



Ritter and Banner Parents and Kids Outing

Kids enjoy the outdoors - once they get there! But organizing the logistics and getting them enthused can be difficult. So we have put together this trip, which removes the planning headaches from the parents and also gives kids an environment to safely discover the high Sierra, climb a few peaks, do a little rock climbing or to simply sit in the sun and relax. The Ritter and Banner area north of Mammoth is an ideal location for a basecamp. The approach to our basecamp is six miles with a total elevation gain of 1600 feet. But we ease the pain of getting to camp by using pack stock to carry the heavy items and we hike easily with a daypack and have most of the day to get to camp near Lake Ediza. Once there we have plenty of options. We can hike cross-country to Iceberg Lake and head up to Cecile Lake below the spectacular Minarets. Just down the lake a few hundred yards is a great climbing crag to work on rock skills. The fishing in the lake is wonderful and the keen angler is assured of catching dinner. Behind camp are the bulky peaks of Ritter and Banner and these give us the opportunity to ascent to over 13,000 feet and gain spectacular views of the Yosemite high country. For those with prior climbing skills we can up the difficulty a little and work on snow climbing skills before attempting the glacier route on Mt. Ritter. If some rock climbing is our goal then Waller Minaret, the southern most of the Minaret chain gives an easy fifth class ascent. Parents have the option of doing all of these or they can leave us to take care of the day and you can kick back by the lake with a good book and soak up the scenery.

Meeting place and time: We will meet in Mammoth at the Breakfast Club for breakfast, introductions, and trip outline at 7:00 a.m. the first morning of the trip. The packers like to get going early so we need to be at Red's Meadow by 8.30 am. The Breakfast Club is located on Highway 203 (the access road to Mammoth from Highway 395) at the first traffic light you encounter, adjacent to the Shell Station. This is the intersection of Highway 203 and Old Mammoth Road and the restaurant is on the south side of 203. If needed the phone there is 934-6944. After breakfast we will do an equipment check before driving to the trailhead. We'll then caravan to the Agnew Meadow Pack Station. There is a \$5.00 per vehicle entry fee or Golden Eagle and Parks passes for entry to the Reds and Agnew Meadows area.

Itinerary: Day One: Hiking the six miles without heavy packs allows us to take an easy leisurely hike up the San Joaquin River from Agnew Meadows, past beautiful Shadow Lake and up to camp in the vicinity of tranquil Lake Ediza.

Day Two: We will take an acclimatization scramble up nearby Volcanic Ridge which has a great view of the Minarets and the entire Ritter range north into the Yosemite High Country. This also preps us for our ascents of Ritter or Banner or both over days three and four. Or we can do some top rope climbing on a small crag above the lake two minutes from camp.

Day Three and Four: For Mount Banner we will ascend to the Ritter-Banner Saddle via some 3rd class climbing and then make our way up easy talus slopes to the summit. On Mount Ritter we have two choices: The North Face above the Ritter-Banner Saddle: this is the route that John Muir first climbed. Or we can climb the South-east Glacier route which involves more snow climbing. Which one we take will depend upon route conditions and the objectives of group members.

Day Five: We pack up and return to the vehicles by late afternoon.

Dates and Prices: Check the latest brochure, call us or go to our web site for dates and rates. Should minimum participant numbers not be reached you will be given the option of paying our private rate, rescheduling, or cancelling. Price includes guiding, permits, all necessary group climbing gear, tents, kitchen gear and breakfasts, lunches and dinners (you bring hot/cold drinks and snack items). Scheduled dates include USFS trail fees. Private programs do not. We have scheduled dates for climbing these peaks but also undertake it as a custom ascent. Pack stock support both ways is very expensive and we need to have a full trip to cover this. With fewer participants we may need to add an extra charge to cover this.

Ratios: We can vary the group size depending upon the number of people who wish to do some climbing. Some family members might just want to stay in camp, hike or do some top roping. If we are doing peak ascents however we want to keep the ratio to a maximum ratio of 1:4. It is also possible for us to have a second guide to join us just for these climbs.

Notes and other information: Guidebooks include Secor's "The High Sierra; Peaks, Passes and Trails". We highly recommend that you spend at least one night at moderate altitude (higher than 8,000') just prior to the trip. Spending a night in Mammoth or camped at the trailhead campground would do the trick. Please refer to our Planning for Success info sheet for more info. Since we use stock support to enable us to set up a comfortable camp from which to climb so we can certainly bring along a few luxuries to make life more comfortable in camp. Take a luxury or two but pack carefully. We have scheduled dates for climbing these peaks but also undertake it as a custom ascent. On a custom trip we can vary the group size depending upon the number of people who wish to do some climbing.

Prerequisites: No prior mountaineering experience is required but everyone should be in good physical condition and able to handle the approach to camp. Once at camp we will work on the skills to get you ready for the climbing if that is your goal.

