

STORY IDEAS

2022 AND BEYOND

OUT OF OFFICE

GET TO THE HEART OF CALIFORNIA.

Step outside and reconnect with nature in the farmlands and mountains called Madera County. The opportunities for wellness travel experiences are endless. Outfitters are ready to guide travelers in forest bathing, backpacking, fly fishing, and rock climbing. Returning to basecamp is a treat when, pomegranates, figs, grapes, and lavender, are part of the local bounty available to chefs.

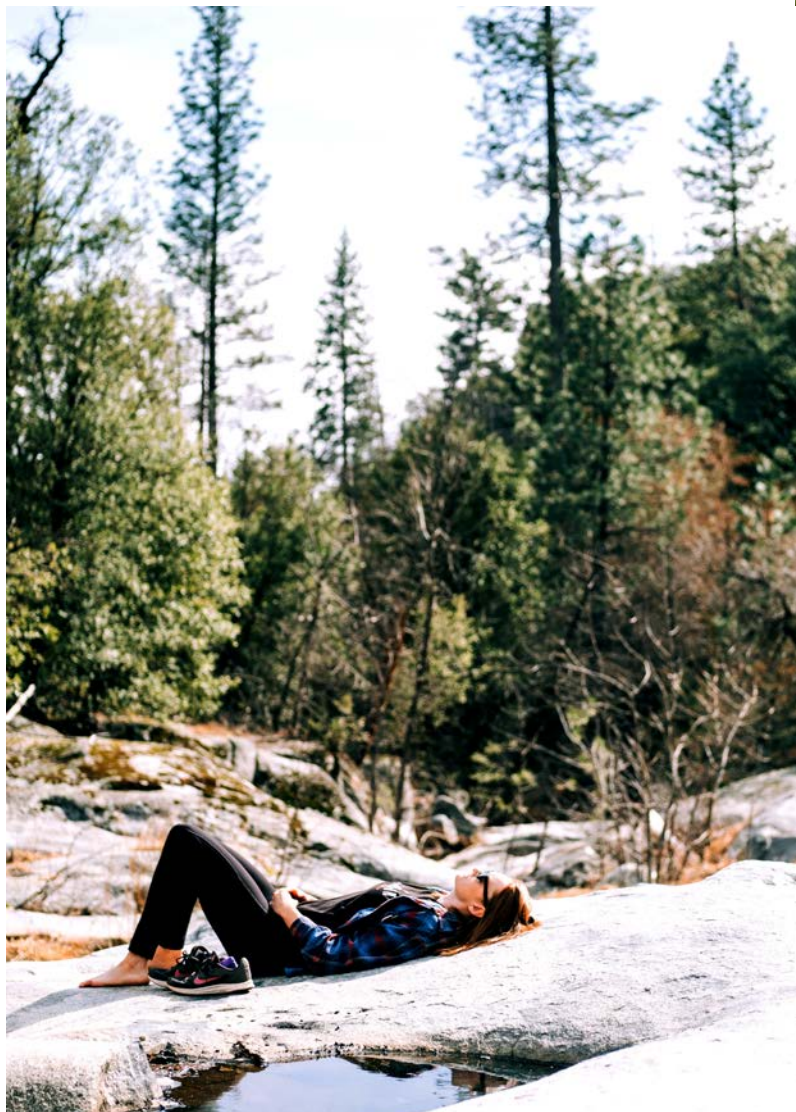
Madera County is one of the richest agriculture hubs in the United States. The food scene at Yosemite's southern entrance is elevated above the rest. In this global food basket, it's second nature for restaurateurs to purchase quality local ingredients.

[Château du Sureau](#) showcases the freshest California produce in sophisticated dishes that are packed with flavor at their [Elderberry House Restaurant](#). Evenings at this fairytale setting can, and often should, be accompanied by the region's best wines. The establishment blends the charm of the Provençal region of France with the beauty of the Sierra Nevada on property that includes an exclusive villa, ten guest rooms, the [Spa du Sureau](#), yoga instruction, cooking classes, and top-rated culinary perfection. Escape for "me time" with a picnic hamper on a day trip to Yosemite Valley.



