

West Coast Roadtrip

14 days Seattle to LA and back

A hotel shows you one view for a week. This route shows you a new one every morning — sea caves, drive-through redwoods, Big Sur, Yosemite, desert stars. Every stop timed. Every overnight picked. All you do is drive.

14

DAYS

~2,800

ROAD MILES

13

OVERNIGHTS

Seattle

START & FINISH



Scan for the live, interactive map

Create a free ExplorOff account or log in — the full map and every stop unlock in your account.

[EXPLOROFF.COM/ITINERARIES/WEST-COAST-ROAD-TRIP](https://exploroff.com/itineraries/west-coast-road-trip)

Your route, mapped

Every stop on the trip at a glance. Down Highway 101 and the Pacific Coast Highway to Los Angeles, then back up the inland side through Death Valley, Yosemite, Lake Tahoe and Crater Lake.



Scan for the live, interactive map

Create a free ExplorOff account or log in — the full map, all 56 stops, unlocks in your account.

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TIP • OFFLINE MAPS

Download the whole West Coast region offline before you leave. Cell service drops out along Cape Perpetua, the Redwoods, Big Sur, Death Valley, and Tioga Pass.

WHERE YOU'LL SLEEP

- | | | |
|----|----------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Yachats, OR | OREGON COAST |
| 2 | Crescent City, CA | REDWOOD COAST |
| 3 | Point Reyes Station / Olema, CA | MARIN COAST |
| 4 | Monterey / Pacific Grove, CA | MONTEREY BAY |
| 5 | Cambria, CA | CENTRAL COAST |
| 6 | Ventura / Oxnard, CA | GOLD COAST |
| 7 | Los Angeles, CA | L.A. BASIN |
| 8 | Bishop, CA | OWENS VALLEY |
| 9 | Mammoth Lakes, CA | EASTERN SIERRA |
| 10 | Yosemite Valley / El Portal, CA | THE PARK |
| 11 | South Lake Tahoe, CA | TAHOE BASIN |
| 12 | Klamath Falls or Crater Lake, OR | SOUTHERN OREGON |
| 13 | Eugene or Salem, OR | WILLAMETTE VALLEY |

♥ A NOTE ON THE GOLDEN HOUR

This plan leans into sunsets on purpose. **Cape Perpetua** (Day 1), **Point Reyes** (Day 3), **Pfeiffer Beach** (Day 5), and **Badwater Basin** (Day 8) are all timed to end the day. Pack a small blanket and something warm to pour, and let those evenings be the slow ones.

! BOOK THREE THINGS AHEAD OF TIME

This route is busiest in summer. Reserve your **hotels well in advance** (the overnight towns are small and sell out), buy **Alcatraz tickets several weeks early** for Day 4, and check whether Yosemite requires a **peak-season entry reservation** for Day 10.

~6.5 HR DRIVE

LEAVE 7:00 AM

1

DAY 1 · THE OREGON COAST

Seattle to the Oregon Coast

The rugged Oregon coast, chased all the way to a sunset. Clear Seattle early, cross the border by late morning, and spend the afternoon hopping headlands and lighthouses down Highway 101 to a stone shelter above the sea.



Cannon Beach & Haystack Rock BEACH

11:45 AM - 1:15 PM

Park in the Pelican Brewing lot or on the street, then take the beach ladder down to the sand under Haystack Rock.



Hug Point BEACH

1:30 - 2:15 PM

Sea caves and a seasonal beach waterfall. Time it near low tide.



Neahkahnie Viewpoint VIEWPOINT

2:30 - 2:45 PM

A quick highway pullout with a big coastline photo.



Tillamook Creamery TOUR

3:15 - 4:15 PM

Walk the self-guided viewing platform and split a fresh ice cream.



The Tunnel BEACH

4:45 - 5:41 PM

Check whether low tide lets you walk through the tunnel; arrive a little early.



