

Yellowstone - NW245

Wednesday 28th August - Monday 16th September 2024

Yellowstone, home to Geysers, hot pools and wildlife is situated in the northern part of the Rocky Mountains within the States of Montana and Wyoming. This tour takes in not only this iconic park but other glorious places such as Bozeman, old gold mining towns and wide expansive vistas. Self supported moving on tour, staying at hotels and motels to include two nights at the Old Faithful Inn in Yellowstone.



Itinerary

Wednesday 28th August 2024 - Arrive in Jackson Hole

Arrive in Jackson Hole to meet at the hotel at 18:00

- No cycling
- Accommodation: Motel

Thursday 29th August - Rest Day in Jackson Hole

Time to relax and adjust to the local time.

- No cycling
- Accommodation: Motel
- Meals: (B)

Friday 30th August 2024 - Jackson to Driggs

We start heading west crossing the Snake River before the one long climb of the day over the Teton Pass utilising the Jackson Hole Community Pathway scheme. There will be great views all around as we climb 500 metres. The reward is a downhill run to Victor, some of which is on the Old Jackson Highway. We'll stop at Victor before taking a rails for trails north to finish the day at Driggs

- Route distance: 51.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 512.0 m
- Accommodation: Motel
- Meals: (B)

Saturday 31st August 2024 - Driggs to Ashton

We are now in Idaho, heading to the west of the Teton range. We undulate at 1900 metres elevation surrounded by big skies, before descending to Ashton.

- Route distance: 72.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 1170.0 m
- Accommodation: Motel
- Meals: (B)

Sunday 1st September 2024 - Ashton to West Yellowstone

Heading east from Ashton, we follow Henrys Fork to cycle the Mesa Falls scenic byway. At 24km there are a couple of observation points to admire the beautiful falls. This is a longer day where we gradually climb along route 20 passing through several smaller towns spread along the roadway with the usual expansive views. We finish at West Yellowstone, just outside the National Park.

- Route distance: 66.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 680.0 m
- Accommodation: Motel
- Meals: (B)

Monday 2nd September 2024 - West Yellowstone to Ennis

We continue to head north and will pass Hebgen Lake. At 15 miles long it was created as a reservoir. Just after though is a lake created by an earthquake that blocked the river,

fittingly called Earthquake Lake. Over the next 70km, we gradually descend 300 metres following the valley of the Madison River to finish at Ennis.

- Route distance: 70.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 427.0 m
- Accommodation: Motel
- Meals: (B)

Tuesday 3rd September 2024 - Ennis to Virginia City

A short day cycling to Virginia City. A steady 600 metre climb over 17km takes us to the Madison Valley Lookout, but not before visiting a local museum manned by volunteers (hopefully open) We descend to Virginia City, where we spend two nights in this former gold mining town.

- Route distance: 24.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 601.0 m
- Accommodation: Self Catering
- Meals: (B)

Wednesday 4th September 2024 - Rest Day in Virginia City

Virginia City was designated as the new territorial capital of Montana in 1865 when Alder Gulch had gathered most of Montana's population. At its peak, 10,000 people flooded the area named "Fourteen-mile City" for the numerous settlements that lined the gulch, searching for gold. Today you can explore this old Western Town, with attractions reflecting its past

- No cycling
- Accommodation: Self Catering

Thursday 5th September - Virginia City to Whitehall

A day that is gradually downhill with a small rise as we head through farming country with the usual extensive and far-reaching views.

- Route distance: 90.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 204.0 m
- Accommodation: Motel
- Meals: (B)

Friday 6th September 2024 - Whitehall to Bozeman

We are now at the most northerly part of the holiday as we head towards Bozeman.

- Route distance: 107.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 506.0 m
- Accommodation: Hotel
- Meals: (B)

Saturday 7th September 2024 - Rest Day in Bozeman

Take the time to explore. Numerous places to eat and drink, several great museums including the Museum of the Rockies affiliated to the Smithsonian.

- No cycling
- Accommodation: Hotel

Sunday 8th September 2024 - Bozeman to Livingston

A shorter day to set us up for the ride towards Yellowstone, so time for a lie in and a later breakfast. To avoid the interstate, we take the roads to the north, passing ski resorts and mountains. There are two climbs today before following a road parallel to the interstate taking us to Livingston.