Many of those seeking wellness travel are also dedicated to traveling more sustainably. Making choices that have a smaller impact on the planet, while benefiting the local economy. For this adventurer, [Alpenglow Gear Co.](#) has skis, snowshoes, tents, jackets, climbing gear, and equipment available for a second life. Stop by the visitor center to pick up a [Thrifting a Gifting Map](#) and discover more than 20 unique, small shops in Bass Lake, Coarsegold, and Oakhurst.

Another peaceful offering is the bike paths and walking trails of [Sierra Meadows](#) glamping resort. In another life, the property was a stunning golf course in Ahwahnee, Ca. Now the land is rewilding, with the natural biodiversity reclaiming the gorgeous acreage. Check-in for a stay at the very 'instagramable' Micro Cabins. Then explore the artistic sculpture installations that have replaced the tees and clubs.



Book a sound bath relaxation session or guided meditation at [Metta Yosemite](#). Metta is a gift shop and workshop space helping everyone reconnect to the positive energy found in nature. Nearby, make memories with dad on a fishing trip up the river with [Sierra Fly Fisher](#). It's all wellness.

Gather a group for forest bathing. A mindful walk in a peaceful setting is stress-reducing. Learning how to be more cognizant, noticing sounds and scents you might have missed before. For serenity-seekers, [Mindful Café](#) offers guided forest bathing excursions to quiet, hidden places ideal for the practice.

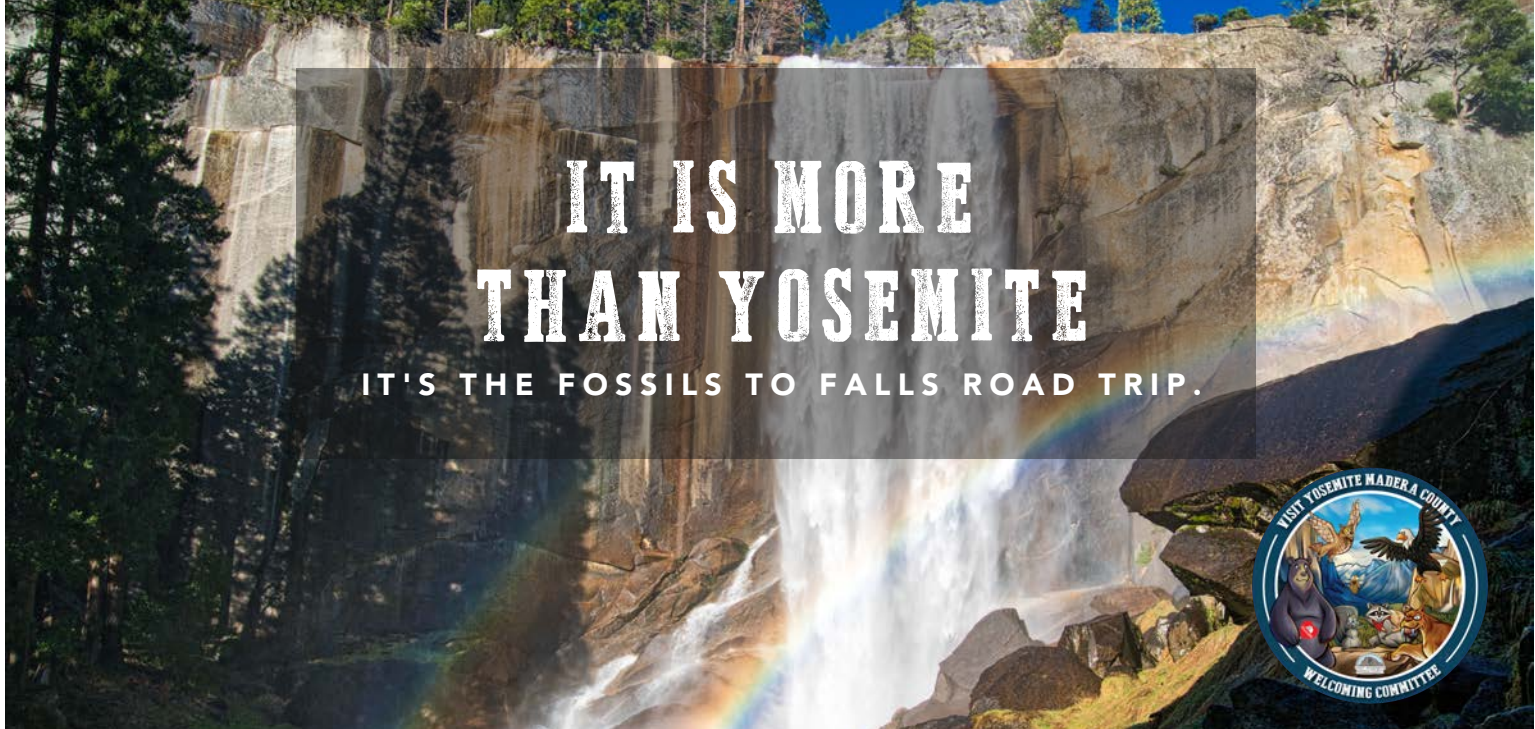
[Southern Yosemite Mountain Guides](#) are the answer to adrenaline-focused expeditions. With over 30 years of backcountry experience, they will get you to the top.