Yaquina Head Lighthouse LIGHTHOUSE

5:45 - 6:45 PM

Basalt tide pools and harbor seals. **Pass covers the \$7 entry fee.**



Cape Perpetua Overlook SUNSET

7:15 - 8:30 PM

Follow the campground sign and take that road up to the stone shelter trail — the best sunset on the Oregon coast. **Pass covers the \$5 parking fee.**

NIGHT 1 · STAY Yachats, OR

[Browse handpicked places to stay ↗](#)



~4.5 HR DRIVE

LEAVE 8:30 AM

2

DAY 2 • SEA CAVES & SECRET BRIDGES

Sea Lion Caves to Secret Bridges

Lighthouses, a cave full of sea lions, and hidden rock arches, ending under the old-growth canopy at the California line.



Heceta Head Lighthouse

LIGHTHOUSE

9:00 – 10:15 AM

Half-mile walk to the keeper's home and the most photographed lighthouse in Oregon.



Sea Lion Caves

WILDLIFE

10:30 – 11:45 AM

Take the elevator down into America's largest sea cave. **\$18 / person.**



Cape Blanco Lighthouse

LIGHTHOUSE

1:30 – 2:30 PM

Remote, windswept, and the westernmost point in Oregon.



Natural Bridges

VIEWPOINT

3:45 – 4:30 PM

Short walk to the iconic arched rock viewpoints — the cover star of this stretch of coast.



Samuel H. Boardman Scenic Corridor

VIEWPOINT

4:40 – 5:30 PM

Stroll from the Last Chance trailhead to the ocean-view bench.



Trees of Mystery

REDWOODS

6:00 – 7:30 PM

Walk the old-growth canopy suspension bridges. **\$20–\$30.**

NIGHT 2 • STAY **Crescent City, CA**

[Browse handpicked places to stay ↗](#)



~6 HR DRIVE

LEAVE 8:00 AM

3 DAY 3 · GIANTS OF THE REDWOODS

Giants of the Redwoods to Point Reyes

Drive straight through the old-growth canopy, then a car through a redwood trunk, ending at a coastal sunset.



Corkscrew Tree REDWOODS

8:30 – 9:30 AM

Wildly twisted old-growth redwood right on the Newton B. Drury Scenic Parkway.



Big Tree Wayside REDWOODS

9:30 – 10:15 AM

Perfect stop for vertical panorama photos.



Drive-Thru Tree Park (Leggett) REDWOODS

11:45 AM – 12:15 PM

Drive your vehicle directly through a living redwood trunk. ~\$15 / car.



Cypress Tree Tunnel WALK

3:45 – 4:30 PM

Walk beneath the arching tunnel of cypress trees leading to the old maritime radio station.