- Route distance: 51.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 503.0 m
- Accommodation: Motel
- Meals: (B)

Monday 9th September 2024 - Livingston to Gardiner

Heading south, we are now heading for Yellowstone, following the Yellowstone River. There are two roads that follow the river, so we may take the quieter one to the east of the river. We finish in Gardner, the Northern gateway to Yellowstone.

- Route distance: 90.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 584.0 m
- Accommodation: Motel
- Meals: (B)

Tuesday 10th September 2024 - Gardiner to Canyon Village

Through the North entrance into Yellowstone and very quickly we pass one of the seminal attractions, Mammoth Hot Springs, where tiers of yellow terraces lie. Heading further into the park, we pass Norris Geyser basin where hot springs and fumaroles here have temperatures above boiling point. We finish the day at Canyon village where we will stay two nights.

- Route distance: 63.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 1199.0 m
- Accommodation: Lodge
- Meals: (B)

Wednesday 11th September 2024 - Rest Day in Canyon Village

Time to explore the local area. Visit the spectacular Canyon Falls, or/and cycle to Fishing Bridge along the Hayden Valley, home to bison herds

- Route distance: 55.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 533.0 m
- Accommodation: Lodge

Thursday 12th September 2024 - Canyon Village to Old Faithful

We are now in the heart of Yellowstone and will retrace back to Norris Geyser basin before heading south to finish at Old Faithful. On the way are more geysers and mud pots, so plenty to stop and see. We finish at the historic Old Faithful Inn, where we will spend two nights.

- Route distance: 69.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 577.0 m
- Accommodation: Inn
- Meals: (B)

Friday 13th September 2024 - Rest Day at Old Faithful

Erupting 20 times a day, Old Faithful is a must see attraction in the area, but only part of a large geyser basin, so our rest day will give you lots of time to explore this iconic area. We are also staying in the Old Faithful Inn. Built in 1904, it's one of the oldest structures in the park, built entirely of wood.

- No cycling
- Accommodation: Inn

Saturday 14th September 2024 - Old Faithful to Grant Village

Our last full day in the park takes us east to head over the Continental divide, where the water before flows to the Pacific, that after flows to the Atlantic. One last basin at West Thumb illustrates more of nature's marvels. We finish at Grant Village, setting us up for our last days cycling in the morning.

- Route distance: 35.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 601.0 m
- Accommodation: Lodge
- Meals: (B)

Sunday 15th September 2024 - Grant Village to Jackson Hole

We leave Yellowstone today, but there are the Tetons to enjoy. Shaped like teeth they rise up to our right as we head towards Jackson Hole. We finish our trip along a long dedicated cycleway.

- Route distance: 125.0 km
- Route altitude gain: 817.0 m
- Accommodation: Motel
- Meals: (B)

Monday 16th September 2024 Tour ends after breakfast

The tour finishes after breakfast at 09:00

- No cycling
- Meals: (B)



Dates and Prices

Cost

- Land only price: £2800.0

Payment Schedule

A deposit of £400 per person is payable upon booking, an interim payment of £1000 by 28th January 2024 with the final balance of £1400 per person to be paid by 19th June 2024 (10 weeks before departure)

Price includes:

- 19 nights accommodation on a twin share basis
- Breakfast on 13 cycling days

Price does not include:

- Travel to and from Jackson Hole, Montana
- Any other meals or refreshments
- Single supplement £2200 (if available)
- Entry fees at any attractions
- Any other personal expenses
- Travel Insurance

Cancellations

Written Notice Received: Cancellation Charge:

- Before 28th January 2024 : £400 (deposit)
- Before 19th June 2024: £1400 (deposit and interim payment)
- 19th June 2024 through to departure : £2800 (Full amount)



Holiday Information

Accommodation

- A variety of accommodation has been chosen, from hotels to motels. The accommodation in Yellowstone includes the historic Old Faithful Inn. On two nights we will be staying in self catering accommodation in a former gold mining town.

