

## Detailed Day by Day Description for Reds Meadow to Yosemite

Below are very tentative day-by-day itineraries. This can change for many reasons such as weather, minor injury, tired mules or unforeseen circumstances so please be flexible and go with any changes the backcountry dictates.

### **Day 1 Reds Meadow to Gladys Lake**

6.7 miles, 2,500' gain, 590' loss

We meet early in Mammoth to check gear and equipment before shuttling to the end of the road at Reds Meadow. Departing Reds Meadow we start with a short detour to the iconic basalt columns of Devils Postpile before heading north through the heart of the Minarets area, with wonderful views of the Ritter Range and dozens of beautiful lakes. The trail climbs 1,000' in two miles to a saddle above Trinity Lakes and then continues to climb another 500' to Gladys Lake.

### **Day 2 Gladys Lake to Laura Lake**

7.6 miles, 1,650' gain, 1,450' loss

The trail now drops 800' past Rosalie Lake to the junction at Shadow Lake. If we are full of energy, we can go left for a side trip to pretty Ediza Lake nestled under the jagged spine of the Minarets or continue directly to camp at secluded and quiet Laura Lake, high above the deep canyon of the San Joaquin River.

### **Day 3 Laura Lake to Davis Lake**

7.5 miles, 1,820' of gain, 1,500' of loss

Easy hiking along the JMT past Thousand Island Lake nestled below the spectacular summits of Ritter and Banner, an ideal place to stop swim and enjoy the scenery. The climb over Island Pass is gentle and it is only a short drop to Davis Lakes.

### **Day 4 Davis Lake to Lyell Canyon**

6.9 miles, 1,100' gain, 2,250' loss

The trail follows a creek through high alpine meadows before climbing more steeply to 11,056' Donohue Pass at mile 2.7, the last pass before Tuolumne Meadow. Take one last look at the Ansel Adams Wilderness before stepping into Yosemite National Park. The trail drops 2,200' over the next 3.6 miles through beautiful scenery of creeks, small lakes, and huge slabs of granite, crossing a number of streams, before reaching the meadows of Lyell Canyon. Camps over the river on granite slabs.

### **Day 5 Lyell Canyon to Cathedral Lakes**

14.0 miles, 1,450' gain, 900' loss

We have spent weeks climbing thousands of feet out of canyons up to views of stark granite mountains. The first 11 miles are an easy walk along the Lyell Fork of the Tuolumne River, moving in and out of the forest with the meandering river to our right. There is a junction to Ireland Lake and Vogelsang High Sierra Camp at mile 2.3 and then another junction after the bridge crossing of Rafferty Creek at mile 6.3. The trail is approaching the campground, stores, visitor center, etc. of Tuolumne Meadow but we do our best to avoid the crowds by swinging out into the meadow. Don't let the shock of the crowds keep you from spending time enjoying the spectacular views from the meadow. Eventually the JMT turns left onto the Cathedral Lakes trail and after a climb of 1,000' in three miles to at Lower Cathedral Lake.

### **Day 6— Layover.**

Great scrambles to nearby peaks with views down into Yosemite Valley.

### **Day 7 Cathedral Lakes to Sunrise Creek**

10.8 miles, 950' gain, 3,250' loss

The trail starts out in forest before opening up into the meadow surrounding the upper Cathedral Lake surrounded by Cathedral, Echo and Tresidder Peaks. A short climb to the minor 9,700' Cathedral Pass before dropping down to Long Meadow to pass the Echo Creek junction at mile 3.6 and the Sunrise High Sierra Camp at mile 4.4. The trail climbs 400' over the shoulder of Sunrise Mountain before dropping steadily for 2,500' to camp along Sunrise Creek.

### **Day 8 Sunrise Creek to Happy Isles**

11.2 miles, 2,050' gain, 5,200' loss

We keep descending now into the low elevations of Yosemite Valley first passing through Little Yosemite Valley where we turn to follow the Merced River down to Yosemite Valley. We can stay on the JMT or we can take the steep but spectacular Mist Trail passing cleaner and cleaner and better smelling people than us. Finally we reach the shuttle buses at Happy Isles and the bustle of Curry Village and our van back to Mammoth.