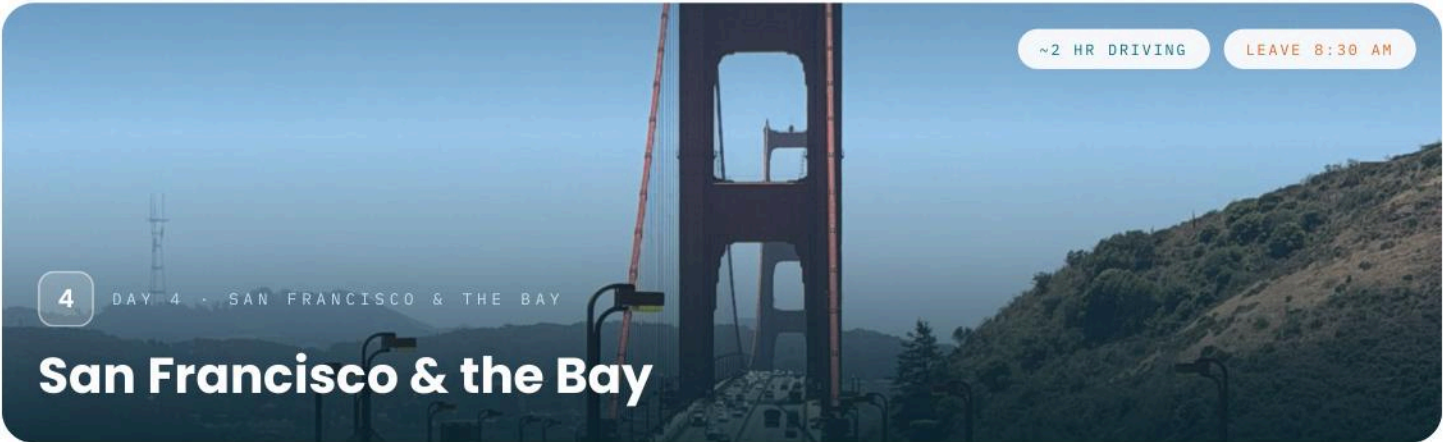


Point Reyes National Seashore SUNSET

5:00 – 8:30 PM

Catch the sunset over the rugged ocean headlands from the lighthouse stairs.

NIGHT 3 · STAY [Point Reyes Station / Olema, CA](#) Browse handpicked places to stay ↗



~2 HR DRIVING

LEAVE 8:30 AM

4 DAY 4 • SAN FRANCISCO & THE BAY

San Francisco & the Bay

The classic city day. Cross the Golden Gate, ride the ferry to Alcatraz, then work down to a waterfront skyline dinner.

BOOK AHEAD • Buy Alcatraz ferry tickets several weeks early — they routinely sell out and can't be booked last-minute.



Golden Gate Bridge LANDMARK

9:15 – 10:00 AM

Stop at the northern overlooks (Golden Gate View Point) before driving across.



Alcatraz Island Ferry Tour LANDMARK

10:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Catch the ferry from Pier 33 for the cellhouse audio tour.



PIER 39 WILDLIFE

1:45 – 3:15 PM

Watch the resident sea lions and grab a late lunch on the wharf.



Lombard Street LANDMARK

3:30 – 4:00 PM

Drive down the world's most famous crooked road.



Skates On The Bay FOOD

6:00 – 8:00 PM

Waterfront dinner in Berkeley facing the glittering SF skyline.

NIGHT 4 • STAY Monterey / Pacific Grove, CA Browse handpicked places to stay ↗

~4 HR WITH STOPS

LEAVE 9:00 AM

5

DAY 5 • THE DRAMA OF BIG SUR

The Drama of Big Sur

One of the most famous drives on Earth. Boardwalk nostalgia in Santa Cruz, then the cliff-hugging bends of Highway 1 to a purple-sand sunset.



Santa Cruz BEACH

9:45 – 11:15 AM

Morning walk along the historic beach boardwalk, under the wooden Giant Dipper.



Bixby Bridge Vista Point VIEWPOINT

12:15 – 12:45 PM

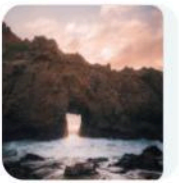
Pull out to view the world-famous highway arch bridge — the one on the cover of this guide.



Hurricane Point Vista Point VIEWPOINT

12:55 – 1:15 PM

Expansive, high-elevation panoramic ocean views over the whole coastline.



Pfeiffer Beach SUNSET

4:30 – 8:30 PM

Explore the purple sand and watch the sunset blast through Keyhole Rock.

NIGHT 5 • STAY [Cambria, CA](#)

[Browse handpicked places to stay ↗](#)



~4 HR DRIVING

LEAVE 9:30 AM

6 DAY 6 · WATERFALLS & WILDLIFE

Waterfalls to Central-Coast Wildlife

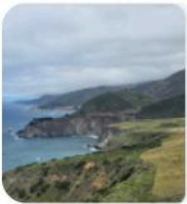
A slow morning on the Big Sur cliffs, then boardwalks full of elephant seals on the way down the central coast.



McWay Falls WATERFALL

11:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Flat trail walk overlooking the hidden beach waterfall cove — the 80-foot fall drops straight onto the sand.



