

Over the River

and Through the

Woods



**This Year, its all about
vacation values. So pack
the suitcases and bring the
whole family to your
nation's national parks!**

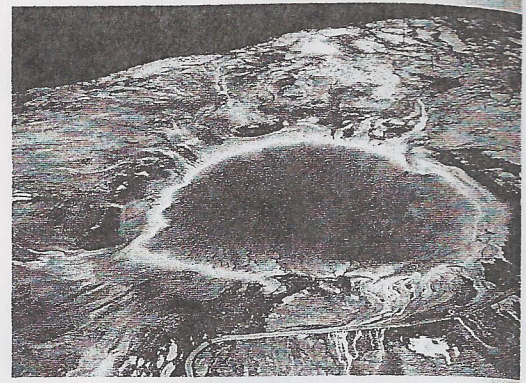


What makes a great family vacation? Fun? Action? Relaxation? In truth, the best is a combination of all three.

Our nation's national parks are amazing treasures, huge masses of protected, spectacular wildlife. Three of the best:

Yellowstone, Zion, and Yosemite. All historical preserves,

these lands were dedicated decades ago in an effort to preserve our beautiful nation. There's something for everyone in the family to do, even the dog!



A blue pool geyser in Yellowstone

Yellowstone

Why it's Worth it

Yellowstone is the treasure of America: 2,219,791 acres of pure air. Set aside in 1872, President Grant made sure such a wonderful place could be preserved for future generations: and it certainly was. The park is famous for its unique geothermal activity, with geysers, vents, hot pools, and every other geological feature imaginable (nps.gov).

Yellowstone is one of the most diverse places on the planet, and you will be shocked to see

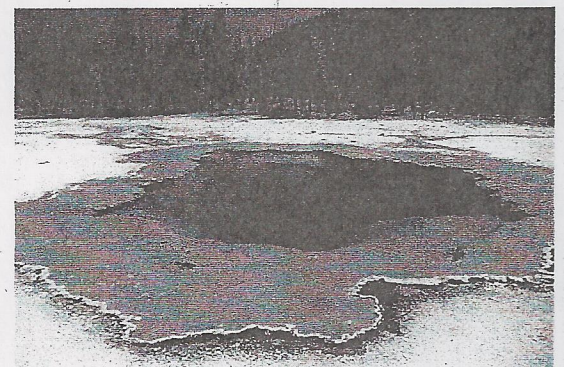
desert next to snow-capped mountains. Add on top of that the extensive list of wildlife, and you have yourself one amazing vacation! "There's something for everyone in the family to do here!" says Jess Wenke, a national park researcher. This year, I am applying for a program at Yellowstone national park, and if accepted; you can stay there for a whole summer and learn about the beautiful ecosystem and work to help maintain such a beautiful habitat. Trail preservation, species survival programs, and beautification are all



Famous Old Faithful Geyser, a National Park Icon

... "There's something for everyone in the family to do here!" ...

part of the agenda (nps.gov). Anyways, Family fun abounds, and there's something



A Spectacular Winter Picture of Biscuit Basin

new to do at every turn here. Take your kids to Biscuit Basin, just a couple miles north of Old Faithful on the road toward Madison. There are a great number of thermal features, including bubbling pools, and they're all boiling hot, showcasing some of the most vibrant colors you have ever seen. One pool, the Sapphire pool, is at a wonderful temperature and visitors are actually allowed to take a dip at certain times of the year (natgeo.com)! Scenic roads are also a very easy and convenient way to view all the parks features. Try the Canyon Village to Tower-Roosevelt stretch of the parks grand loop. It is a generally uncrowded, 19-mile drive through the parks highlights and most iconic landscapes (natgeo.com). Stay in the Old Faithful Historic lodge, a national historic landmark right across the street from Old Faithful! Yellowstone is also somewhat dog friendly, and



A lonely barn along US 191, the road to Yellowstone

dogs are allowed two hundred feet from any paved road in the park, with the exception of hot pools and hot springs in the two hundred foot vicinity (nps.gov). All in all,

Yellowstone is certainly worth of its

title as "King of the National Parks".

