

MARIPOSA COUNTY RECREATION

Mariposa County Home of Yosemite

www.homeofyosemite.com

www.historichwy49.com

Recreation contributes to life satisfaction, quality of life, health and wellness.

The region in and around Mariposa County offer nearly any type of recreation imaginable, for all interests and skill levels. The Merced River originates in Yosemite National Park on the crest of the Sierra Nevada at an elevation of 11,000

feet. The river flows wild and undammed until it reaches Lake McClure, formed by the New Exchequer Dam near Merced Falls. The old Yosemite Valley Railroad right-of way on the north bank of the Merced River provides hikers with a relatively level, though mostly unshaded, river trail from near



Carol Johnson

El Portal to Bagby (28 miles). Because the old railroad bridges have fallen, the swift side streams (particularly on the North Fork of the Merced) may not be crossable during winter.

An alternative along the South Fork is the Hite's Cove Trail, famous for its spring wildflowers and its ghost town. The hike is 8.4 miles round trip, but the best wildflowers are in the first two miles. If you go all the way, you can see the remains of the once bustling town of Hite Cove.

Yosemite National Park

(209) 372-0200

<http://www.nps.gov/yose/>

Yosemite National Park is a world-famous scenic location in the Sierra Nevada mountains of California, attracting visitors from all parts of the globe. Yosemite Valley is the point of entry into the park for the majority of the 3.5 million visitors per year. The park covers an area of 761,266 acres, 95% of which is designated as the Yosemite Wilderness, and reaches across the western slopes of the Sierra Nevada (Spanish for "Snowy Range") mountain chain. The Park includes 263 miles of roads, over 150 species of birds, 85 species of mammals. Elevations range from 2,000 feet above sea level to more than 13,000 feet.

Yosemite is filled with stunning features such as waterfalls and granite domes. Mariposa County is called "Home of Yosemite" because over one quarter of the county is comprised of Yosemite National Park. Including Forest Service and BLM holdings, 57% of Mariposa county is federal land.

Explore and Enjoy

Badger Pass Ski Area—winter sports, cross-country and downhill skiing

El Capitan—Massive, granite monolith stands 3,593 feet from base to summit. The top can be reached via trail alongside Yosemite Falls and proceeding west

Glacier Point—look down 3,215 feet to the Valley floor, can be reached by the very strenuous Four Mile Trail or descend from Glacier Point along the John Muir Trail which passes Vernal and Nevada Falls. (14.5 miles)

Happy Isles—springtime rapids in the Merced River and trickling of water through a fen (or marsh)

Hetch Hetchy where the hiker can stand in the arms of a waterfall

Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias—largest stand of giant sequoias with over 200 giants

Tenaya Lake with sandy beaches, the surface of Tenaya Lake has an elevation of 8,150 feet

Tioga Road (State Route 120 East) : This scenic 45 mile drive covers almost 4000 feet of elevation change. During this 1 1/2 hour drive, visitors pass through meadows and forests, lakes and granite domes

Tuolumne Meadows is located at over 8,575 feet in elevation.

From Tuolumne, numerous trails lead hikers to lakes, meadows and beautiful river canyons

Vernal Falls and Nevada Falls—hike from Happy Isles—.75 miles and 3.5 mile

Yosemite Falls—2,425 feet, with upper and lower falls combined, make the tallest waterfall in North America

Compliments of the Mariposa County Arts Council

Biking

Paved and unpaved roads offer miles of unspoiled scenery. The old Yosemite Railroad flat runs for miles alongside the Merced river or climb the Burma Grade Trail that links the popular recreation sites along the Merced River near Briceburg with the higher elevations and trails in Stanislaus National Forest.