Don't check email; check out the excitement outside. Life is all about experiences.

A scenic view of a mountain valley. In the foreground, there are lush green evergreen trees. The middle ground shows a deep valley with a waterfall cascading down a rocky cliff. The background features high, rugged mountains with some evergreen trees on their peaks. The sky is a pale, overcast blue. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent grey rectangular area in the center of the image.

“THE SNOW
IS MELTING
INTO
MUSIC”

– John Muir



Take the road trip, collect trading cards, and enter to win a Yosemite Adventure Vacation.

Our Welcoming Committee has been known to act like animals! Meet them along the [Fossils to Falls Road Trip](#). This is your official invitation to take a journey through the history, culture, and natural beauty of the region. It ends at the tallest waterfall in North America.

But it begins at the [Fossil Discovery Center of Madera County](#). Uncover jaw-dropping exhibits at one of the most significant middle-Pleistocene fossil excavations in North America. Mammoth, Sabertoothed-Cat, Sloth, Dire Wolf, and Camel are just a few of the 15,000 fossils found at the site. The outdoor "mock-dig" is perfect for families.

It's here that you begin to realize, Madera County is the gateway to so much more.

The [Madera Wine Trail](#), in the heart of California, is one of the oldest wine-grape-growing regions in the state. Award-winning Ficklin Port comes from this comfortable countryside, as do incredible reds and whites from nine family-run, small-batch wineries along the trail. The Madera AVA is an under-the-radar-superstar in California.

Climb through the historic foothills of California's Gold Country with a stop at [The Coarsegold Historic Village](#). Home to a unique community of shops, delicious food options, and a local coffee house. Events include weekend peddlers fairs and the annual Tarantula Awareness Festival each October.

Next up, Oakhurst. At the Visitor Center get the scoop on the food scene at this delicious destination. Explore the town, including [Fresno Flats Historical Village & Park](#), independent theatres, and small-business shopping.

Discover new perspectives at the five galleries of the [Yosemite Gateway Art Center](#). Access artwork from world-renowned artists that call the region home. Exhibits like the powerful, Yosemite Renaissance and Sierra Art Trails return annually to much celebration.





No matter what time of year you decide to visit the region, [Bass Lake](#) awaits you with nesting bald eagles, migrating birds, historic establishments, movie memorabilia, and time-honored cheeseburger traditions. Bass Lake is the quintessential golden state experience.

Find your happy place lakeside. Venture further on a paddleboard, canoe, or speedboat. With multiple resorts, restaurants, campsites, and cabins in the region, lake house heaven awaits. Travel Bonus: miles of world-class mountain bike trails surround this alpine gem. The secret is out; Bass Lake is the hideaway you've been missing.