The Details

Yellowstone is in the middle of nowhere. Literally. And that is what makes it so peaceful. However, with careful planning, you can spend less time traveling and more time enjoying! The closest airport to Yellowstone is Jackson Hole International, although Butte isn't too far away either. Travel times range from 2 hours and 45

Travel Tip: Flying with the Dog

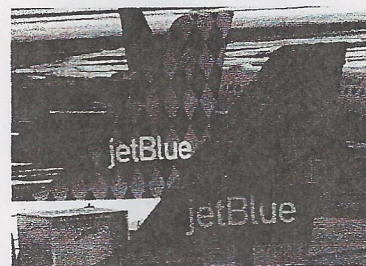
Everyone knows it can be a great hassle to both you and your pet when you have to transport them. These airlines are best fit for your companion, offering low flying fees and great service.

JetBlue

Known for its free snacks and in-flight TV's, this airline can also accommodate your pooches needs for in-cabin flight

Dimensions-Your pet must fit in a carrier that is smaller than 18"l x 15"w x 8"h and must be placed under the seat in front of you (no checked baggage animals permitted on JetBlue)

Fees-\$100 one way, \$200 round trip (jetblue.com)



Delta

This airline has always been known for its safety with animals, and that legacy still lives today.

Dimensions-

Carry-on:carrier must be small enough to stow under seat
Checked: no jumbo kennels allowed

Fees- Carry-On:\$150.00 one-way

Checked:\$275.00 one-way on flights within the United States, U.S. Virgin Islands, and Puerto Rico.

Note: Some dog breeds will not be allowed to fly on very hot days due to health restrictions (delta.com)



Virgin America

This new airline is defining what it means for the future of air travel: and its not just for humans

Dimensions- be able to fit under seat in front of you

Fees- \$100 each way, \$175 roundtrip (virginamerica.com)



minutes from Jackson Hole International to the south entrance and 2 hours and 50 minutes from Butte Municipal. Jackson Hole is served by all the major legacy carriers (Delta, United, American), while Butte is served only by Delta. Each airport has car rental facilities, and hotels are in the two surrounding metro areas. Yellowstone Entrance fee: \$25 for seven-day pass, also includes admission to Grand Teton National Park (nps.gov/natgeo.com)

What Else?

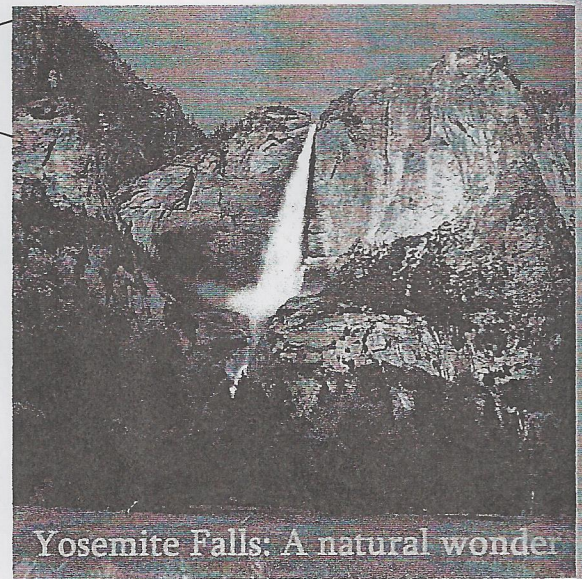
Ok. So you've seen enough hot springs and mud pots for one day. So head on over to Jackson Hole, a town that's become a tourist hub for Yellowstone travelers. Stop by the elk antler arch at Jackson Town Square, a great photo opportunity. If you want to indulge, pull up to the Four Seasons and let your stress melt away in the hotel's famous year-round heated pool. In Butte, check out the Piccadilly Museum, a mix of old auto-related advertising memorabilia from around the world and old cars. You can see license plates from all 50 states, with some dating back to the early 1920's! There are also many unique hotels in Butte, like the Finlen Hotel and Motor Inn, a historic brick building that is full of old-world elegance (natgeo.com).

