



Welcome to your Back to Earth Adventure!!

Experience yoga in the majestic beauty of Yosemite National Park. We'll spend three incredible days and nights exploring the granite peaks, glacial valleys, peaceful forests, and rushing streams of this mountain temple. Look forward to invigorating morning and afternoon yoga sessions, amazing backpacking, gourmet food, and an energizing experience...

General Trip Information

Whatever length of trip you participate in, the important trip information is the same. They commonly start on either Wednesday or Thursday evening. Three day trips commonly start Thursday evening and end Sunday in the early evening. Some four and five day trips will go from Wednesday to Sunday/Monday or Thursday to Monday. **Participants are invited to arrive at whatever time is convenient on the first evening (encouraged to arrive between 6-10pm, and please provide your own dinner on that night).** Formal group activities do not begin until the next morning.

On the first morning we wake up, share an organic breakfast, learn how to pack our backpacks, divvy up group equipment and food, and depart for the trailhead.

With the 3 day, Thursday to Sunday trips, we take a breathtaking 5-7 mile backpack and arrive at our backcountry campsite. Here we set up our home where we will base for the rest of the journey.

With the 4 to 5 day trips, we may stay at this one location or spend another 2 days at a second, equally incredible location.

Our first yoga session begins the first day in the late afternoon. The first practice is generally more restorative than the others as we work out the kinks from our hike in to camp. We practice yoga again, usually 2 times a day, in the morning and later afternoon. We also incorporate a beautiful amount of meditation and breathing practices into our day.

We work with some of the best yoga instructors in the world, who we carefully select because they embody more of the full spirit of yoga in addition to the physical practice. The yoga we practice is suitable for all levels and our instructors are skilled at offering variations so that you may challenge yourself appropriately. More information about each instructor's style can be found by visiting the outdoor programs page of our website at www.backtoearth.org/outdoor.html

In addition to yoga and backpacking, we spend our time laughing, day-hiking, playing music, eating delicious food, learning about the Earth and ourselves, and enjoying some quiet personal time amidst the sweet smelling trees and warm sunlight of the Yosemite Mountains.

Trip Arrival and Departure Times

Participants are invited to meet us at the first night campground starting at 6:00pm. For night arrivals, try your best to arrive at a reasonable hour so that you can get ample rest before backpacking the next morning. It is important to note that specific departure times at the end of the trip cannot be guaranteed, and estimates of what time you will return home on the final day are merely estimates. Many factors, including, but not limited to, weather, trail conditions, group dynamic, blisters, and other situations can delay our journey back to the trailhead. In addition, traffic, road work and other factors beyond our



control may also impact what time you arrive home at the end of the final day. Please do not make any plans for the evening of the last day of the trip as we cannot arrange the trip accordingly.

Backpacking

On this adventure, you will carry a backpack (suitable for overnight journeys, not a day pack) with all of your personal clothes & equipment, and some group food & equipment. While prior backpacking experience may not be required, you should feel comfortable and confident in your ability to carry a backpack for up to 7 miles on moderate terrain each day. Backpacks vary in weight (25-40lbs) depending on how much personal equipment you bring. Prior wilderness backpacking skills are not necessary as we will take care of cooking, water filtering, route finding and other logistics. In addition to your personal equipment, you will carry a small share of the group food and equipment (backpacking stoves, cooking equipment, water bags, etc. We make sure to divvy it up well so that everyone has a pack that is as comfortable as possible.)

Yoga in the Backcountry & Outdoors

Yoga (asana practice) in the wilderness is *very different* from yoga in a studio, and it is important to recognize this and prepare for it before the trip. Yoga in the outdoors is subject to the personality, moods, and actions of the Earth. Temperature, cloud cover, precipitation, wind, time of day, insects, and other factors make yoga in the outdoors a more challenging, unique, rewarding, and fun experience than indoor yoga. Please be prepared to dress in layers, to feel the Earth under your feet, and to experience yoga in a refreshing and wonderful way. Mountain pose in the heart of the mountains, and tree pose in the company of 200 foot pine trees will undoubtedly open your spirit to yoga in new ways.

Our goal is to practice yoga from the moment we begin our journey together through the last parting hug. It is our intention to live our yoga on and off the mat, to recognize how we are impacting the earth as we walk upon it, to be aware of our connection with the community of new friends we travel with, and ultimately to reach deeply into our personal core and open up to our highest selves.

Trip Leaders

Our wilderness adventures are lead by experienced mountain guides who love nature, enjoy people, and work hard to make your experience the best that it can be! At least one of the leaders will be a Wilderness First Responder, trained to deal with medical emergencies. As the quality of our events is of paramount importance to us, please spend a moment completing a leader evaluation at the end of your experience. This will enable our leaders to continuously develop their skills. *While gratuities are not required, they are much appreciated and graciously accepted.*

Food

We prepare all of your meals during the journey including breakfast, lunch and dinner. All food is 100% natural with no preservatives, artificial flavors or colors, or msg. Our goal is to provide 100% organic food, and we strive to support local farmers and businesses and use organic ingredients whenever possible. If organic is unavailable, we will use the highest quality available. *You are encouraged to bring your own trail snacks, but please keep them to a minimum as extra weight and extra space will make the journey more challenging. Please let us know if you have specific dietary needs so that we may provide you with food that you prefer to eat.* Don't worry, we love food and always bring enough for everyone. Remember, whatever you bring, you have to carry!



