



Welcome to International Alpine Guides JMT Mammoth to Yosemite Valley Hike

We are excited to have to you as a guest on our John Muir Trail Mammoth to Yosemite Valley Hike! It is a spectacular wilderness backpacking adventure that explores some of the best terrain along the JMT through Yosemite National Park.

Following is some important general information to help you prepare for your upcoming adventure. Our hope is that this will help your planning go smoothly and will add to the enjoyment of your trip. Do not hesitate to contact us with any questions...we are available to provide you with a high level of service. Our office will be checking in with you at some point prior to your trip.

It is required that you carefully read all the information we give to you and on our website, including the gear lists and any itinerary information. For your safety and enjoyment, and for the safety and enjoyment of others on your trip, you are responsible for knowing all of it and agreeing to our policies and procedures.

Your Guide

Your lead guide will be in contact with you approximately 2 days prior to the trip via phone call and/or email. It is our goal that you will develop a rapport with your guide before the trip commences that will last long after it ends. Before they have contacted you, please continue to contact the office with any further questions you may have.

All of our backpacking trips are fully guided trips which means you will be traveling with the group and your guides the entire time. You are required to stay with the group the entire trip.

For everyone's enjoyment and safety, it is required that you follow your guide's instructions and direction for the duration of your trip. Failure to do so may result in your guide arranging for you to leave the trip.

Pacing

On our group backpacking trips we hike at a slow and steady pace. Your guide will pace the group appropriately according to the group's strengths and the day's objective. We generally hike no faster than 2 MPH and we take breaks no more than every hour to hour and a half.

The group's pace may be slower than you normally hike. However, you have signed up for a group trip and you are required to hike at the pace the guide sets for the group. ***Under no circumstances will you be allowed to hike ahead of the group!***

Trail Conditions & Itinerary

The Mammoth to Yosemite hike is a remote and committing wilderness adventure. This is not a "tour" or a fully catered hike, it is a strenuous and committing backpack in remote terrain. You are required to carry all of your own gear and also your share of the group gear according to your size.

Parts of the High Sierra Nevada & Yosemite we visit are in the remote wilderness areas. Trail conditions will vary widely. You can expect uneven trails and muddy or wet trails. The Sierra can also receive copious amount of snow during our winters, and you could experience some snow covered trails well into the summer months. Fresh summer snow and other adverse weather conditions can happen anytime. You could also experience some off-trail travel if conditions warrant a detour off trail.

Your itinerary is not "set in stone". We keep our day-to-day itineraries flexible to account for group strengths, trail and environmental conditions. Camping locations and daily mileages may, and often do, vary from the published itinerary and our guides will at times have to be very flexible

We cannot guarantee the exact itinerary, daily mileages or trail conditions of any of our trips.

You must be prepared to be flexible in your expectations. But that is the nature of adventure! We recommend ***not*** trying to keep a daily log of mileage (ex apple watches, or personal GPS... etc.) as all devices record different mileage, and to please just remain flexible and immerse yourself in the grandeur of the Sierra wilderness.

Physical Fitness Requirements & Training Advice

We are happy to provide you with training advise to help you better physically prepare for your trip. Feel free to contact our office for more

information. Showing up physically prepared for your backpacking trip will greatly increase your enjoyment and your odds of success. In short, the best training is aerobic and stamina training that mimics what you will be doing on your trip. So in addition to all other training you will be doing, you must train by hiking 14-16 miles with a lightweight day pack and also practice hiking 12-14 miles with an overnight weight pack.

You will be expected to carry an overnight-weight backpack with your share of group gear such as stoves, etc. and food. Pack weights vary on each trip according to the section of the hike and your own personal gear. We also distribute group gear and food according to a person's own weight and size.

Pack weight can vary on this trip from approx. 35 lbs to as much as 45 lbs depending on many factors stated above. If you have a specific pack weight you feel you cannot go above within this range then perhaps this trip is not for you. Experienced backpackers understand that they sometimes must carry more weight than they expect. You must have the capability to carry a pack that goes a bit over your expected pack weight.