Yosemite

Why its Worth It

Yosemite is one of the most spectacular National Parks our nation has to offer. With canyons, waterfalls, and cliffs, this is a true natural wonder. Yosemite Falls, pictured right, is one of the tallest waterfalls in the world! It is also one of the most accessible national parks, with many surrounding cities like Sacramento and San Jose. Yosemite is famous for its rock faces—sheer cliffs, massive domes, and spectacular canyons. Half Dome rock is truly a must-see. The park is home to many animal species, like the American icon: The Bald Eagle (natgeo.com).

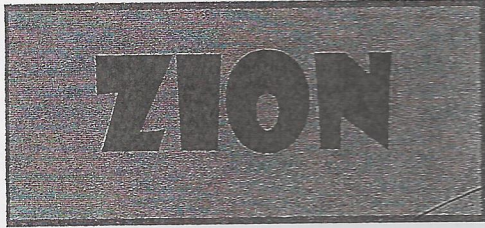
Some of the best hiking in the park system is offered here, and many trails are easy enough for you to bring the kids along (nps.gov). As with Yellowstone, Yosemite is also semi-dog friendly, and dogs are allowed on any paved road or trail as well as a few well-cleared unpaved trails. The reason for certain dog restrictions is to prevent disease to your precious pet in heavily wooded



Yosemite Falls: A natural wonder



breakfast. In San Jose, discover the future at "the tech" (Technological Museum of Innovation), then indulge yourself at the Modern W Silicon Valley Hotel, an all suite oasis with details for every desire. You just can't go wrong with a Yosemite vacation: there's simply too much to do!



THE W SILICON VALLEY



Why its Worth it

Zion is a very Special National Park. It is very unique in that it has one of the most diverse climates, come of the craziest oddities you've ever seen, and enough fast paced action to keep your whole family entertained. Zion was formed when the Zion river carved out a beautiful natural landscape millions of years ago. Because of this, it certainly isn't your average forest and hill national park, with huge rocks balancing in air and a perfectly carved rock tunnel called "the subway"(nps.gov). The name speaks for itself. When it comes to pet friendliness however, this park is not all fun and games. This park gets extremely hot in the summer, and because of this and the large variety of poisonous plants, dogs are not recommended for this park in the summer (natgeo.com). However, dogs are allowed on paved trails and walkways, as well as largely cleared dirt trails, during the other three seasons (which is the best time to go anyway)(nps.gov).



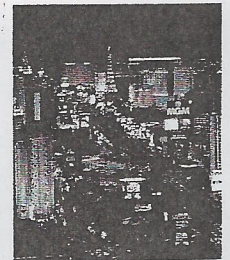
The Details

Zion isn't the easiest park to get to, but once there your time will definitely be worthwhile. There are a few closer municipal airports, but after factoring in costs of using those small airports, its better to just use Las Vegas McCarran International. It is serviced by literally all United States carriers and has an abundance of transportation options available, from car rental to monorail lines. Average travel time from McCarran international to the entrance gates of Zion is three hours. Zion National Park Entrance fee: \$25 for one private vehicle, valid for seven-day use at any of the park entrances (nps.gov).

What Else?

There is only one major city around Zion, but that sure doesn't leave it short of things to see and explore. That's because the city is Las Vegas (party anyone?). But chances are your taking this vacation with the whole family, so its

The



important to make sure your children can enjoy this leg of the trip too. So check in to Circus Circus, a really cool hotel that has an indoor, air-conditioned glass dome amusement park with its own roller coaster! Rates are also very competitive as well. So now you know all about what your nation has to offer for a fun affordable family vacation. Although here comes the hard part: which park to choose!

"I THINK MORE PEOPLE SHOULD DEFINITELY BE VISITING THESE NATIONAL PARKS..." WILL YOU BE NEXT?

