Exploring Kings Canyon National Park & nearby forest lands

Review safety tips on page 10. Be extra careful near rivers, even when the water is low. Bring a map or trail guide. Nights are cool; carry layers. Store food properly while you explore. Be safe!

Grant Grove

Kings Canyon Visitor Center (NPS)
Exhibits/film in English & Spanish. Details, page 2.

Grant Tree Trail
This 1/3-mile (.5 km) paved trail visits one of the world's three largest trees and the Nation's Christmas Tree since 1926. Trail guides sold at visitor center. North then west of the center 1 mile (1.6 km). Ask about the Christmas Tree Ceremony on 12/8.

North Grove Loop
This lightly traveled, 1½-mile (2.4 km) trail offers a close look at Big Trees and a quiet forest walk. Start at Grant Tree overflow-parking area.

Panoramic Point Road
A narrow road up to a Sierran vista. Trailers/RVs not permitted. Go east through visitor-center parking & follow signs. Park Ridge Trail (4 miles/6.4 km round-trip) begins here.

Redwood Mountain Sequoia Grove
One of the world's largest groves. Research here revealed the positive link between sequoias and fire. Across Generals Highway from Quail Flat/Hume Lake junction (7 miles south of Grant Grove). Turn right (west) at Redwood Saddle; go 2 miles to parking lot.

Big Baldy Ridge
Great views over Redwood Canyon from the top (8209 feet); elevation gain 600 feet (183m). Round trip 4 miles (6.4km). From Grant Grove, go 8 miles (13km) south on Generals Highway to trailhead.

Kings Canyon & Cedar Grove

Fall brings reduced facilities in the canyon: The visitor center has closed; last night for camping is 10/14. Water systems shut down on 10/25. The road into the canyon closes at noon, 11/12.

Canyon View
The "U" shape of this canyon, apparent from this viewpoint, reveals its glacial history. 1 mile (1.6 km) east of Cedar Grove Village Road.

Knapp's Cabin
During the Roaring '20s, a California businessman stored gear in this small cabin for lavish fishing trips. Two miles east of the village road.

Roaring River Falls
A very short, shady walk to a powerful waterfall rushing through a granite chute. East of the Village 3 miles. Paved, accessible with assistance.

Zumwalt Meadow
This 1.5-mile (2.4 km) loop passes high granite walls, lush meadows, and the Kings River. Parking is 4½ miles east of Cedar Grove Village road. Buy a trail guide at the visitor center. Allow 1 hour.

Mist Falls
One of the park's largest waterfalls. Allow 4 - 5 hours; 9 miles (14.4 km) round trip from Road's End. 600-foot elevation gain in the last 2 miles.

Hotel Creek Trail
Starts .2 mile north of the market at the intersection with the pack-station road. Climbs through chaparral to forest and views from Cedar Grove Overlook. 5 miles (8 km) round trip; 1200-foot/365 m elevation gain. Strenuous; allow 3 -4 hours. Return via Lewis Creek Trail for an 8-mile loop.

National Forest (USFS)

Explore Giant Sequoia National Monument, part of Sequoia National Forest which abuts the park.

Converse Basin
Virtually every mature sequoia in this huge grove was felled early in the 1900s. Walk the 2-mile (3.2 km) Boole Tree loop, 6 miles north of Grant Grove to a monarch they spared, or the ½-mile (.8 km) loop to the Chicago Stump, cut for exhibit at the 1893 World's Fair (2 miles north of Grant Grove). Ask for a map at the visitor center.

Indian Basin
A one-mile accessible trail & one-mile unpaved trail. Take Highway 180 7 miles north of Grant Grove; turn into Princess Campground. Turn left past the dump station to trailhead parking area.

Hume Lake
Formed by a rare, historic dam, the lake supplied water to a flume that floated lumber 67 miles (108km) to Sanger. An easy 2½-mile (4 km) trail circles it. Page 9 lists facilities. Eight miles (12.8 km) north of Grant Grove on High way 180; 3 miles (4.8 km) south on HumeLake Road.

Buck Rock Lookout
A 1916 tower, still used for spotting fires, offers 360° views. Approximately 6 miles (9.6 km) off Big Meadows Road 14S11, then take Forest Road 13S04.

The Kings Canyon

The Generals Highway

Driving this 80-year-old roadway is part of the park experience. It carries you up almost a mile in elevation and, by connecting the General Sherman Tree to the General Grant Tree, earns its name.

For decades, a skin of pavement barely improved the original wagon road. An effort is underway to build a route that can handle today's large numbers of modern vehicles, without losing the joys of a mountain road. See page 12 for safe-driving tips.

Wayside exhibits at overlooks along this historic road offer insight into these parks:

· Kings Canyon Overlook
View the High Sierra wilderness from this overlook about 6 miles (9.5km) south of Grant Grove.

· Redwood Mountain Overlook
Six miles (9.6 km) south of Grant Grove on the southwest side of the Generals Highway. Views out over one of the world's largest sequoia groves.

· Eleven Range Overlook
South of the Giant Forest, this turnout offers views to the west over the foothills and the distant valley.

· Amphitheater Point
View the sweep of life zones from high to low from this spot between Giant Forest and the Foothills.

Generals Highway in Giant Forest