Meals

- Breakfasts on cycling days are included. We aim to have a good breakfast before setting out and some will be within the accommodation that has been booked. Typical breakfasts include panackes, bacon, eggs, waffles and lots of coffee. In some places fruit and porridge is available. Remember sizes are large! Costs are included up to \$16, which should be adequate for a good breakfast. Lunches are usually taken at a store or coffee shop. An evening meal destination will be recommended and I encourage the group to stay together. American cuisine is tasty and filling. Please allow \$5-10 for lunch and \$15-\$25 for dinner. Please note that gratuities are expected in the USA. Waitresses and waiters are paid very little, so rely on tips and the service is usually great. Please allow from 15-20% of your meal price

Single Supplement

- Single rooms in the USA are available but these are nearly always queen rooms, which is in effect a big single bed designed for two people. The prices are the same as a double queen room with two twin beds. Therefore it's with regret that I cannot offer a single supplement at a realistic price, but have included one, just in case.

Area Covered

- The Yellowstone and Teton National Parks are located in the Rockies and we will be cycling within the States of Wyoming, Idaho and Montana. The first part of the tour takes us north and to the west of Yellowstone at which point we arrive at Bozeman. From here we loop via Livingston to cycle into Yellowstone Park, finishing by riding past the Tetons.

Rides

- The itinerary will suit those wishing to cycle in one of the most striking areas in North America. There are several long climbs, but for the majority of the tour distances are modest. The daylight hours are long and so there will be time to complete the ride. You will need to carry your own luggage, but with good accommodation and the wide variety and availability of food it is my experience that you won't need to take too much with you. Due to the paucity of accommodation, there are four longer days, so an early start will be required. However four rest days have been included as well as one at the start to allow you to acclimatise to the time difference. It is not practical to ride as one group, and riding in smaller groups of similar speed and ability is recommended, re-grouping at least three times during the day. There will be traffic to contend with, however many roads especially outside the parks itself will have wide shoulders. In Yellowstone itself, caution is advised. It is a mandatory requirement that cyclists progress in groups no larger than three and should pull over if cars are backing up behind. Motorists aren't driving quickly but with so much wildlife on view their attention won't be as good as it usually is, so please cycle defensively and enjoy the experience. Having said this, there is a move to make Yellowstone more cycling friendly and a 25 mile cycle route was opened in 2011 in the Tetons and there will be ongoing

work on the roads to create shoulders on many of the roads within the park. You will be supplied with a map and route information. I led a tour here in 2012 for CTC Holidays and have no hesitation in returning. The tour is has been graded as a 6 out of 9, which reflects the fact that some of the days are longer than 80km

Riding Style

- My leading style is described as relaxed. We always start together in the morning and if going through a town, will stay together. After that you are free to ride at your own pace. You will find that I am close to the back, simply because there are faster cyclists and I can help anyone in difficulty (punctures etc) We stop at least three times a day to regroup and I will point these out beforehand. If the group does have a group wanting to cycle at noticeable different pace, then after lunch we will often split into two groups meeting at the nights accommodation. I aim to start at about 09:30 having had breakfast, though in some cases earlier if a longer day is expected.

Rest Days

- These have been built in to really take advantage of the area. The first is on arrival at Jackson Hole, to allow you to recover from jetlag. The second is at Virginia City, where we are staying in this old gold mining town with plenty of themed attractions to keep you occupied. The third is in Bozeman, a city full of things to do. The last two are in Yellowstone at Canyon Village and at Old Faithful, right by the geysers in the iconic wooden hotel.

Route Sheets

- Details of routes and further tour information will be distributed approx four weeks before the tour departs. GPX routes and maps will be supplied

Getting to Jackson Hole

- As this is a land only holiday, it is very important that you note that neither your leader, nor Bikexplore are responsible for you in any way until the appointed time at the designated meeting point. Should you fail to arrive at the appointed meeting point, for whatever reason, we will not be responsible for any additional costs you may incur in order to meet up with the tour group. Before finalising travel arrangements to meet the tour you should ensure that you have read and understood our booking conditions. Should this tour not attract sufficient bookings to reach the minimum operating size, we may cancel the tour at any time up to 10 weeks before departure. It is therefore recommended that you book fully flexible and refundable transport and accommodation, or wait until you have been informed that the tour will go ahead, as in the event of the tour being cancelled we will not be responsible for any losses incurred.

