



The Winter Handbook

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Chapter 1

An Introduction

Winter is hard.

Doubly, though, winter makes it hard to do the things that make you happy. This, in turn, only makes us sadder.

Sometimes those things that make us happy are the simplest, and so I've written a handbook as motivation, and as a plan, to help us kick this winter's ass! Think of it like when we would make chicken salad sandwiches for lunch for the whole week, only on a grander scale.

Chapter 2

Monthly

Breaking the winter down by month, it doesn't seem too long. Only November, December, January, and February (and basically March). It's just making it through each month that makes it really difficult. But, one of the easiest ways to make time seem like it's going faster is to have milestones. Not only the night of the milestone, but also the planning of the milestone, make the time in between go much faster. So, we should plan to have things to do every month, specifically designed to make us feel more invigorated.

I've put some ideas down, and they could be done in any order. But they fall under three categories: In Memoriam (of summer), Embrace (winter), and Cabin Fever (fighting) nights.

2.1 *In Memoriam*

We both love summer so much, it's only appropriate that we mourn its passing by trying to recreate it as much as possible.

2.1.1 *Carribean Night*

Steel drum music, fruity drinks (preferably with rum), and the heater on high will make us feel like we're on a carribean island. I suggest we look the part and wear swim trunks, and maybe even put Newton in a hula skirt!

2.1.2 *Mexican Night*

We love tacos, and we certainly like tequila. And there's nothing to say that we can't turn on some Gloria Estefan and jam out while playing Bean Race!

2.1.3 *Spring Fling Night*

We'd have to do this early in the winter, so it doesn't encroach on spring too much, but having root beer floats and spritzing the house to smell like flowers would definitely remind us of spring.

2.1.4 *Drive-in Night*

This one is the best! We put up a sheet and use the projector to watch a movie, while sitting in cardboard "cars". We could improve the likenessess by eating burgers and buying movie theater popcorn, turning up the heat and wearing our shorts!

2.2 *Embrace*

Sometimes you can't keep fighting off the cold and hoping you were somewhere else, so you have to really embrace winter. There are plenty of things you can't do without the winter weather, and we should do them!

2.2.1 *Ice Skating Night*

We live hardly half a mile from an ice skating rink, we really have to go ice skating! I know you're afraid you might hurt your ankles, but if you want to, you can hold close to me the whole night!

2.2.2 *Snowball Ambush Night*

Just like when we'd go on campus and streak or something, mischief always gets your blood turning. I think we should bundle up one night and appear at someone's house (Tony and Bri, or Adam and Mary) and ambush them with snowballs. You know we'd destroy them! We'd be actual partners in crime then!

2.2.3 *Sled Slayter Hill Night*

I loved sledding with you, and if the weather cooperates over winter break, we should go sledding on Slayter Hill when the students are gone. Don't let me beat you at sledding again!

2.2.4 *Coffee or Fireplace Date Night*

Finally, we have to try the little coffee places around us. That Fuel place down main street seems like it'd be fun.

Ideally, we could find some place that has a fireplace and sit beside it, as close as we can.

2.3 *Cabin Fever*

When you reach the end of your rope as far as winter weather is concerned, you have to just bundle up, make warm drinks, and do something wonderful inside. We're both really imaginative, and so I think one of the best ways to pass the time would be to plan things that we'll do next summer.

2.3.1 *Make Crafts and Decorations Night*

Especially since Qualls have made the past couple years so difficult, I want to go all out on holiday decorations. What better way to get in the spirit than to drink tea or cocoa and make homemade decorations (and other crafts).

2.3.2 *Plan Summer Hike Night*

I think we're both more happy when we get outside and hike together. But we've definitely explored the Lafayette area about as much as we can, so we need to broaden our horizon a little bit. Try to fill in the below circles with places to go in each of the categories.

Other Places

Midwest

Indiana

2.3.3 *Plan Summer Vacation Night*

We've been talking about saving up vacation time to take a good trip this summer, and the time would be ripe to plan for this vacation during the winter. We've already talked about Italy and Switzerland, but there's nothing to say we can't do something else, and the table on the next page could be a starting place to plan.

#	Where?	What?	How?
1	Geneva, Turin, Cinque Terra, Rome	Backpack, see Pisa and Florence Museums	Train, Hike, and Kayak
2			
3			
4			

2.3.4 *Plan John Muir Trail Night*

Even longer ranging in time than the summer vacation is a plan to do one of the through trails by sections, maybe the John Muir Trail. Below is a map showing someone's day splitup and a separate split for the elevation, which could be a starting place for our plans!