Big Creek Cove Vista Point VIEWPOINT

12:15 - 12:35 PM

Dramatic view of the massive double-arch canyon bridge where the highway leaps the cove.



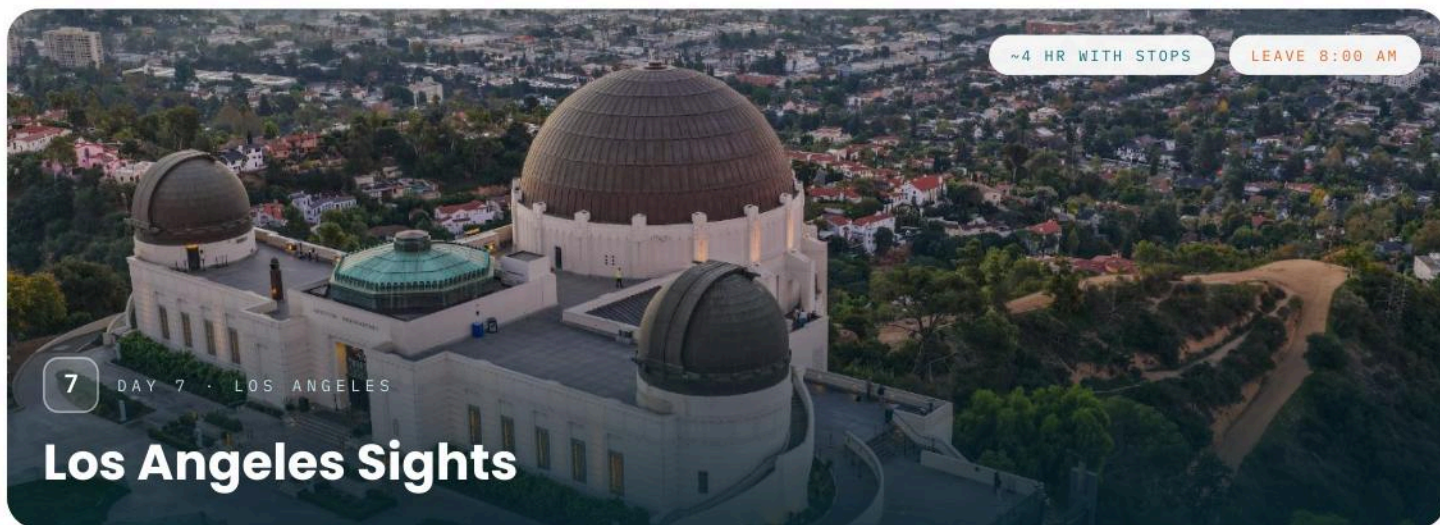
Elephant Seal Vista Point WILDLIFE

1:45 - 2:45 PM

Walk the boardwalks directly next to thousands of wild elephant seals hauled out on the sand.

NIGHT 6 · STAY Ventura / Oxnard, CA

Browse handpicked places to stay ↗



~4 HR WITH STOPS

LEAVE 8:00 AM

7

DAY 7 · LOS ANGELES

Los Angeles Sights

One day, all the icons — the pier, the sign, the observatory — with a proper old-school lunch in between. The southern turn of the loop.



Santa Monica Pier LANDMARK

9:15 – 10:45 AM

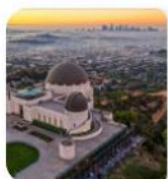
Walk the historic boardwalk and find the End of Route 66 sign.



Beverly Hills Garden Park LANDMARK

11:15 – 11:45 AM

Take a stroll past the iconic Beverly Hills sign and the lily pond.



Griffith Observatory & Hollywood Sign VIEWPOINT

12:30 – 2:30 PM

Sweeping basin views and the classic Hollywood Sign photo from the lawn.



Pinocchio Restaurant (Burbank) FOOD

2:45 – 4:00 PM

Stop for a classic, affordable old-Hollywood Italian lunch.