Then ride "The Logger" steam train through the tall pines of the Sierra National Forest. [Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad](#) is a living museum. Two massive Shay locomotive relics transport visitors to a bygone era. From 1899 to 1931 the Madera Sugar Pine Lumber Company transported timber from the site more than 50 miles by flume to the town of Madera. (Splash Mountain-style.)

Learn about the trees and animals on the hour-long train ride. Explore the Thornberry Museum, evening jazz programs, and even try gold panning, too.


Next up on the road trip adventure, [Yosemite National Park](#). Home to three major Giant Sequoia groves, and the granddaddy of them all – [Mariposa Grove](#). In the lower Mariposa Grove, explore a peaceful balance between man and Mother Nature. The raised boardwalks and handicap accessible trails minimize visitor impact, all the while inspiring your spirit at the grandeur and beauty of these, the largest living organisms on the planet. Extend your exploration with a hike into the upper-grove and find yourself mostly alone with the bulk of the grove's over 500 mighty Giant Sequoias.

Onward to the scene you've remembered in your minds-eye. Yosemite Valley as seen from Tunnel View. Nothing in the world can compare to the viewpoint at the end of the Wawona Tunnel. It's a place that must be experienced to be understood.

And the experience doesn't end there. Four hundred feet below Tunnel View lies Yosemite Valley with its towering granite walls holding amazing landmarks including El Capitan, Half Dome and last but in no way least, North America's tallest waterfall, Yosemite Falls!

Join the Fossils to Falls Road Trip to visit new places, collect contest trading cards, and enter to win another epic Yosemite Adventure vacation!





**“DRINK
THE
WILD
AIR.”**

– Ralph Waldo Emerson

GETTING AROUND HAS NEVER BEEN BETTER

THE BEST MODE OF TRANSPORTATION FOR YOUR EXPEDITION.



Enjoy a new mode of transportation in Oakhurst this summer. Then, take advantage of the well-trusted, Yosemite Area Regional Transportation System, or private guided tours of the park!

The [Oakhurst Trolley](#), or O.T., as we affectionately call it, is a mountain town treat and the perfect way to pop about enjoying the many shops, bars, eateries, and attractions in Oakhurst. Ride for free every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, May through September.

Getting to the park is a breeze on [YARTS](#). Pickup sites along the Highway 41 corridor originate from [Fresno International Airport](#), just one hour south of Oakhurst. Even repeat visitors to Yosemite will be surprised to learn that there's a better way to visit, and it doesn't involve your car.

Consider minimizing your footprint and your frustration by skipping the drive to Yosemite. Put away your car keys and tour with one of our many local expert [tours or adventure guide services](#). Tours are a golden ticket into Yosemite when summer reservations sell out. Learn about the park, take back your day, leave the concerns of navigating and parking behind, or have a once-in-a-lifetime adventure all courtesy of these experts.

Yosemite Valley is actually quite flat and bike-able. Pedestrians share paved trails in many places, so be aware of your surroundings. 360-degree views of Half Dome and Yosemite Falls are unrivaled on a bicycle unless you consider Yosemite's actual best mode of summer transportation: The raft.

River raft rentals open in the valley when the water level, flow, and temperature make the conditions just right. Revelers can make their in-person reservations one day in advance. Then get ready for arguably, the world's best day of river float access on two miles of the Merced River in Yosemite Valley.



NEW ATTRACTIONS NEW ACCOMMODATIONS NEW MUSEUM

**THE SOUTH GATE OF YOSEMITE IS YOUR MOUNTAIN
PLAYGROUND.**

Find the unexpected at Yosemite's south entrance. Located in the geographical center of California, Madera County is easily accessed from any part of the state. That makes this special region of the world a recreational hub. Name your adventure, and you can likely find it here. From wake-surfing at Bass Lake, the Ales and Trails backpacking trip, or rock climbing Shuteye Peak, the sky is quite literally the limit. The region is rich in adventure and filled with cultural experiences and educational moments.

The [Sierra Mono Museum](#) in North Fork, California, is home to many historical and priceless artifacts. The Sierra Mono people have been present in the Sierra Nevada mountains for over ten thousand years. In 2021 their stories were given new reverence in an expanded and modernized museum that proudly displays their cultural treasures.