Also, this national geographic essay about it is really good:

I only went out for a walk, and finally concluded
to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found,
was really going in.

John Muir

Drawing wild-eyed wanderers and scruffy-haired men from around the world, the 211-mile John Muir Trail has a reputation of immeasurable proportions. Making its way onto the proverbial bucket list of nearly every serious outdoorsman, it is not only a showcase of the sheer perfection that the natural world can attain but highlights some of the best wilderness in the United States.

The trail has become an incredibly popular destination in recent years with the permit office in Yosemite National Park reporting a record number of applications for 2013. For those who fail to draw a permit, or for the individual who lacks enough foresight into their schedules to apply in advance, there is still hope; a limited number of permits are available the day before a departure date.

...

By the time I reach Tuolumne Meadows, mile 27 and the third day of the trip, I have mumbled nearly every unmentionable word in the English language. Hordes of tourists and gas guzzling motor homes dominate Tuolumne, with backpackers grabbing a burger or ice cream and other supplies before quickly escaping back into the wild. I follow suit.

Things change rather quickly as the crowds suddenly vanish and the hills rise to unimaginable heights. Both the trail and those who walk upon it become increasingly wild with every mile. It becomes a social experiment as people from all walks of life are thrown together in the wilderness on the same trail. Some are running away from their woes, many are on a meticulously planned dream trip, while others are simply killing time (again I fall in the latter category). I soon cross paths with a Frenchman named Pascal heading northbound with two mules, taking the scenic route to Puerto Montt, near the southern tip of Chile. It's an unfathomable 14,000 miles away. I shake the man's hand in wonder, and for the next two days I contemplate the sheer immensity of his journey.

...

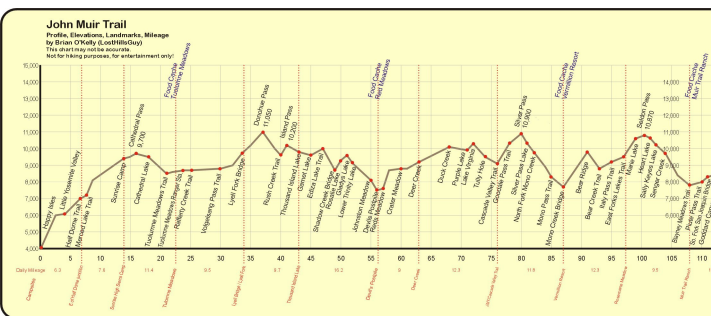
Mile 107 marks a huge milestone in the journey as Muir Trail Ranch, commonly regarded as the halfway point of the trail, is reached. For most people this is the final resupply until Mount Whitney and the town of Lone Pine, awaiting your distant arrival some 114 miles away. We

overload our packs with food and head into the wild once more.

This is truly where the John Muir Trail begins. The terrain increases in magnitude and difficulty as the passes become bigger than the next and the route consistently hangs above the 10,000-foot elevation mark.

We begin to personify each climb, vilifying them like dictators or high school teachers or DMV workers. This is rather easy considering they all have been named after prominent wilderness men of the early 1900s. Muir Pass (11,955 feet) comes up first at mile 128 and is patient but rather blunt at times. Mather Pass (12,080 feet) is an inconsiderate bastard looming over mile 150. Pinchot Pass (12,100 feet) is a short and stocky bald man at mile 159. Glen Pass (11,980 feet) is a cold and quiet stockbroker from Manhattan, standing at mile 179. Forester Pass (13,200 feet) ends up being all hype and actually quite the

Figure 2.1: John Muir Trail Elevation

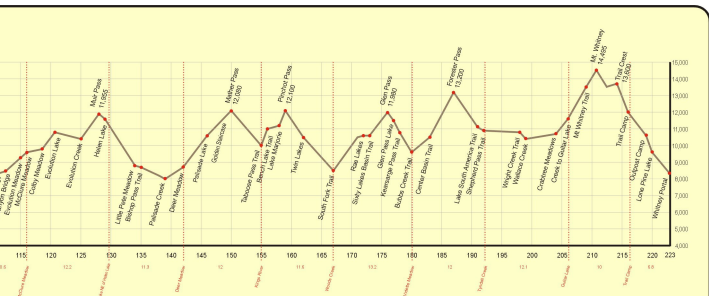


pleasant conversationalist near mile 187.

