

YOSEMITE WITHOUT CARES OR CARS

GETTING THERE BY BUS OR TRAIN

Though you can drive to Yosemite Valley any day of the year, one has to ask, "Why would you want to?" After all, Yosemite is served by one of the most convenient, modern and extensive transportation systems at any national park. This itinerary describes how to visit Yosemite without driving.

Getting to Yosemite is the best part. Amtrak offers daily rail service from San Francisco through Oakland to Merced. Additional service is available seasonally from Southern California through Fresno. The tracks lead through the orchards vineyards and farmlands of California's abundant Central Valley.

After arriving in Merced or Fresno, you will board a "Grayline of Yosemite" motor coach operated by VIA



Adventures for your trip to Yosemite Valley. VIA's luxurious European coaches depart and return up to four times per day and are driven by professional operators who provide fascinating narrations of the colorful history and sights along the way.

Another way to get to Yosemite is to ride on one of the daily motor coach tours from San Francisco operated by California Parlor Cars. It's possible to see Yosemite in a day by either Amtrak/VIA or California Parlor Cars, but why rush your visit? Isn't the point of leaving your car behind to leave your cares behind, as well?

Both VIA and California Parlor Car will drop you right at your Yosemite Motel. Plus, you can arrange to be picked up at your Yosemite Motel and transported into Yosemite Valley each day, too. So, there's no need for a car once you get there.

And, it's a deal! The roundtrip bus trip from El Portal to Yosemite on VIA is only \$16 (including park admission).¹ And, kids ride free on Amtrak during special promotional periods. No wonder it's a favorite way to travel among cost-conscious travelers.

Service is another reason why many people prefer to leave their car behind. For \$63, a burgundy-coated VIA bus driver becomes your personal chauffeur and valet, motoring you from Merced to Yosemite and back, escorting you to lunch (included) and arranging your seat on a Yosemite Valley Open Air Tour (included).

When you get to Yosemite Valley, there are free shuttle busses to ride that loop through the east end of the Valley. They stop at the best sights and trailheads. Also, several half-day and all-day narrated tours visit the Valley, Glacier Point, the Big Trees and Tioga Pass. Sign up at your Yosemite Motel or once in the Valley.

Of course, if you'd rather do your own touring, bicycles can be rented at Curry Village or the Yosemite Lodge and Yosemite Valley has miles of paved bike trails and level footpaths to explore. You might even pass a few people who are searching for parking spaces while you enjoy your carefree and carfree visit to Yosemite National Park.

INTERNET LINKS

Amtrak: www.amtrak.com

California Amtrak: www.dot.ca.gov/hq/rail

VIA: www.via-adventures.com

Calif. Parlor Car Tours: www.calpartours.com

Yosemite Area Transportation Information:
www.yosemite.com

Yosemite Motels: www.yosemite-motels.com



¹ Schedules and prices are subject to normal changes