

IFMSS Yellowstone National Park Visit Options

I. Flying into and out of Bozeman, Montana

1. Fly into Bozeman International Airport, pick up a rental car and stay at one of the hotel/motels next to the airport (we liked the La Quinta Inn & Suites). If you arrived early enough, would encourage you to go into Bozeman to explore the shopping area and visit the local breweries that have good restaurants (Bozeman Brewing Company, Bridger Brewing, MAP Brewing Company).
2. Next day drive East on **Interstate Highway 90** and turn **south** at the **Livingston exit**. Follow **Highway 89 south** to the town of Gardiner and continue to follow Highway 89 to the **North Entrance** into Yellowstone National Park. Get a **map** at the entrance and recommended first stop would be **Mammoth Springs** that is an amazing geothermal site with a nice museum to visit, and you will likely see Elk in the area.
3. By evening, you will want to check into your hotel/motel room in the town of **West Yellowstone** which is the West entrance to the Park. Make your reservations **as soon as possible** as this is high tourist season and rooms may be hard to find. After leaving Mammoth Springs you have 2 choices. You can follow **Highway 89** until it intersects with **Highway 191 West** that will take you to **West Yellowstone** with several interesting sites and hiking trails along the way. If you have time, the **other option** I would suggest is to take **Highway 212** towards **Tower Junction** and the Roosevelt Lodge. Then take **Highway 20 south** to **Canyon Village** and then turn **west** back to **Highway 89** and go **south** until you reach **Highway 191 West** that will take you into **West Yellowstone** for the evening. This route as many opportunities for wildlife observations (especially bison) and many beautiful sights and interesting things to see along the way. As far as food goes in West Yellowstone, the **Slippery Otter Pub** was our favorite (inexpensive, good food and local craft beer)
4. The **next** day(s) the key spots to try and fit into your schedule would be:
 - a. **West Thumb Geyser Basin**
 - b. **Old Faithful Lodge and Geyser**

- c. **Canyon Village** area where you have many access points to view the **Yellowstone Canyon** which is one of the highpoints of the visit and be sure to hike out to the lookout for the **North Falls** (nearest to Canyon Village) which is one of the most photographed water falls in the world.
- d. Otherwise if you have time, there are countless hikes and beautiful places to visit, just look at your Yellowstone map, look different sites up on the Internet or ask any of the Park Ranges for information and recommendations.

II. Flying into and out of Bozeman, Montana

1. Fly into Jackson, Wyoming for the meeting and rent a car. You will have **2 options**, the **first** is to use Jackson Hole as your hotel base and drive north on **Highway 191** to the **South Park Entrance** every day which takes about an hour to get to the entrance and longer to get to the sites of greatest interest. The **other option** would be to fly into Jackson Hole for the meeting, but then plan to fly out of **Bozeman, Montana** for the trip home. For this option you would check out of the Four Seasons leaving Thursday afternoon to drive **north** into Yellowstone, get your map, and follow **Highway 191** to the **Old Faithful Lodge and geyser** (world famous landmark) and then on to the **West Thumb Geyser Basin** and then up to the town of **West Yellowstone** at the **West Park Entrance** to check into your hotel/motel for the evening. Again, make sure to **make reservations as soon as possible** as it is a very busy time of year for tourists.
2. The following day, from either Jackson or West Yellowstone head for **Canyon Village** to spend most of the day exploring the many sites and trails along the **Yellowstone Canyon**.
3. If your plan is to fly home out of Bozeman, then you could **option (A)** either spend more time exploring the Park and returning to West Yellowstone to leave the following morning to take **Highway 191 North** out of West Yellowstone through the **Big Sky country** and the **Gallatin River Valley** which is a **very beautiful drive** arriving in Bozeman to check into your hotel near the airport to fly out the

following day. The other **option (B)** would be to drive north on **Highway 20** when you are done exploring the **Yellowstone Canyon**, to **Tower Junction** and then following **Highway 212 West** (good chance to see wildlife) until you reach **Highway 89** to turn **north** into the **Mammoth Hot Springs** area where you should plan to stop to walk the hot spring basins, and then leave the Park driving north on **Highway 89** until you reach **Livingston** where you will take **Interstate Highway 90 West** to **Bozeman, Montana** to check into your hotel near the airport to fly home the following day.

These are just suggestions based on my travels in this area and are only constrained by the amount of time you have to spend. Two days in the Park you would be able to see the key interest points. Two and a half days in the park would allow you to see more (with a less hectic schedule) and give you a half day to get back to your departure destination to prepare for your return home. If you only have a single extra day, then stay in Jackson Hole and take a day float trip on the Snake River, or a guided fly fishing trip on the Snake River, or go horseback or bike riding in the high Teton Mountains or just totally chill out in the Spa and pools at the Hotel and continue your education in the local beers and wines. Also do not pass up the opportunity to pick up a nice pair of cowboy boots, cowboy hat or nice western belt (look for bison leather). Whatever you choose, **enjoy this beautiful part of the world and have a safe journey home!**