The collection housed at the Sierra Mono Museum curates exhibits of native fauna and flora, historical photographs, authentic and heirloom baskets, and interpretive moments of education. It is one of only a handful of museums in the state that are solely owned and operated by Native Americans.

The newly updated museum gives a fresh perspective on the significant contributions of the Mono people of California both past and present. Many natural history exhibits from the Sierra Mono Museum are loaned and proudly displayed at the Fossil Discovery Center.


Laying your head down at the end of a long day of adventuring in a quaint mountain town has never been more comfortable. Three brand-new flagship hotels have opened their doors in the town of Oakhurst.

In Oakhurst, the total amount of hotel rooms within walking distance to restaurants and pubs is more than 800! The NEW Holiday Inn Express & Suites and the Fairfield Inn & Suites by Marriott are adjacent to each other and add more than 200 beautiful new rooms. Next door, in 2022, a Hampton Inn & Suites will also open to travelers. These new hotels are only 15 miles from Yosemite, 17 miles from the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias, and seven miles from beautiful Bass Lake.

Directly across the street from these new hotels is a new attraction, [Yosemite Axe Throwing](#), which adds to the joy of visiting the southern gateway to Yosemite National Park. The target lanes and countertops are constructed from the reclaimed wood from a past fire by owner and World Champion axe thrower, Nate Hodges. The effect brings the outdoors inside, and the warm scent of tree sap fills the club. If you enjoy hiking and the outdoors, you are going to love this! There are outdoor lanes, too for added opportunities to throw and enjoy gorgeous weather.

The club is open for ages eight and older, seven days a week. General admission is \$30 for one hour of unlimited throwing. Visitors to Yosemite National Park and Bass Lake should not miss this authentic new attraction. It will have you yelling "Timber!" Then call your friends to recommend they give axe throwing a try, too. Local tip: In early July experience a timber sports extravaganza at the Mid-Sierra Loggers Jamboree in nearby North Fork, CA.

An authentic mountain experience isn't complete without spending a day outside of Yosemite National Park in the Sierra National Forest. Have some extreme fun trekking in all-terrain vehicles and Jeeps from [Yosemite Adventure Company](#). They offer guided and self-guided experiences to reach the top of a mountain in time to witness the alpenglow.



**“CLIMB THE
MOUNTAINS AND
GET THEIR GOOD
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AUTUMN.”**

— John Muir



MEET THE MAKERS

IN COWBOY COUNTRY, OUR CRAFTSPERSONS ARE RENEGADES, ARTISTS, AND SELF-STARTERS.

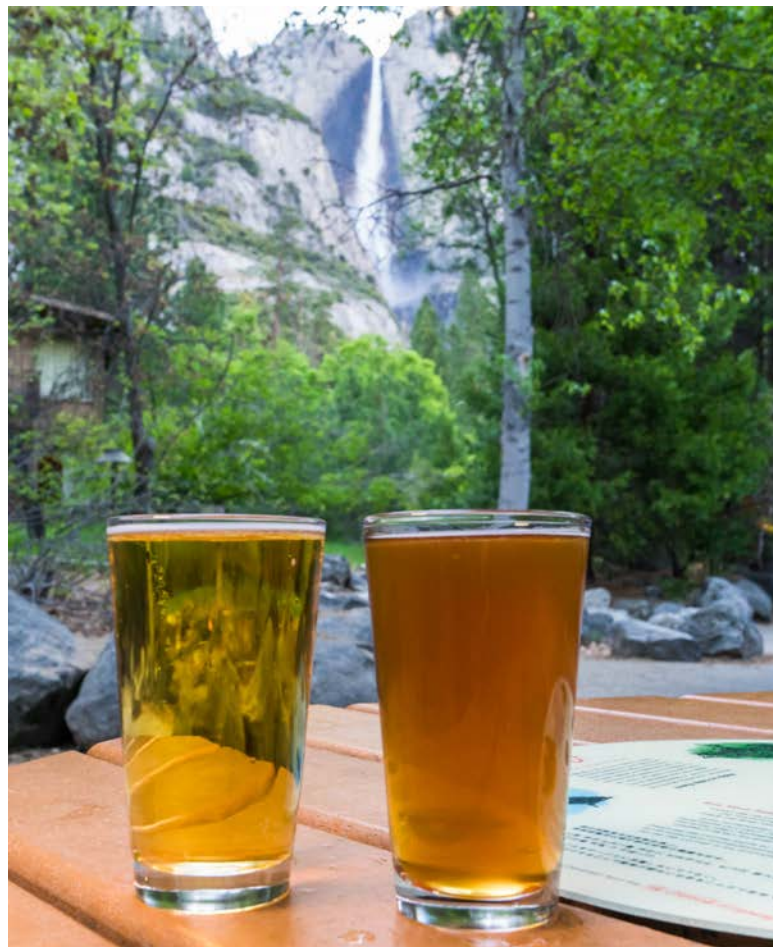
The [Madera Wine Trail](#) winds through miles of farmland and rolling hills in central California. It is one of the oldest wine grape-producing areas in the state and perhaps the country.

