

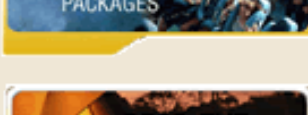


www.worldlesstraveled.com



Elisa Taylor

worldlesstraveled.com



The Travel Tip Box

Many travelers often mistake the rock formation in the Grand Canyon with what they really expect to see in the Moab region located in the state of Utah. The Moab region is a mini-Grand Canyon of sorts and you don't have to drive down anything - all the formations are up close and personal. Some people prefer the unique beauty of the Moab region to the Grand Canyon. You may want your travel agent to include a stop at Moab in your tour plans.

Travel Guiders — The “Eat” Part of Italy



Welcome to this edition of Passages. First, we want to remind you of the upcoming Travel Guiders meeting. This month, we invited an **Italian-American, Michele Smith** to come talk to you about the sumptuous experience of traveling to Italy and eating some of the best food in the world while visiting world-famous destinations, including Rome and Venice. Have you ever wondered what's it like to “roam” the streets of Rome and see the Vatican or to take a boat ride

along one of the canals of Venice? Or to eat authentic pasta that tastes absolutely unlike anything you can eat here in the states? Then come listen to Michelle Smith share some of her favorite experiences. See how the experience of visiting her country of origin measured up to her expectations.

Travel Guiders

April 1

7:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.

Raley's Grocers

1915 Douglas Blvd.

Roseville

Open to the general public

Best,

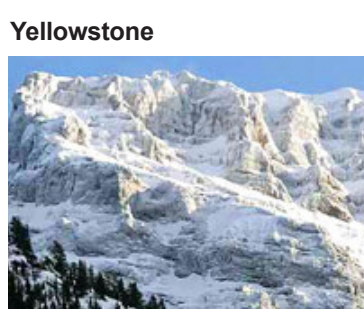
Elisa Taylor

etaylor@worldlesstraveled.com

The National Parks Vacations Edition

Did you know that here in the U.S., we have 53 national parks dotting the map throughout the country? Most people are more aware of the top three — Yellowstone, Yosemite and Grand Canyon. The top three are certainly places to begin exploring our nation's natural treasures and wonders. Before you decide on which park to take the family or friends, do realize that the month of July is the busiest visitor month in the park, which is why we recommend you go right when school lets out in early June or wait until the last week before school begins. If you don't have children then you should try going in late May right as the parks reopen for summer. Late May offers a tremendous opportunity to see the parks unfettered of traffic and crowds.

Yellowstone



Our nation's first official national park sits in three states — Idaho, Wyoming and Montana. What will first strike you about Yellowstone is the lack of forest — small baby pine trees have emerged to replace the old-growth forest destroyed in the massive fires back in the '80s. You may have forgotten about those fires and expect to encounter lush forests; however, those forests will take decades before the trees grow big enough to be considered dense and thick again. If you expect to see this sight you will not be disappointed upon your arrival.

Yellowstone is home to two primary attractions — the geysers and more specifically Old Faithful and the numerous free-roaming bison, deer, antelope, black and grizzly bear, Canadian geese, wolves and more. You can drive quietly along and encounter a free-roaming herd of bison or notice perhaps a bunch of cars parked along the roadway, as sightseers with telephoto lens photograph a great grizzly wandering along a riverbed with perhaps a new cub. Few wildlife preserves like Yellowstone still exist and it's quite a sight to see nature in its natural setting just being free.

The geysers and hot springs create the most breath-taking attractions, as these natural wonders are sprinkled throughout the park. You should pick up a map and don't be afraid to turn off on some stray road to what seems like nowhere. You will likely encounter the spewing, steaming and spraying geysers randomly seen throughout the park. Time it just right and hit Old Faithful and its various brother and sister hot springs blowing hot fountains up in the air, or stop and stare at the many natural formations. The hot springs colored in deep, deep blues, vibrant orange and striated brown and red algae that can only grow in temperatures that become as hot as 400 or 500 degrees. Please be careful with your children around these beautiful water fountains and tranquil ponds — they kill and can burn with just a simple touch of the finger. Always remember to have respect — and that goes for the “cute” wild animals too. You will find warning signs posted everywhere about the natural hazards.

