

Our Favorite Memories

Yellowstone & Grand Tetons

By Tour Leader Kellie Fennessy

We met in Jackson, Wyoming, a quaint and clean “cowboy” town to begin our journey. Our first stop was Grand Tetons National Park where magnificent mountain peaks push up from plains of wildflowers towards a very blue sky. We took a float trip down the Snake River while our guides shared wonderful tales of what life was like before the park was established. With the wildflowers in full bloom and snow melt filling the river it was a perfect way to kick off our trip. The next day, several of us woke up early to go on a guided walk given by one of the park’s interpretive guides. As the only visitors joining him that morning, we were treated to a personal history of the Grand Tetons as we strolled along the shores of Lake Jenny. Another special delight was seeing a mother bear and her two cubs out for their morning exercise ambling down the pathway below our lodge.



Grand Tetons National Park

Our drive north took us into Yellowstone National Park where we had our own mini snowball fight—in the last week of June! Although the weather was a pleasant mid-70s, there was still quite bit of snow on the ground in spots. We briefly stopped to take some pictures. Those of us from areas that don’t get much snow enjoyed tossing a few snowballs around.

We checked into the Old Faithful Inn where we got to watch Old Faithful let off a little steam! The famous geyser starts slowly—a few burps, a few bops and then a full blown gusher of water and steam shooting up in the air. Old Faithful definitely lives up to its name—we could pretty much set our watches by the geyser’s regular shows and we watched it as many times as we could during our stay.

We spent three days in the Yellowstone but could have spent a week there and not seen everything. Yellowstone is like



By the one of the park’s entrances.

viewing a movie with a different landscape in each frame. There were walks amongst beautiful pine woods surrounded by wildlife where we were rewarded at the end of the trail with waterfalls. There was a “lunar” terrain with bubbling mud pots and steaming hot springs. Then there were massive natural terraces where falling water is constantly depositing minerals, building up an ever changing display of white travertine rock. Known as one of the most scenic areas in the park, another favorite “movie frame” was Artist Point. Named for the numerous paintings done there, Artist Point is famous for its unusual rock formations in a variety of crimsons, pinks, browns and creams and for its truly impressive waterfall.

Wildlife was in abundance. What do you think your boss would say if you were late to work because of a “Bison Jam?” Yellowstone employees get to use that

excuse and we got to experience one. We were driving down the road looking at the stunning natural beauty around us when we had to come to a complete stop not because of traffic but because about 50 bison—mothers and babies (called red dogs)—decided to share the road with us. Later that day we ran into actual auto traffic as park visitors stopped to snap photos of a black bear. We were all safe in the WTT mini-coach as the bear passed by but what fun to say we saw a one!

The next day we made our way back to Jackson and during a scrumptious “farewell dinner” we reminisced on the fun times we shared, the friendships we made, the lasting memories we’ll forever keep—exploring, hiking, walking, and rafting in the magnificent Grand Tetons and Yellowstone National Parks. ❖



Bison jam in Yellowstone.



Some of Yellowstone's amazingly varied scenery.

Above: Artist Point

Above right: A lunar-like landscape

Below right: Inspiration Point