From old world techniques to state-of-the-art technology, you can experience it all, all in the same day. Madera County winemakers celebrate each others' unique wine and styles and so can you (hear from the winemakers themselves in this [video](#))! This American Viticulture Area is considered by many to be the best-kept secret in California wines.

[Toast of Oakhurst](#) is a unique beverage trail featuring handcrafted beer, wine and spirits all made in Oakhurst, California. From seasonally-rotating brews to award-winning wine, and silky-smooth small-batch spirits - the Toast of Oakhurst is a beverage trail that puts the cheer in "Cheers!"

Visit [South Gate Brewing Company](#), a full-service brewery, and gastropub with farm-fresh food and incredible microbrews. Acclaimed Brewmaster Rick Boucke takes no shortcuts when it comes to creating all the beers in their

seasonal draft lineup, each one with a unique character. Their Glacier Point Pale Ale is available to taste at the brewery and also in Yosemite National Park. During your Yosemite expedition make time to stop at the Mountain Room Lounge at Yosemite Valley Lodge to order a refreshing pint. It doesn't get more local than that.





[Idle Hour Winery & Kitchen](#) features wines produced with sustainably-grown grapes, native yeasts, gravity flow, and other traditional methods. Winemaker Anna Marie Dos Remedios delights the pallet with charming Petit Verdot and violet and plum aromatics of Tempranillo varietals. These incredible vintages will stop you in your tracks.

That's why the San Francisco Chronicle Wine Competition has repeatedly bestowed honors and medals to their library of fine wines. The kitchen serves up a delicious Sunday brunch each weekend, complemented by a sparkling blanc de blanc varietal. Lunch features greens and herbs from the patio garden. Many live music events happened at the on-site wine bar at the Queen's Inn by the River.



[Oakhurst Spirits Distillery](#) is a gold nugget find in the High Sierra. Sample small-batch brandy, gin, vodka, seriously-smooth whiskeys, and bourbons created by owner and distiller Michael Benbrook.

Premium grains purchased from local farmers create the mash used to produce the spirits. Once the process is complete, the discarded mash of grain and rye is then returned back to farmers for food for their animals. This process is lovingly referred to as "farm-to-table and back-to-farm again", by the mastermind behind Oakhurst Spirits.

Stop in for a tasting, and leave with an education of the finer things in life.

Experience the passion, quality, and excellence of these makers for yourself.

BASS LAKE LAND OF BEAUTY

FOUR SEASONS OF RECREATION AWAIT!

With pristine waters and sandy shores Bass Lake, California, is nestled among tall cedars and pines at an elevation of 3,415 feet.

Known for its sparkling blue waters and scenic views, all types of lodging, various restaurants, and fantastic shopping all located moments from the water's edge. It all comes together to create the perfect spring break, summer getaway, fall romantic adventure, or winter escape. A year-round vacation destination, Bass Lake was named one of the "West's Best Lakes" by Sunset Magazine and has been a popular tourist destination since the 1930s.

