

BEST OF THE WEST – 15 DAYS

Day 1: San Francisco

Welcome to the 'City by the Bay' in sunny California. San Francisco is a city which the locals are fiercely proud of and for good reason. There's plenty to keep you entertained but for the best introduction, jump on a hop-on hop-off bus tour or book one of our 'Urban Adventures' around the city. A welcome meeting will be held at 18:00 hrs in your hotel.

Accommodation: Hotel included | Meals: Paid locally

No trip to San Francisco is complete without a visit to Alcatraz. We recommend you reserve an extra night in our hotel the night before the tour starts and book your ticket online in advance with Alcatraz Cruises.

Day 2: Yosemite National Park

No doubt you'll leave your heart in San Francisco, but you have 14 adventure-filled days ahead of you. As you head east through California's historic gold country, you'll soon reach Yosemite National Park, where everything is super-sized, including some of North America's tallest cliffs, waterfalls and trees. Enjoy an afternoon under the mighty Sequoia trees before setting up camp just outside the park.

Accommodation: Camping included | Meals: Lunch and dinner included

Day 3: 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 the rocks whilst hikers get to walk to the base of some of the largest waterfalls in the world. Spend your time exploring Yosemite Valley where you can cycle, take a dip in the Merced River or wander the meadows. You'll get the chance to hike on one of the many trails. The famous sites situated along these trails include Yosemite Falls, Nevada Falls, Vernal Falls, Mirror Lake and Half Dome. The views are striking from every vantage point, with the granite formations of Half Dome, El Capitan and Cathedral Rocks sure to be forever etched on your mind.

Accommodation: Camping included | Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Day 4: Death Valley National Park

Entering one of the hottest, driest and lowest places on earth, Death Valley offers an extraordinary experience and will certainly take you out of your comfort zone. Shaped by erosion and the arid climate, the richly tinted mudstone hills, canyons and expansive salt flats provide the setting for today's adventure.

Accommodation: Hotel included | Meals: Breakfast and lunch included

Day 5: Zion National Park

After a pleasant drive through the desert you have time to explore the delights of Zion National Park. There are various hikes to choose from, ranging from easy to strenuous. Warm up your legs by taking a short hike from the valley floor to view the Lower Emerald Pool, then continue on to the sparkling Upper Emerald Pool. You'll pass more stunning scenery as you make your way to Zion's 'beach', then cool off from the summer sun by exploring the Riverside Walk section of the Virgin River. If you're feeling ambitious, enjoy the park's more challenging option and ascend 760 metres (2,500 ft.) to experience unbeatable views from the top of Angels Landing; after a beautiful but strenuous hike along the knife-edge ridgeline you will be rewarded with one of the most breathtaking panoramic views you'll ever experience. If weather conditions permit, you may choose to hike deep into the Zion Narrows. Of course if you'd prefer a seat with a view, horseback riding is available!

Accommodation: Camping included | Meals: Breakfast, lunch and dinner included

Day 6: Bryce Canyon National Park

Bryce Canyon is a fascinating natural amphitheatre of pink, orange and white sandstone spires, known locally as hoodoos. There are a variety of scenic overlooks and trails that range from easy to moderate in difficulty. The Navajo or Peek-A-Boo Loop Trails will enable you to hike right in amongst these unique rock formations. Some may prefer to hike on the Queens Garden Trail or remain on the rim and photograph the ever-changing shadows and hues as the sun makes its way across the wide open sky.

Accommodation: Camping included | Meals: Lunch and dinner included

Day 7-8: Grand Canyon National Park

Traverse the eastern entrance of the Grand Canyon and catch your first glimpse of this unsurpassable landscape at Desert View. This incredible spectacle is difficult to comprehend and as you stand at the rim or hike down into the canyon, nothing can prepare you for just how astonishing this place really is. Once again, you'll have the opportunity to explore the park at your own pace. Venture down the Bright Angel Trail to Plateau Point, or stroll along the more leisurely West Rim Trail and catch a shuttle bus out to Hermits Rest. In your free time, we highly recommend a scenic helicopter flight over the canyon, which offers perspectives you simply can't see on foot. Finish your day by watching the amazing IMAX film, 'The Grand Canyon Experience' and enjoy a spectacular sunset over one of the world's natural wonders!