By this point we have turned into climbing machines as we breeze past mile number 200. The reality and realization that we have been walking for nearly three weeks finally kicks in as we pitch our final base camp beneath the northern shadow of Mount Whitney. In attempt to lighten our packs we feast on our remaining food and slowly fade away with the setting sun.

I briefly awake from my slumber, startled at first by the sheer magnitude of my surroundings. The stars seem strangely close on this particular night and the darkness deeper than usual. For a moment my thoughts seem to come from a child's wandering mind more than my own, convinced that if I reach out my hands far enough then perhaps I could touch them, even bring a few of those distant jewels into my arms and hold them even closer.

After 19 days my sanity seems to waiver as I begin to understand how all those famous poets can write all those



beautiful things with seemingly effortless grace, such timeless combinations of words that are so infinitely relative. For when you are surrounded by such an inspiration you simply reflect it back onto a piece of paper. I can't help but think of Mr. Muir. I slowly close my eyes and fade back into the night, the stars still churning high above.

We round off the final climb in the morning with ease, floating to Whitney's 14,500-foot summit by 10 a.m. Yet somehow it feels rather anti-climatic. The hordes of weekend warriors who are surmounting Whitney from the south side flood the trail, updating their Facebook statuses, and fiddling on their cell phones upon completion. The shock and thought of leaving the wilderness suddenly begins to sink in. After that long in the wild it can be incredibly difficult to leave.

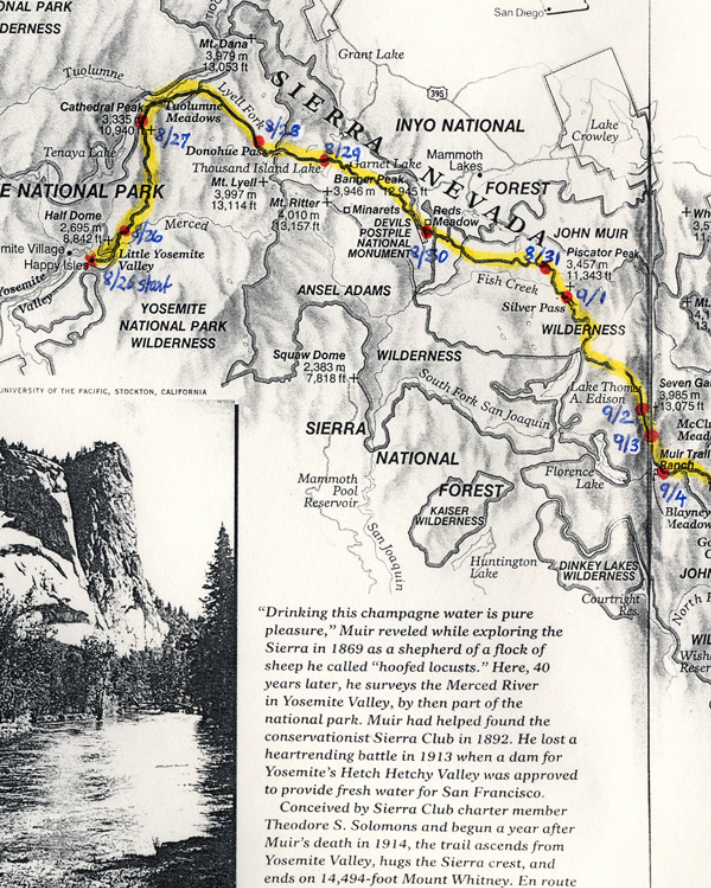
Alas we shuffle down the final 9 miles to the Whitney Portal, drink a beer, hitch a ride into the sleepy town of Lone Pine and before long we are off the trail; and back to reality. I certainly was not ready. I don't think any of us were.

The following day we all say our good-byes and quickly scatter, taking nearly every mode of transportation to make it home. Some resort to hitch hiking while others unite with their vehicles. I opt for the bus, the pinnacle of public transportation, full of mostly shady locals but a few JMT hikers are aboard. I notice two Korean men in particular who we had camping by nearly every day are among the motley crew. And though they speak only broken English they don't need to say a word. You can

see the same shock and bewilderment in their eyes that the rest of us have. They get off in Los Angeles and catch a direct flight to Seoul. Reality sinks in even deeper, for some more quickly than others.