Gold Panning

- Bagby Recreation Area - from Mariposa go North about 15 miles on Hwy. 49 to Bagby. Pan for gold for a day use fee. Info: MID Parks Department 800-468-8889
- Briceburg Recreation Area - from Mariposa go East on Hwy. 140 about 15 miles to Briceburg. Make a left on the road next to the right side of the Visitors Center and across the bridge from the parking area. You are allowed to pan down stream from the bridge. Info: 209-966-3192 for other available areas to pan.
- Coulterville Area - local places to pan for gold. Stop by the North County Visitor Center on Main Street.
- Mariposa Museum and History Center - 5119 Jesse St. Gold panning is in the Museum courtyard. Hours: 10am - 4:30pm 209-966-2924

Hiking

Over 800 miles of hiking trails in Yosemite range from easy strolls to grueling trails or multi-day backpack trips.

- Mariposa Creek Project - stroll along a paved pathway that runs the length of Mariposa creek in downtown Mariposa.
- Sentinel Dome - start at Sentinel Dome parking area, Yosemite. A Moderate 2.2 mile round trip taking 2 hours.
- John Muir Trail through Lyell Canyon - start at Dog Lake parking area, Yosemite. An easy 8 mile trip one way, with a 200 foot gain, taking 3 to 4 hours.
- Harden Lake - start at White Wolf drop off point via the Tuolumne Meadows Hikers' Bus, Yosemite. A moderate 9 mile round trip taking 4 to 6 hours.
- Foresta via Big Oak Flat Rd. - start at Tamarack Flat Campground entrance via the Tuolumne Meadows Hikers' Bus, Yosemite. A moderately strenuous 10-12 mile one way trip taking 5 to 7 hours with a 2,000 foot loss.
- Yosemite Valley via Yosemite Creek - start at Lukens Lake trailhead via the Tuolumne Meadows Hikers' Bus. A moderately strenuous 10.5 mile one way trip taking 5 to 9 hours one way with a 3,500 to 4,000 foot loss .

Horseback riding

Overnight horse camping in Yosemite requires a permit and specific horse inoculations. Yosemite Horseback Riding Info. 209-372-0200 Yosemite Trails Pack Station 559-868-3405

Parks and playgrounds

The Mariposa County Parks and Recreation hosts the Mariposa County Art Park on Hwy 140 and 4th Street. Swimming, tennis, amphitheatre, playground and picnic grounds at Mariposa County Park at 4998 County Park Rd. Darrah Schoolhouse playground at Darrah and Triangle Road.

Lakes, Rivers and Camping

- Brown and rainbow trout and small-mouth bass are the game fish found in the Merced River. Squawfish, hardhead, western sucker and sculpin are common. The California Department of Fish and Game stocks catchable size rainbow trout in the river from the South Fork upstream to the Foresta Bridge. With a fishing license, Bass fishing is open all year with a limit of five fish. All bass less than 12 inches must be released. Yosemite National Park Boundary to Foresta Bridge: This is a special fishing area that is open all year with a two-trout limit. No fish less than 12 inches may be possessed. For all species, only artificial lures with single barbless hooks may be used. Foresta Bridge to Bagby: The trout limit is 5 fish. This area is open from the last Saturday in April through November 15
- Lake Don Pedro, offering 160 miles of shoreline and 13,000 surface acres of water, Don Pedro offers something for every water enthusiast.
- Bass Lake - (Madera County) located southeast of Oakhurst. - 559-642-3200, 800-585-9283
- Lake McClure - located west of Coulterville. Water-skiing, jet skiing, sailing and houseboats. - 800-468-8889
- Lake McSwain - located west of Coulterville. Water-skiing, jet skiing, sailing and houseboats. - 800-468-8889
- Three BLM campgrounds exist below Briceburg with both tent and RV campsites. All campsites are on a first come - first serve basis. All BLM campgrounds provide pit or composting toilets, fire pits, grills and garbage collection.

Rock Climbing

Climbers can generally be spotted in the snow-free months on anything from 10 foot boulders to 3,300 foot El Capitan. Yosemite National Park - half and full day classes and private guides are available from many groups. General Info 209-372-0200 Yosemite Guides 209-379-2231