NIGHT 7 · STAY [Los Angeles, CA](#)

[Browse handpicked places to stay ↗](#)

~8.5 HR WITH STOPS

LEAVE 7:00 AM

8

DAY 8 • DEATH VALLEY & THE INLAND TURN

Death Valley & the Inland Turn

The big pivot inland: leave the ocean behind at dawn and drop below sea level by golden hour. **Top off the tank before entering the park.**



Wildrose Charcoal Kilns LANDMARK

11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

Tour the striking, beautifully preserved row of beehive masonry kilns.



Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes VIEWPOINT

2:30 – 3:30 PM

Wander the vast sand peaks rolling out toward the mountains.



Zabriskie Point VIEWPOINT

4:00 – 4:45 PM

View the surreal, rippling badlands draped in golden afternoon light.



Badwater Basin SUNSET

5:15 – 6:30 PM

Walk out across the salt crust of the lowest point in North America as the light turns gold. **Pass covers the \$30 park entrance.**

NIGHT 8 • STAY **Bishop, CA**

[Browse handpicked places to stay ↗](#)



~3 HR WITH STOPS

LEAVE 8:30 AM

9

DAY 9 • EASTERN SIERRA

Eastern Sierra Pillars & Basalt Columns

A short, strange, beautiful day among the volcanic leftovers of the Eastern Sierra — and an early night at altitude.



Lake Crowley Stone Columns VIEWPOINT

9:15 – 10:45 AM

Explore the grand, naturally carved stone colonnade along the lake's eastern shore — columns formed by ancient volcanic steam, only revealed when the reservoir eroded the bank.



Devils Postpile National Monument LANDMARK

11:30 AM – 1:30 PM

Easy walk to the geometric wall of hexagonal basalt columns — one of the finest examples on Earth. Summer shuttle may be required from the Mammoth adventure center.

NIGHT 9 • STAY [Mammoth Lakes, CA](#)

[Browse handpicked places to stay ↗](#)

~4 HR WITH THE HIKE

LEAVE 7:30 AM

10

DAY 10 • INTO YOSEMITE VALLEY

Over the Pass into Yosemite Valley

Over Tioga Pass and straight into the postcard — waterfalls, granite, and a river swim under El Capitan. **Pass covers the \$35 park entrance.**

BOOK AHEAD • Check that Tioga Pass is open (typically late spring to fall) and whether Yosemite requires a peak-season entry reservation for your dates.



Mist Trail HIKE

10:30 AM – 2:00 PM

Ascend the granite staircases past Vernal Fall — bring a shell; the spray earns the trail its name.



Yosemite Valley Welcome Center LANDMARK

2:30 – 3:30 PM

Walk the village plaza and grab a late valley lunch.



Swimming Spot with El Capitan View BEACH

3:30 – 6:30 PM

Cool off along the Merced River beneath the massive granite monolith.

NIGHT 10 • STAY **Yosemite Valley / El Portal, CA**

Browse handpicked places to stay ↗



~3.5 HR TO TAHOE

START 8:00 AM

11

DAY 11 · YOSEMITE BUCKET LIST

The Yosemite Valley Bucket List

The valley's greatest hits before lunch, then over the mountains to the biggest alpine lake in North America.



Tunnel View VIEWPOINT

8:30 – 9:15 AM

Capture the definitive panoramic frame — El Capitan, Bridalveil, and Half Dome in one sweep.



Glacier Point VIEWPOINT

10:00 – 11:45 AM

Stand at the cliff-edge overlook facing Half Dome and the high country, 3,200 feet above the valley floor.



