers said:

*"The whole trip was absolutely fantastic. From San Francisco to LA, everywhere we visited was amazing, stunning scenery, great hikes, good food, beautiful campsites, but most importantly excellent company. I don't think I have laughed so much in my life."*  
- Andie from Scotland

*"You really see spectacular places, on and off the usual tourist route, and stay in them long enough to explore and enjoy them. There's also flexibility to add in extra bits if you all want to and there's time."* - Rosemary Warren from UK

## ALTERNATIVE TOURS

If you would prefer to join a different Grand American Adventures tour, we have several other camping tours and a variety of lodging, walking and specialty tours as well as family adventures for you to choose from. Click on the link below for more information.

<http://www.grandamericanadventures.com/>

## ADVENTURE TRAVEL

All details are provided in good faith. Due to the nature of travel, this information can change and should therefore be taken as an indication only and not as a contractual obligation on the part of Grand American Adventures. If you have any questions, please contact us.

Average High / Low Temperatures in Celsius (°C)

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Bryce Canyon NP	2/-15	4/-13	7/-9	12/-5	17/-2	24/2	26/7	25/6	22/2	16/-3	8/-10	4/-13
Grand Canyon NP	5/-8	7/-6	10/-4	15/0	21/4	27/8	29/12	27/12	24/8	18/2	11/-3	6/-7
Las Vegas	13/1	17/3	20/7	25/10	31/15	37/20	40/24	39/23	34/19	27/12	19/6	14/1
Los Angeles	18/8	18/9	19/9	21/10	22/12	24/13	27/16	28/16	27/14	24/12	23/10	19/8
San Francisco	13/8	15/9	16/9	17/10	18/10	19/12	19/12	19/12	21/13	20/13	18/10	14/8
Zion NP	11/-2	14/1	17/3	22/6	28/11	34/16	37/20	35/19	31/15	25/9	17/3	12/-1

Celsius / Fahrenheit Conversions:    -10°C = 14°F    0°C = 32°F    10°C = 50°F    20°C = 68°F    30°C = 86°F    40°C = 104°F