Group information

- The maximum group size will be 14, this tour is guaranteed to run. (including the Tour Leader).

Weather and Clothing

- We are cycling in the Northern Rockies and towards the end of the season. The days should be warm, but please be prepared for extremes of weather, as it can snow at any time of year. Therefore you should have plenty of warm clothing, a waterproof coat and gloves.

Cycles / Equipment

- Touring cycles, hybrid bikes or MTBs will be suitable. I would recommend 32C tyres. Road surfaces are generally good. A lot of roads outside Yellowstone have shoulders. These are about 2 metres wide and keep you out of the traffic, but you should be aware that there may be occasional debris, so watch out for this. Drivers are generally polite in the USA, speed limits are rigorously enforced. The trucks are larger than in the UK, but again are well driven. There will be roads with no shoulders. As in the UK, please cycle with due attention, so if a truck is coming one way and another the other, please pull off the road, though this will be an uncommon occurrence. You should ensure your cycle is well maintained, paying particular attention to wheels, tyres and brakes. It is advisable to fit a calibrated cycle computer/garmin type device, as this will aid navigation. Please pack a set of lights just in case they are needed, but it is not anticipated that any night riding will occur, unless there are severe delays. Each participant will be expected to carry sufficient spares and tools to deal with punctures and minor repairs. You will need to carry your own luggage for the holiday, but remember that we are staying in fixed accommodation and some will have washing machines. Helmets are not mandatory but if you do not intend to wear one, please check that your insurance will cover you in the event of claim. Bikexplore or Neil Wheadon is not responsible for any issues that you may have should you deviate from the route or choose to cycle before or after the days ride.

Tyres

- 32mm tyres or above with good tread are recommended. The roads are generally very good, but there are sections of cycle paths and the road between Bozeman and Livingston is a little rougher.

Cycling in Yellowstone Park

- Cycling is popular within the park and one of Adventure Cyclings routes runs through it. However you need to ride with caution. The roads are good, but generally have no shoulders. You will be sharing the roads with motorists who may have an eye on the wildlife rather than the road, so please be aware of this. Recreation Vehicles (RV's) are common and have wide wing mirrors, so please allow them plenty of room. You will often spot wildlife by the associated number of parked cars. This is a wildlife park with big animals, these include Bison and Elk. Keep a safe distance and do not approach the animals as they can accelerate very quickly. There are also bears and wolves. Incidents however with cyclists are rare, but you need to be aware.

Maps

- You will be given daily maps and enough information to navigate during the tour. If you are taking a Garmin, then maps can be downloaded from the internet or bought from Garmin. Yellowstone Park have excellent maps.

Guide Books

- Both the 'Rough Guide 'Yellowstone & Grand Teton' and the ' Lonely Planet 'Yellowstone & Grand Teton'' are useful sources of information

Money

- The currency in USA is the dollar (approximately \$1.20 = £1)

Travel Insurance and Advice

- Please ensure that your insurance covers you for medical emergencies and also repatriation of your bike, should this be necessary, and ensure that the single item limit on your luggage is adequate to cover your camera or similar item you bring. You should bring your insurance documents with you. Before booking you should check the Foreign Office 'Travel Advice by Country' at www.fco.gov.uk/ or on 0845 850 2829. Bikexplore cannot accept responsibility for any costs that may be incurred due to insufficient insurance cover.

ESTA

- In addition to travel insurance, you will need an ETA Electronic Travel Authorisation. Providing you are a British Citizen and don't have any unspent convictions for criminal offences, you need to apply for this authorisation for entry to the USA by going to <https://esta.cbp.dhs.gov> and completing the form online. This must be done at least 72 hours before you fly, but it would be much better to do it well before that. The application lasts two years, so if you have travelled there recently you should still have a valid authorisation. Anyone not travelling on a British passport should review the requirements carefully for their nationality

About Neil

- I have led 9 tours in the USA, including a similar tour in 2013. Over 20 years, I have created and led over 80 tours all over the world. I like to cycle for the scenery and food. I am happily married to Sarah with two grown up children. Our day jobs are veterinary surgeons, where I locum to enable me to take cyclists away to glorious places. Any queries please contact me at Neil@tandem-club.org.uk. Thankyou for looking at this tour