Lower Yosemite Falls WATERFALL

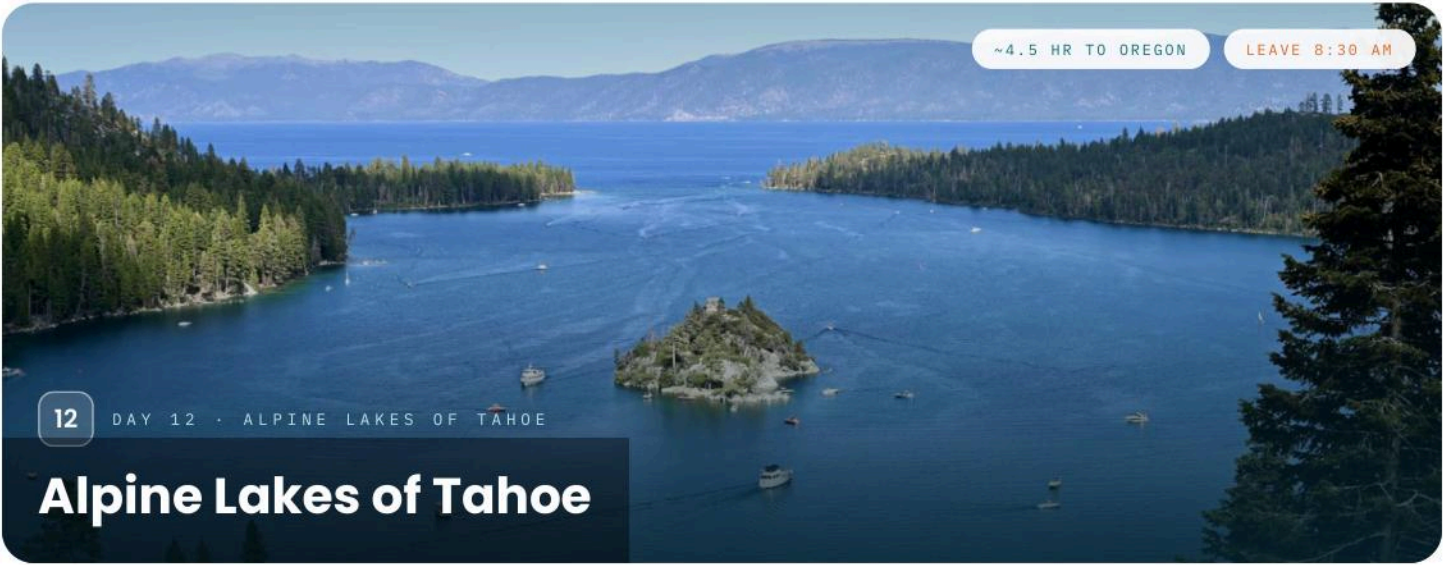
12:15 – 1:00 PM

Flat, easy paved stroll to the base of the tallest waterfall in North America.

NIGHT 11 · STAY

South Lake Tahoe, CA

Browse handpicked places to stay ↗



~4.5 HR TO OREGON

LEAVE 8:30 AM

12

DAY 12 · ALPINE LAKES OF TAHOE

Alpine Lakes of Tahoe

Emerald coves and granite shorelines — Tahoe at its clearest before the long run north into Oregon.



Emerald Bay Vista Point VIEWPOINT

9:00 – 10:15 AM

Gaze over the glacier-carved bay and historic Fannette Island — Tahoe's only island.



Lower Eagle Falls WATERFALL

10:15 – 11:30 AM

Short walk up to the rushing cascades framed by alpine peaks and the bay below.



Tahoe East Shore Trail HIKE

12:15 – 3:15 PM

Stroll or bike the wide paved trail tracing the crystal-clear water, then point the car north.

NIGHT 12 · STAY **Klamath Falls or Crater Lake, OR**

Browse handpicked places to stay ↗



~6 HR WITH STOPS

LEAVE 8:00 AM

13 DAY 13 · CRATERS & HOT SPRINGS

Volcanic Craters to Hot Springs

A volcano's ghost, a soak on the canyon wall, and basalt waterfalls — southern Oregon shows off.



Garfield Peak Trail (Crater Lake) HIKE

9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Hike the ridge trail for towering viewpoints over the impossibly blue caldera. **Pass covers the \$30 park entrance.**



Umpqua Hot Springs HOT SPRING

1:30 – 3:30 PM

Walk up the hill to soak in natural geothermal terraces on the canyon wall. **\$5 day-use.**



Toketee Falls WATERFALL

3:45 – 4:30 PM

Short trail to the double-drop falls framed by pillars of columnar basalt.