So where am I going with this story? Nowhere at all really. Often it is not about the destination but instead the journey to it and the lessons learned along the way. Whether your journey is 3 days, 12 hours, and 41 minutes—like the men who just set the speed record for the John Muir Trail—or three years—like Pascal’s epic timetable—it is entirely irrelevant in my opinion. You can learn more in a single moment of inspiration than an entire lifetime of contemplation. I for one prefer to wander.

- Eric Leifer of National Geographic Young Explorers



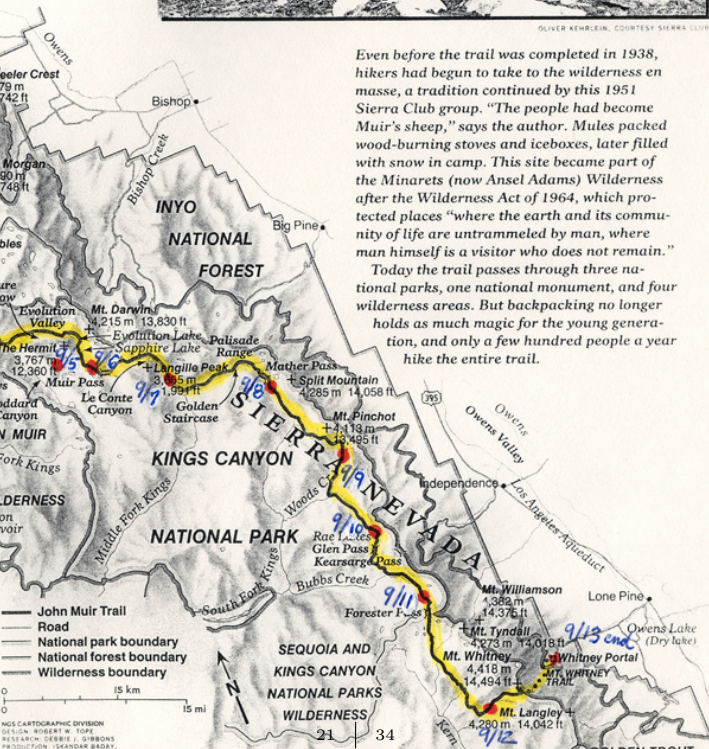
"Drinking this champagne water is pure pleasure," Muir revealed while exploring the Sierra in 1869 as a shepherd of a flock of sheep he called "hoofed locusts." Here, 40 years later, he surveys the Merced River in Yosemite Valley, by then part of the national park. Muir had helped found the conservationist Sierra Club in 1892. He lost a heartrending battle in 1913 when a dam for Yosemite's Hetch Hetchy Valley was approved to provide fresh water for San Francisco.

Conceived by Sierra Club charter member Theodore S. Solomons and begun a year after Muir's death in 1914, the trail ascends from Yosemite Valley, hugs the Sierra crest, and ends on 14,494-foot Mount Whitney. En route

Figure 2.2: John Muir Trail Magazine Inset



OLIVER KENNELIN, COURTESY SIERRA CLUB



Even before the trail was completed in 1938, hikers had begun to take to the wilderness en masse, a tradition continued by this 1951 Sierra Club group. "The people had become Muir's sheep," says the author. Mules packed wood-burning stoves and iceboxes, later filled with snow in camp. This site became part of the Minarets (now Ansel Adams) Wilderness after the Wilderness Act of 1964, which protected places "where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man, where man himself is a visitor who does not remain."

Today the trail passes through three national parks, one national monument, and four wilderness areas. But backpacking no longer holds as much magic for the young generation, and only a few hundred people a year hike the entire trail.

Chapter 3

Weekly

The winter is long. Even if you celebrate every holiday to the nines and have a wonderful time once every month, that still only accounts for 15 events out of 90-120 days. To help provide small bright points, I think it would be good to have weekly traditions to look forward to, to help stave off the blues and cabin fever.

3.1 *Go!*

I find [being]... ..out in the open so beneficial.
Even if it is but for a minute or two, it is
unbelievable how that short time helps to...
...bring feelings into equilibrium...

Roald Amundsen on expedition to the South Pole

Who better to give advice on staving off cabin fever and seasonal depression than the guy that finally made it to

the south pole (unlike the slackers before him who went crazy or perished on the way). We've talked about going on walks outside in the snow a lot in the past and never have really stuck to it. This year, we should! If we bundle up appropriately, keep our walks short, and account for enough time to warm up/cuddle/shower afterwards, I think the fresh air and beautiful snow (or ugly rainy Lafayette winter weather) would be beneficial. Here's a list of places we could go:

Downtown Obviously we could just walk out our door and get up to 2 miles in without really having to leave the cool area of downtown.