It is imperative that you are prepared to hike up to 14 miles each day of this hike. Some days will be shorter. We generally leave camp between 8 and 9am and arrive at the next campsite in the late afternoon, but this must remain flexible! There may be days you arrive at camp close to dinner time. And there may be days the guide decides to leave much earlier in the morning. There also may be days where you arrive in camp early afternoon to relax and enjoy the surroundings.

You are expected to meet the physical & experience levels required for your trip. If you are unable to keep a reasonable pace that is required to meet each day's mileage objectives in a reasonable amount of time, you may be asked to leave the trip without refund.

Mental Flexibility

On wilderness backpacking trips it is imperative for your enjoyment, and the enjoyment of other guests, that you have a very flexible and easygoing mindset. As mentioned above, exact mileages, campsite locations and even break spots are flexible and can change. Sometimes things do not go as planned such as thunderstorms, blisters, trail conditions, pacing of the group, the food menu and a multitude of other unforeseen things that can come up on a long wilderness backpacking trip. We ask that everyone maintain a positive mental attitude throughout the trip.

Any caustic behavior towards our staff, other guests, and other wilderness users is strictly not tolerated, and may result in you being removed from the trip.

Food

We provide breakfast and dinner throughout the trip. The food we provide on all our backpacking trips we like to consider “backcountry gourmet”. We strive to provide the best food possible according to the objective at hand.

We can accommodate most diets and dietary restrictions. However, it is required that you are flexible with simple like and dislikes of food as we eat as a group. Please communicate to us well in advance any dietary restrictions or allergies you may have.

Lunch and snacks will not be provided. For lunches, plan on bringing food that doesn’t require warming or cooking. In addition, we ask that you consider weight and space when planning food for the crucial need to keep weight down.

Travel Assistance & Transportation

Our office is available to you for any travel assistance to help you get to the meeting place of your trip.

IAG and your guides are not able to provide you transportation to the meeting place and the trailhead of your trip. You are responsible for arranging your own transport to the meeting point and the trailhead.

Using public transport to the meeting place may not be possible and if it is it can be somewhat time consuming so please account for that. If you do not have your own vehicle and need to rent a car it usually makes sense to keep the rental car while in the backcountry, even for extended trips.

Gear List

It is imperative and required that you bring **everything** on the gear list. You can find recommendations on specific gear choices on our website. If you have any questions at all please do not hesitate to contact our office or ask your guide once they are in contact with you.

We will be doing a full pack check with you the first night we meet to make sure you have everything you need and not too much. Our guides have the right to tell you not to bring something along that is not needed on the hike.

It is your responsibility to come fully prepared. We can refuse your participation on the trip if you show up without the proper gear and clothing.

Gear for lend

Many items are available for lend at no extra charge. These include sleeping bag and pad, backpacks and even eating utensils. Tents are automatically provided on all trips. (There is a \$25 cleaning charge for sleeping bags). Our sleeping pads are closed cell foam and they work great. However, If you wish to have a cushier pad, we suggest purchasing a lightweight air mattress.

You must notify the office of any gear you need at least 7 days in advance of your trip via our gear request form on our website.

Sleeping Arrangements

You will be sleeping in lightweight tents that we can provide and we do ask people to share tents to reduce our footprint in the wilderness. You can bring your own tent if you have it approved by us first.

Tips/Gratuities

If you are happy with the service provided by your guide, it is customary to provide a 10-15% tip. This is solely at your discretion.

Cancellation Policy

International Alpine Guides has a 60-day day no refund cancellation policy. Sorry, but no refunds can be made within that time period. You can purchase travel insurance to cover the costs of cancellation within the no-cancellation period (See below).