You can rent a cabin or camp in the park. During peak season, cabin and campground spaces become premium spaces so you will want your travel agent to coordinate and reserve your space now not later. Many private cabin rentals are predominantly available on the Montana side of the park. You may choose to rent one that sits high on a mountainside with a spectacular view. Camping is fun - but you might feel safer to camp in an RV that has walls and protection from foraging wildlife.

Yosemite

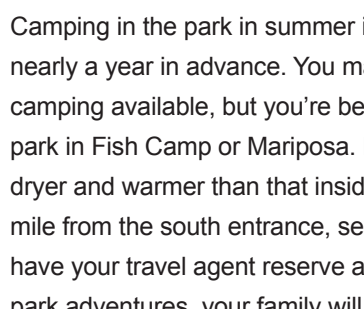


Another one of our earliest national parks, Yosemite is most famous for its giant granite mountains El Capitan and Half Dome that stand towering in stone vigil over the valley floor. Visitors upon entrance into Yosemite Valley typically through one of two entrances — through Merced/Mariposa or Fish Camp — will be struck by the enormity of the rock formation and experience a breathless sense of wonder over the magnificence of the granite-face walls and numerous cascading waterfalls among them Yosemite Falls that pours a tremendous spray of water that cascades down to the river below. In spring time, any hike to the falls promises to leave hikers drenched in wayward spray as the Sierra snow pack melts with a powerful force that rages down the mountainside. Just being hit with the great mist will leave hikers completely drenched, so you might consider wearing a poncho for protection — or at least bring one in your backpack.

Start your adventure by driving in and touring the valley floor and stopping at the world famous Curry Village, a fabulous hub to get out of your car, hike, bike or jump on a tram to be bussed to spots where traffic isn't permitted. Take a hike to Mirror Lake or for extreme hikers a climb down Half Dome is sure to challenge even the most seasoned rock climber. For the less extreme visitors, check out the many Indian camps or find a warm spot along the Merced River to enjoy a little water fun and sun. Don't forget to drive up the southern portion of the park to set your eyes on the Giant Sequoias, which will make you feel puny and awestruck by their enormous size. The Sequoias, redwood cousin to the California redwoods found up north near Eureka, will leave you completely amazed and glad you came to see them.

Camping in the park in summer is nearly impossible to get a spot unless you plan nearly a year in advance. You may want to see if your travel agent can find any camping available, but you're better off to find a spot mid-week just outside the park in Fish Camp or Mariposa. Be aware that the climate in Mariposa is much drier and warmer than inside the park. Just above Fish Camp and about a mile from the south entrance, several upscale hotels and resorts are situated. Do have your travel agent reserve a room or suite at the Tenaya Lodge. In between park adventures, your family will find an all-inclusive resort and spa with four-star amenities. Built in the famous California Craftsman style, is at once rustic and beautiful.

Grand Canyon



The Grand Canyon North and South Rims are distinctly different in terms of terrain. The more forest-like and lush area that less desert-like and arid is the North Rim that you can enter through Arizona on Hwy. 67. RV camping isn't available inside the park on the North Rim — you can RV camp on the South Rim in Mather Campgrounds. Tent camping is available in the North Rim Campgrounds. As is the case with the other National Parks have your travel agent make your reservations well in advance of the summer season or lose your opportunity to camp inside of the park.

The Grand Canyon, an incredible natural wonder, was carved out from the natural meandering of the Colorado River that you can see far below as you stand on one of the rims. You can decide to take one of the many buses that tour you along the rim and take you back again. They do not allow cars to drive past certain parts along the rim. The buses run about every 15 minutes and begin in and around the South Rim Village. Do arrive early as lines form for the rim tours and may take a while for passengers to get on your first bus out. You may find that you have to wait over an hour just to get on your first bus — especially during the peak summer season, which incidentally may or may not be blistering hot. It is recommended that should you go in July or August take advantage of the cooler morning hours to get your tours and hikes out of the way.

Numerous overlooks and cliffs are available for sightseers to stop, take photographs or get a closer look via binoculars at the red-rock formations and carved stone walls. Your first view of the enormous and spectacular canyon will leave you breathless and amazed. You can go down and spectate the canyon in the traditional donkey rides or take a train ride around the canyon and down into it and enjoy a wonderful lunch deep in the bottom of the most beautiful canyon in the world. Now Jeep rides are available as well. To find out more about Jeep tours, [click here](#). More information is available on the [National Park Service website](#).