****Please note – Trips to Yosemite require that we pack all food into bear proof canisters at the end of the night, so keeping personal food to a minimum is essential.*

Equipment List and Rental Information

We ask you to bring your own backpack, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, clothes, and basic personal necessities (bowl, utensil, toiletries, etc. See equipment list) In order to take part in the adventure as safely as possible, it is up to you to make sure you have all of the equipment on the list. If you have any questions or concerns, please give us a call or email us. We will gladly help you to get ready! Please make sure that you have a backpack large enough for a 3 day trip. A small overnight or day pack will be too small to carry all of the food and equipment. Overnight packs should be a **minimum of 3,500 cubic inches**. If you don't know what this means, let us know and we will happily explain. If you do not have this equipment, please visit your local REI, EMS, or other outdoor store to take care of your equipment rental needs.

Waivers and Health Forms

A Waiver and Health Form must each be read, filled out, and signed to participate in this event. The Health Form is necessary to assist leaders in case of a medical emergency. We will provide you with these the first morning.

Refunds & Cancellation Policy

If you cancel within 60 or more days before the event you may receive a credit for the amount you paid less a 25% processing fee. Participants who cancel less than 60 days prior to an event may only receive a credit or refund, less a 25% processing fee, in the case of a medical emergency accompanied by a physician's letter. We will refund all payments for events that we cancel. Unfortunately we cannot be flexible with this policy. Because these trips are so small, with a maximum of 11 participants, a last minute cancellation is very costly and often difficult to fill. Please consider this before registering for the adventure.

Trip Cancellation and Destination Changes

With all wilderness adventures there are some variables that are beyond our control. Various factors, including, but not limited to, weather, trail closures, forest fires, rockslides, avalanches and other natural occurrences may require us to change outing destinations at the last minute. All adventure outings will go as scheduled, rain or shine. Refunds cannot be offered for destination changes or other changes due to natural expressions of Mother Earth!

Transportation

Each trip has different transportation logistics. Generally we meet at campground or trailhead destinations. A couple of weeks before the event we will check in with you to make sure your transportation is arranged, and, if necessary, we will help to coordinate carpools. We will also provide you with thorough directions to get to the meeting location. We are happy to offer carpool organizing assistance. We are also happy to help coordinate hotel and transportation accommodations for people traveling from out of state or internationally. If you have any questions about the transportation for this trip please contact us.



Out-of-State and International Participants (Travel & Accommodations Info)

We are excited to welcome many participants from around the country and the world to these journeys. Yosemite National Park is located approximately 3.5 hours from the San Francisco Bay Area. While transportation to and from the Park is not included in the price of the trip, we do help local participants to coordinate *carpools* to minimize the number of cars traveling to the park, to share the cost, and to make the drive more enjoyable.

If you would like to be included in carpool arrangements, we suggest flying into *Oakland* or *San Francisco*, as these are the two major Bay Area airports. As the 3 day trips usually run from *Thursday evening* to *Monday evening*, we recommend flying in on *Wednesday night* at the latest and departing on *Tuesday* at the earliest. For all trips, it is recommended that you fly into town a day before the trip begins and a day after the trip ends. We will provide all drivers with directions to the Park and our first night campground.

If you plan on visiting the area for an extended period of time and/or will have your own transportation and accommodations we will also provide you with driving directions.

For Bay Area hotel accommodations, we recommend staying in San Francisco or Berkeley. If you wish to stay closer to, or in Yosemite, prior to, or after the trip, we recommend staying in Yosemite Valley or in the town of Groveland, located approximately 45 minutes from the Big Oak Flat entrance to the Park. We highly recommend making reservations at the earliest possible moment as summer is the busiest time of year. Accommodations and other Park information can be found at www.nps.gov/yose/pphtml/lodging.html

In Berkeley, we recommend the following venues:

1. **The French Hotel.** An eclectic inn, located in the heart of Berkeley, among cafes, restaurants, and shops. (510) 548-9930
2. **The Bancroft Hotel.** A standard hotel, located near the University of California. 510-549-1000, <http://www.bancrofthotel.com/core.html>
3. **The Doubletree.** A standard hotel, located at the Berkeley Marina, overlooking the majestic San Francisco Bay, with views of the Golden Gate Bridge, San Francisco, and the mountains of Marin County. 510-548 7920, www.doubletree.hilton.com

We do not recommend any specific accommodations in San Francisco. It is one of the most beautiful cities in the world with numerous hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, and inns. We recommend visiting www.sanfrancisco.com on the web or checking out a *Lonely Planet* or similar travel guide at your local bookstore.



Drug and Alcohol Policy

For your safety, alcohol is permitted only in camp after all the day's traveling is done. All illegal narcotics are strictly prohibited at all times! Please feel free to ask your group leaders any questions regarding this policy.

Goals and Expectations

At our first meeting spot, we will discuss everyone's goals and expectations. Please come to the adventure with a clear idea of what you would like to gain from the experience. A discussion of everyone's expectations helps to provide a wonderful experience for all.

Hygiene

All of your personal hygiene products must fit in a single quart sized bag (it doesn't have to be a plastic bag.). These outings are wilderness experiences, and there are *no showers* or *toilets*. Participants will be taught how to dig holes in the ground for human waste. Don't worry, this is one of the most interesting and enjoyable lessons!!! In addition, as the weight of your backpack and attracting animals can be of concern, participants are encouraged to leave non-essential toiletries at home. Essential toiletries are a toothbrush with a small container of toothpaste, glasses and/or contact lenses with cleansing solution, personal medications, ibuprofen or acetaminophen, a small brush or comb, nail clippers, a small container of sun block, and a small container of moisturizing cream. If you can possibly leave your deodorant at home – it's fun, really – that would be great too. If you can't we understand. *Everything else is non-essential. Remember, 1 single quart sized bag for EVERYTHING!*

If you have any questions, please call us at 510.652.2000 or email us at kylah@backtoearth.com

Thanks for reading all of the technical stuff.
We look forward to sharing a great experience with you!