NIGHT 13 · STAY **Eugene or Salem, OR**

Browse handpicked places to stay ↗



~5 HR HOME

LEAVE 8:30 AM

14 DAY 14 • THE COLUMBIA GORGE RUN

The Columbia Gorge Run to Seattle

The Columbia Gorge waterfall run, a celebratory sushi stop, and the easy evening drive home.



Yuubi Sushi (Beaverton) FOOD

11:00 AM - 12:15 PM

A celebratory road-trip sushi lunch before the final run of gorge waterfalls.



Latourell Falls WATERFALL

1:15 - 2:00 PM

Walk right up to the misty plunge pool of this sheer-drop waterfall.



Wahkeena Falls WATERFALL

2:00 - 2:45 PM

Explore the stone bridges and winding creekside trails.



Multnomah Falls WATERFALL

2:45 - 3:45 PM

The most famous two-tiered waterfall in the Pacific Northwest. **Summer timed-use permit ~\$2.**



The Home Stretch DRIVE

3:45 - 6:45 PM

Hop on I-5 North for the smooth evening drive home to Seattle.

THE LOOP CLOSES **Seattle, WA**

14 days • ~2,800 miles • welcome home

America the Beautiful pass guide

One \$80 interagency pass covers day-use vehicle fees at the federal sites on this route. Here is exactly what it covers, what is already free, and what you still pay on site.

✓ COVERED BY YOUR PASS

Yaquina Head Lighthouse (Day 1) — waives the \$7 vehicle entry.

Cape Perpetua Overlook (Day 1) — waives the \$5 day-use parking.

Death Valley National Park (Day 8) — waives the \$30 vehicle entrance.

Yosemite National Park (Days 10–11) — waives the \$35 vehicle entrance; a peak-season reservation may still be required.

Crater Lake National Park (Day 13) — waives the \$30 vehicle entrance.

○ ALREADY FREE

Redwood National & State Parks scenic parkways and trails · Point Reyes National Seashore and the Cypress Tree Tunnel · highway overlooks — Hug Point, Neahkahnie, Natural Bridges, Samuel H. Boardman, Bixby Creek, Elephant Seal Vista Point · Latourell & Wahkeena Falls · Tillamook Creamery's self-guided tour.

✗ OUT OF POCKET (NOT COVERED)

Sea Lion Caves (Day 2) — ~\$18 per person, privately run.

Trees of Mystery (Day 2) — \$20–\$30, privately run.

Drive-Thru Tree Park (Day 3) — ~\$15 per car, privately run.

Alcatraz Island (Day 4) — ferry and audio tour run by a private concessioner; book weeks ahead.

Umpqua Hot Springs (Day 13) — \$5 day-use or a NW Forest Pass.

State & city parking — Santa Cruz, Santa Monica Pier, and city lots charge separately.

Before you go

Five things worth sorting out before Day 1. The first one matters most.

- 1 Download the map offline.** Cell service drops out completely along Cape Perpetua, the Redwoods, Big Sur, Death Valley, and Tioga Pass.
- 2 Book the big three.** Hotels in the small overnight towns, Alcatraz tickets, and Yosemite's peak-season reservation all sell out.
- 3 Pack layers up front.** Coastal fog, desert heat, and alpine evenings can span 50 degrees in a single day.
- 4 Footwear strategy.** Non-slip closed toes for tide pools and waterfall trails, flip-flops for the sand.
- 5 Watch the fuel gauge inland.** Top off before Death Valley and the Eastern Sierra, where stations run 60+ miles apart.

Distances, timings, fees, and operators in this guide are planning estimates. Confirm hours, tide tables, permits, and tickets before you go — and treat the daily leave times as a rhythm, not a rule.



Found this in a friend's glovebox?

Scan for the live version — create a free ExplorOff account or log in, and the full interactive map is yours.

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