Wabash Heritage Trail Right out our door, or at Fort Ouiatenon, or up in Battle Ground, or at Davis Ferry. The options are endless! 1-13 miles.

Clegg Gardens I've always wanted to see the Wildcat in winter, and especially if it's recently snowed, this hike could be really beautiful. 2ish miles.

Prophetstown Trail 1 The prairie will be covered with snow! We could even try to cross country ski up there...maybe. 2-8 miles.

Plymouth Arch Someplace we've never been in summer might be really fun to do in the winter, and then we can revisit to see how it changed! 0-1 miles.

Spinn Prarie Nature Preserve Only a little ways away (near Benton Central), there's another prairie that I'd never heard of until researching this. It's always fun to explore and maybe this is a good place to do that! No clue how long it is.

Eagle Creek We loved our winter hike there last year, so why wouldn't we love it again this year? 6-8 miles.

Delphi Canal Trails Again, a place we haven't been that's close by, I hear that these are cool in the way that the Rails-to-Trails are, like nature's taken over from man. 1-2 miles.

Monon Trail If we want to keep it more city living, we could do the Monon Trail down in Indy. The benefit of this trail, is we could end at a nice bar and get some whiskey drinks to warm us up. 0-20 miles.

Puddle Stomping While not TECHNICALLY a place to walk, anytime after it rains, we could go out in our rubber boots and stomp the shit out of some puddles. For funsies.

Snow Shoeing Similar to puddle stomping, but more serious! We could find any of the prairie like places we would walk normally, and rent snowshoes to make it speedier (and more like walking on the moon).

3.2 *Smell!*

Aromatherapy is incredible for beating the winter blues. Below are three recipes that we can throw together and see if it helps our mood at all. And the last one doubles as a massage oil, so we can definitely use it for its intended purpose.

Rose-Citrus-Sandal Wood	4 portions
-------------------------	------------

15 minutes

- | | | | |
|---|---------|------------|---|
| 1 | 1 drop | Rose | Mix the sandalwood and rose |
| | 3 drops | Sandalwood | until well blended. |
| 2 | 1 drop | Orange | Add orange, with more to preference. Blend well by shaking. |

Spring Mix	4 portions
------------	------------

15 minutes

- | | | | |
|---|--------|------------|---------------------------------|
| 1 | 1 drop | Lavender | Once blended, the grapefruit |
| | 1 drop | Ylang | will help with concentration, |
| | | Ylang | and the lavender will remind of |
| | 1 drop | Grapefruit | spring. |

French Massage Mix

lots!

15 minutes

1	2 oz	Almond Oil	Try on a small, rough portion of skin (like the back of your hand) to ensure no reactions before using as a massage oil.
	12 drops	Bergamot	
	8 drops	Clary Sage	

3.3 *Eat!*

This one's simple! Cook, or let me cook for you, some comfort food. These include hearty pastas, soups, roasted things. Here's a list of ideas (most of which I picked because I want to try them!)



One Pot Garlic Parmesan Pasta



Butternut Squash and Gorgonzola Rigatoni Pasta Pie with Fried Sage



Vegetarian Stuffed Shells Recipe



Rotini with Butternut-Sage Sauce



Easy One-Skillet Lasagna



Chili Corn Chowder



Broccoli Cheddar Baked Potato Soup



Curried Pumpkin and Apple Soup

3.4 *Eat!, the sequel*

This one's also really simple! Turn to Appendix A.1 on page 32 and follow the directions to finish the game of bingo!

3.5 *Eat! III*

I'm misleading you, all of the Eat's are simple! Chocolate is supposedly really good for you to feel better in the winter, so we're going on a strict regimen!



Take 2 pieces (1 oz.), by mouth, of chocolate once per day to feel startling positive effects. Recommended to take after returning home from work, and at least half hour before consuming any dairy products.

Appendix A

Reference and Ideas

A.1 Restaurant Passport

Before the end of the winter, try to get a stamp over every logo by going to every place on this page!



HEIRLOOM



	HEIRLOOM	

A.2 *Winter Walk Companion*

In the white space below, trace or freehand a view from one of your snow hikes, and color it in with crayons. This is best done with hot chocolate/tea!

A.3 *Snowball Ambush Paraphrenalia*

Everybody needs to have a name, number, and rank when going on military expeditions. Below are those ranks, and even some medals that can be given out for uncommon valor!