Bass Lake sits in the perfect location just 17 miles from the southern gate of Yosemite National Park and 7 miles from Oakhurst, the park's largest gateway community. Visiting Bass Lake any time of the year is a treat.





Summer is especially popular due to the 80-degree water and the abundance of aquatic activities. Relax with a book on a sandy beach, have a family picnic at one of the many day-use areas, or enjoy an array of water sports from swimming, paddleboarding, kayaking to motor-boating.

Autumn brings beautiful changing colors to the trees and cooler temperatures, perfect for hiking the many trails and vistas overlooking the lake. Winter is peaceful and popular for kayaking and canoeing. It is an incredible time of year for bird-watching. Keep a keen eye out for the nesting Bald Eagles that call the lake their home.

Spring is a favorite for many with colorful wildflowers and rushing waterfalls.

Temperatures are perfect in the spring and early summer for fishing. No matter the time of year, this mountain biking mecca offers world-class trails that challenge even the most experienced riders.

Water ski, ride a wave runner, swim, fish, paddleboard, rent a boat, hike or mountain bike several beautiful trails or just sun yourself on the shore. Stay at one of the three full service resorts: [The Pines Resort](#), [The Forks Resort](#), [Miller's Landing Resort](#), or rent one of the many vacation homes or pitch your tent in one of the lakeside campsites.

Your dining options are varied and numerous around the lake and you really won't want to miss the world-famous hamburgers, buckets of ice cream, and movie memorabilia magic.

With the Sierra National Forest's 1.3 million acres as a backyard, the lake is an excellent jumping-off point for all adventures big and small. Exploring the region's "Hidden Yosemite", the [Sierra Vista Scenic Byway](#) is one of the big and highly recommended ones!

Events form a big part of life at the lake. Starting with the [Bass Lake Fishing Derby](#) in early May through New Year's celebrations at The Pines Resort, the calendar is full of variety and fun. The annual Bass Lake 4th of July Fireworks (the largest in Madera County) is a highlight of the region and just one example of how we love to celebrate.

Live music performances, barbeques, seasonal art and craft fairs, comedy shows, and sporting events are a taste of what you can experience.

There is a lot to love about Bass Lake.



THERE IS A LOT TO LOVE ABOUT BASS LAKE.

THESE WATERFALLS WOW

THE BIGGEST, THE BEST, AND THE HIDDEN.



Yosemite is home to countless waterfalls. The best time to see them is the spring, during snowmelt.

Peak runoff typically occurs in May or June, with some (including Yosemite Falls) often only a trickle or completely dry by August. Storms in late fall rejuvenate some, and all of them with any flow accumulate frost along their edges many nights during the winter.

This is not a complete list of Yosemite's marvelous falls. While all but three in the following list are in Yosemite Valley, both Yosemite Valley and many other areas of the park have watery wonders, large and small.

And Yosemite doesn't have the monopoly on waterfalls in the region. Check out our blog ["5 Lesser Known Waterfalls To See In Or Near Yosemite"](#) for more!



Yosemite Falls in Yosemite Valley is the tallest waterfall in the United States. It is located in Yosemite National Park and has a total vertical drop of 2,425 feet.



Chilnualna Falls (Wawona area) (about 2,200 feet) is the closest waterfall to Visit Yosemite Madera County's entrance. Flows: all year, with peak in May.



Sentinel Falls (Yosemite Valley) (about 2,000 feet) Flows: approximately March through June, with peak in May.



Ribbon Fall (opposite Bridalveil Fall in Yosemite Valley) (1,612 feet) is the longest single-drop waterfall in North America. Flows: March through June, with peak in May.