Equipment List for Ritter & Banner Parents & Kids Camp

The following list is a general guide and will assist you in packing for the program. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have specific questions regarding equipment or if you need assistance prior to making a purchase. The following list will vary according to the time of year, and your individual requirements. Please try to pack lightly and compactly. Items on the list with an * may be rented from SMC.

Climbing equipment

- Ice Axe*. A standard 70 cm. general purpose axe will suffice. These may or not be needed. We will let you know.
- Crampons*. These should be matched to the boot. We suggest for very flexible boots the Charlet Moser G10 or Black Diamond Contact Clip; for stiffer boots the Black Diamond Sabretooth, the Moser G12 or Rambo. These may or not be needed. We will let you know.
- Carabiners*. Two locking carabiners (Screwgates are better than twist lock style & are easier to manipulate).
- Belay/rappel device*: An ATC type.
- Harness.* An adjustable type such as a Black Diamond Alpine Bod works best.
- Helmet. New models such as the Petzl "Helios" or the Black Diamond Half Dome are comfortable and light weight. We provide these for the program. .
- Rock shoes . we can provide these for some top roped rock climbing.

Other essentials

- Footwear. For most Sierra climbs a medium-weight pair of leather mountaineering boots or heavyweight hiking boots will be sufficient. The Sportiva Glacier is a good example of an appropriate mountain boot.
- Large Pack. A 4000 cubic inch will hold everything for the five days in the backcountry. Internal frame packs are recommended for their comfort and balance when climbing. The Gregory Makalu or Reality are about the right size. You will be able to put your big pack on the mules and hike in with a small climbing pack.
- Sleeping Bag. Most summer trips are warm and a bag rated to about 25°F will be sufficient except in the spring and fall.
- Sleeping pad. A 3/4 length Ultralight thermarest paired with a Ridgerest foam pad is the best combination. Bring a Thermarest repair kit to fix any pesky leaks.
- Bivvy Sac. Only if using a Megamid.
- Camp Shoes. A lightweight pair of tennies or Tevas to wear in camp. This will reduce vegetation damage at our campsites.

Clothing

- 2 pair synthetic liner socks.
- 2 pair heavier synthetic or wool blend socks.
- Gaiters.
- Long underwear top. Capilene or some other synthetic is best.
- Long underwear bottom.
- Warm pants. Tights or Expedition weight Capilene.
- Warm shirt. Synchronia or 200 weight works well.
- Another fuzzy sweater top or pile jacket of some sort
- GoreTex Jacket and Pants - A lightweight set is sufficient and heavy bulky clothing is unnecessary. Side zips on the pants should be long enough to slide on over boots. Jackets must have a hood. Do not skimp on your rain gear.
- Shorts for on the trail.
- Tee shirt for on the trail.
- Polypropylene or similar gloves.

- Heavyweight shelled gloves.
- Warm hat. Synthetics are less itchy than wool.
- Sunhat.

Etc.

- Sun glasses. Good quality with side shields.
- Water Bottles. Two quart (1 liter) wide mouth bottles and or a hydration system holding up to 50oz. (2 liters).
- Headlamp. With a spare set of batteries.
- Eating and drinking equipment. Forget the traditional Sierra cup, instead use an insulated backpacking mug, with a lid. This can double for a bowl. Fork and spoon.
- Pocket knife. Swiss army style.
- Personal toiletries. It is not necessary to smell like a rose each day so do not over do it. Remember toilet paper and a small zip-lock bag to carry out the used in.
- Personal Medical Kit. The guide will carry a large kit so yours will predominately consist of foot repair items, mild pain killer such as Advil and bandaids.
- Sunscreen and lip screen. SPF 30+. A 1oz. bottle will be enough. Make sure the lip stuff actually contains a sunscreen.
- Bug repellent. Only needed in the early season.
- Camera. Bring film and a spare battery to record those special moments.
- Plastic Trash Sac. Handy for keeping gear in outside the tent should it rain.
- Optional reading material etc.
- Ski poles. These are not essential, but can be handy on the trail. It is your choice, but they do save wear on the knees.

Food

- We will provide breakfast, dinner and lunch but bring some snack items like cliff bars, power bars, gorp concoctions. A days worth for most people would be 2 bars, 3 ounces of gorp, and perhaps a candy bar. Don't over do it.

Shared Equipment Provided by SMC

- Shelter. We will provide lightweight, storm worthy tents. If you have your favorite, by all means bring it, but we do want to pair people up where possible to reduce weight.
- Stove. We provide MSR Whisperlite stoves.
- Cookwear.
- Water purification. A sad but true fact of life is that much Sierra water is contaminated. Iodine may be used individually or the group can carry a pump style purifier.
- Bear Canisters. Sierra bears have fallen into bad habits and learned that backpacker's food is tasty and easy to obtain. We provide these bulky items since this area warrants their use.

You specifically don't need

- ⊗ Cell phones. They rarely work anyway.
- ⊗ Big first aid kits (we have a comprehensive one).
- ⊗ Deodorant or any toiletries beyond those listed above.
- ⊗ Items that are not on this list.