Accommodation: Camping included | Meals: Breakfast (x2), lunch (x2) and dinner (x2) included

Day 9: Monument Valley

Monument Valley is sacred land to those who call it home, and the sandstone monoliths and spectacular sunsets and sunrises have been the backdrop to countless Western movies. You'll be met by a Navajo guide, for an included tour of the Monument Valley Tribal Lands. Learn about the history and culture of the Navajo people and hear how Native Americans have embraced this harsh environment. Finally head back to your hotel in the town of Bluff, about 45 minutes outside of Monument Valley.

Accommodation: Hotel included | Meals: Breakfast and lunch included

Day 10-11: Moab - Arches National Park

The town of Moab will be your home for the next two nights and it's the perfect base, with an assortment of restaurants and activities and the gateway to the magnificent splendour of Arches National Park. The park's stunning red sandstone arches have been created over millions of years by the wind whipping down the west slope of the Rocky Mountains. You'll have the opportunity to hike to many of these incredible arches, including Landscape Arch and the famous Delicate Arch, the latter being the most iconic and most photographed of the arches in the park. Alternatively, why not tackle the desert terrain on a guided Hummer tour across the slick rock, or take a float trip down the Colorado River? Adventure is definitely all around you in Moab.

Accommodation: Camping included | Meals: Breakfast (x2), lunch(x2) and dinner (x2)

Day 12: Salt Lake City

Today we head north to the capital and largest city of Utah, Salt Lake City. Enjoy a city tour with a local Mormon guide and see the city from a local's perspective. Nowadays the religion is less common among the community and less than half the population here are Mormons. Nonetheless the story of Brigham Young and his Mormon (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints) followers is etched in the city's culture and history.

Accommodation: Hotel included | Meals: Breakfast and lunch included

Day 13-14: Yellowstone National Park

Enjoy copious exploration of wilderness and wildlife at your next destination, Yellowstone National Park. The world's first and largest national park in continental USA, Yellowstone was originally protected for its high concentrations of geothermal wonders, such as Old Faithful which you'll see erupt. This park is so large that its boundaries cross into three states. Most of it is in Wyoming, but parts of the reserve extend into Idaho and Montana. Yellowstone is home to a large variety of wildlife including Grizzly Bear, wolf, bison and elk, and it's possible to watch herds of bison roam amongst the erupting geysers while steam rises from the various rivers running through the park. A fire in the 1980s ravaged much of the park, but its rapid recovery is a testament to nature's power of regeneration. You'll spend a full day exploring with a wildlife and wolf tracking guide to help you delve into a side most visitors don't have access to and a real opportunity to learn more about this wonderful park. Accommodation: Camping included | Meals: Breakfast (x1), lunch (x2) and dinner (x2) included

Day 15: Grand Teton National Park - Jackson, Wyoming

You continue your journey in Wyoming, travelling through Grand Teton National Park where you have the option to take a ferry across Jenny Lake and hike up to Inspiration Point and past waterfalls, to a viewpoint that will take your breath away.

Your tour finishes in the Western town of Jackson this afternoon. It's recommended to spend a few extra nights to experience this truly authentic Western town. Once home to trappers and a hideout for outlaws and rustlers, Jackson is now a base for hikers to take on some lovely hiking trails, as well as a town renowned for its cafes and Western style saloons! With a permanent population of around 8,600 people and a far greater transient tourist population, it attracts many of the rich and famous and is a great base for exploring the nearby wilderness.

Meals: Breakfast & lunch included

This tour ends at our gateway hotel at approximately 17:00 hrs. We can book you post-tour accommodation at our gateway hotel if required. If you are planning to fly tonight, please do not book a flight that departs before 21:00 hrs.