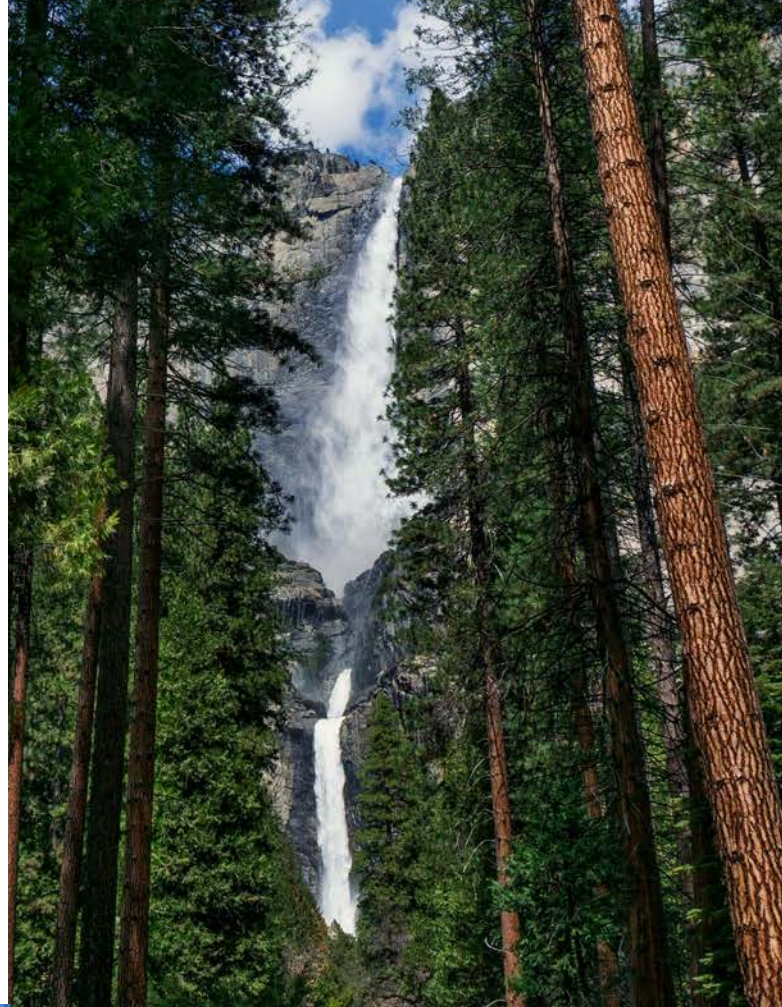
Horsetail Fall (Yosemite Valley) (1,000 feet)
 Flows: approximately December through April. Horsetail Fall is widely known for appearing to be on fire when it reflects the orange glow of sunset in mid-to-late February. When the conditions are just right, it is best viewed from the eastern side of El Capitan. This completely natural phenomenon is unlike the historic man-made "firefall" from Glacier Point in the past.



Bridalveil Fall (Yosemite Valley) (620 feet)
 Flows: all year, with peak flow in May.



Nevada Fall (Yosemite Valley) (594 feet)
 Flows: all year, with a peak in late May. Reach the top of this marvelous wonder via the Mist Trail.



Vernal Fall (Yosemite Valley) (317 feet)
 Flows: all year, though by mid to late summer water flows decrease; peaks in late May. Catch a rainbow at the base of the waterfall.



Illilouette Fall (Yosemite Valley) (370 feet) Flows: all year, with peak in late May.



Cascade Falls (Yosemite Valley) (600 feet) Flows: all year, with peak in spring. Also Known as "The Cascades" this series of tumbling waterfalls is visible from viewpoints along, Wawona Road, Big Oak Flat Road, and El Portal Road.



Wapama Falls (Hetch Hetchy) (1,400 feet) Flows: all year, with peak flow in May. One of the tallest waterfalls in Yosemite. It falls into a massive man-made water reservoir that shortens its drop by nearly 400 feet.

FRESH STORIES ABOUT AN ANCIENT LANDSCAPE

Journey through California's heartland, beginning at the Fossil Discovery Center and carrying along the historic and much-awarded Madera Wine Trail onward into the Sierra Nevada. Marvel at Yosemite's giant sequoia trees, granite walls, and exquisite views.

Explore park tours, shopping, and museums. Discover attractions like mountain biking, off-road rentals, ax throwing, Bass Lake, the Yosemite Mountain Sugar Pine Railroad, miles of open trails, and moments of serenity. Make golden memories at the doorstep of a national treasure. Madera County is the gateway to so much more than just Yosemite National Park.

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