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DESTINATIONS NORTH AMERICA ULTIMATE NATIONAL PARKS EXPEDITION



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Expedition Details

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Venture into the wilderness with our experts to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the National Park Service—what writer Wallace Stegner called “the best idea we ever had.” Explore five of America’s most iconic national parks, traveling from Grand Teton and Yellowstone to Glacier, the Olympic Peninsula, and the Grand Canyon, and learn about National Geographic’s vital role in preserving and promoting these natural treasures.

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Days 2 & 3 — Grand Teton National Park/Yellowstone National Park

Delve into the natural and human history of Grand Teton National Park at the Laurance S. Rockefeller Preserve, and walk scenic trails along Phelps Lake. Then drive north to Yellowstone—the world's first national park, established in 1872. Most of the park rests atop a slumbering volcano whose magma chamber is the source of the area's colorful hot springs, steaming fumaroles, and geysers—including Old Faithful, whose eruptions we will witness this evening. Spend the next day exploring gurgling mud pots and mesmerizing mineral pools. Have dinner at Old Faithful Inn, a national historic landmark.

Old Faithful Snow Lodge (B,L,D Daily)

Days 4 & 5 — Yellowstone National Park

Head out early to search for wildlife in Hayden Valley. Visit the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone, and walk the rim to view

thundering waterfalls. Cross Dunraven Pass on our way to Mammoth Hot Springs, where thermal waters have sculpted travertine terraces over thousands of years. During our stay, a park representative will provide insight into the National Park Service's centennial celebration and its vision for the future. Explore Lamar Valley, known as "the Serengeti of North America." Learn about the reintroduction of wolves in 1995, and use spotting scopes to observe bison, eagles, coyotes, and perhaps even a grizzly.

Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel and Cabins (B,L,D Daily)

Days 6 & 7 — Missoula, Montana/Glacier National Park

Journey through Montana's Rockies to Missoula, and discover the lively downtown. The following morning, continue north through the Mission Range to Flathead Lake. Take to the waters of the Middle Fork of the Flathead River, which forms the southern border of Glacier National Park. Paddle Class II and III rapids through rugged canyons, keeping an eye out for bears, bald eagles, and ospreys.

Doubletree by Hilton and Belton Chalet or Lake McDonald Lodge (B,L; B,L,D)

Day 8 — Glacier National Park

Named after the slow-moving glaciers that carved these valleys over hundreds of thousands of years, Glacier is one of America's most magnificent national parks—boasting nearly 1,600 square miles of what naturalist John Muir called "the best care-killing scenery on the continent." Take in awe-inspiring vistas as we navigate Going-to-the-Sun Road, a 52-mile engineering marvel that crosses the Continental Divide at Logan Pass. Explore St. Mary Lake and unwind with a trailside picnic. This evening, enjoy a talk with a park representative.

Belton Chalet or Lake McDonald Lodge (B,L,D)

Days 9 & 10 — Kalispell/Seattle, Washington/Olympic National Park

Transfer to the airport in Kalispell for our flight to Seattle. Upon

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arrival, drive into the heart of Olympic National Park, first declared a national monument by President Theodore Roosevelt—one of the park system's greatest patrons—and subsequently designated a national park by President Franklin Roosevelt in 1938. This vast wilderness harbors diverse ecosystems, with glacial peaks presiding over spruce-shrouded rain forest, crystalline lakes and rivers, and sandy beaches. Paddle along the coast in a sea kayak looking for seals, otters, and whales. Then head up to Hurricane Ridge to take in show-stopping views of Mount Olympus as we hike through subalpine meadows.

Lake Crescent Lodge (B,L,D Daily)

Days 11 & 12 — Olympic National Park/Phoenix, Arizona/Sedona

Venture deep into Hoh Rain Forest, marveling at monumental Sitka spruce and western hemlock stands. Walk amid tide pools, sea stacks, and nesting seabirds on Ruby Beach. Have dinner in the historic Roosevelt Dining Room at Lake Quinault Lodge. The next day, fly from windswept coast to high desert, arriving in Phoenix, Arizona. Drive to Sedona for the night.

Lake Quinault Lodge; Orchards Inn Sedona (B,L,D Daily)

Days 13 & 14 — Grand Canyon National Park

Enjoy the morning light as it spotlights Sedona's red-rock spires on our journey to the Grand Canyon, stopping for a hike along the way. A park representative joins us for dinner to introduce us to the history of the Grand Canyon. Spend the next day exploring the South Rim, which frames the canyon's one-mile-deep chasm—carved by the Colorado River over millions of years. Choose from a variety of hikes, and take in the dazzling colors of sunset. Celebrate our national parks expedition during a farewell dinner at El Tovar hotel, perched on the canyon's rim.

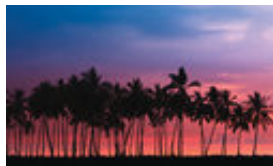
Kachina Lodge (B,L,D Daily)

Day 15 — Grand Canyon/Boulder City/Las Vegas

Enjoy a bird's-eye view over the Grand Canyon as we fly to Boulder City, Nevada. Transfer to nearby Las Vegas for your flight home.

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Related Trips



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Island and Maui



Yellowstone and
Grand Teton
National Parks



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Park