We do not issue refunds for unused days due to weather, mountain conditions, fires or other environmental conditions or government actions that are beyond our control. But we can issue a weather credit for any unused days due to weather. This is at the discretion of CAG. We do not issue credits or refunds due to not reaching an objective.

Please see the website for our [full cancellation policy](#).

Travel and Rescue Insurance

It is highly recommended that you purchase travel insurance for your trip. This will cover the cost of any trip fees if you have to cancel for any covered

reason (You can even get “cancel for any reason” policies). It will also cover many other things such as extra medical bills, transport and airline delays, etc.

In the event a rescue is needed, you are responsible for any costs associated with the need for a rescue. Some travel insurance plans may cover some of this. However, we recommend you join the [American Alpine Club](#). The nominal costs of the AAC membership provides you automatically with thousands of dollars in rescue insurance.

Health Insurance

It is imperative that you have adequate health insurance to cover anything that may occur on your trip. IAG does not provide any insurance for its guests.

Rescues

Our guides are wilderness medical professionals certified as Wilderness First Responders and are the only ones that make the call whether an outside rescue is warranted. Minor medical problems and/or fatigue do not constitute the need for an outside rescue.

Rescues involving rescue personnel and/or helicopters are ONLY available for high-risk medical problems that have an immediate threat to life and limb. And sometimes an outside rescue may not even be an option depending on weather conditions or other circumstances.

Voluntarily leaving a trip early

In the event you need to, or simply want to, leave the trip voluntarily you will be charged for any costs associated with that. This includes paying staff to hike you out and/or any transportation costs associated with that. As your contracted guides, we are fully responsible for your wellbeing and cannot let you hike out on your own.

The above also pertains to someone having to leave a trip early due to lack of physical preparedness.

For your safety you cannot leave the trip or hike away from the group on your own without IAG staff while out in the wilderness. If you do so, against the direction of your guide, we will be required to report you to the National Park and Forest Service.

We do not offer any refunds or credits when someone needs to, or wants to, leave the trip early.

Itinerary

Day 1

We meet in Mammoth Lakes at 5pm and your guide will take you to our campsite. After a gear check and introductions, we enjoy a backcountry gourmet camp dinner.

Day 2

We board a shuttle bus from the Mammoth Mountain Inn that takes us to Agnew Meadows along the San Joaquin River and we begin hiking along the JMT towards Shadow Creek. We establish camp for the evening at a beautiful remote location.

Day 3

Hiking past incredibly beautiful Sierra lakes, we make our way to the famous Thousand Island Lake. Then it's over low Island pass and down into the Rush Creek drainage where we make a cozy camp for the night along one of the many remote lakes in the area.

Day 4

Today is hiking up over Donahue Pass with it's high alpine views and crossing into Yosemite National Park. We descend into the beautiful Lyell Canyon where we make camp along the tranquil Lyell Fork of the Tuolumne River. Great swimming options today!

Day 5

Hiking along the Lyell Canyon we arrive in Tuolumne Meadows around lunch time where we pick up our resupply and perhaps grab an ice cream or a cold drink at the store. Then it's back into the wilderness of the Yosemite high country where we make our way to spectacular Lower Cathedral Lake for the evening.

Day 6

Leaving Cathedral Lakes we hike towards Sunrise Lakes High Sierra Camp

and descend down towards Cloud's Rest basecamp, making base camp for the night along Sunrise Creek.

Day 7

Today is summit day! We will plan to summit Cloud's Rest. Leaving at dawn, we have all day to summit Cloud's Rest with a lightweight pack since we will hike back to our Sunrise Creek base camp afterwards. After packing up, we leave Sunrise Creek we descend towards Yosemite Valley through "Little Yosemite Valley" and then down the famous Mist Trail past Nevada and Vernal Falls into the "incomparable valley".. We then catch an evening shuttle back to the cars at the Mammoth Mountain Inn arriving back in the evening.

Itinerary subject to change & camp locations and distances each day remain flexible.