

2009 Graduates Cross Country Camping Trip

July 1 – Drive to Indiana Dunes (756 miles; 12 hours)

Watch fireworks

Camp and at Indian Dunes State Park

July 2 – Drive to Badlands (895 miles; 14 hours)

Enter Northeast Entrance

Stay at Cedar Pass – right past Ben Reifel Visitor Center

July 3 – Stay at Badlands (30 miles; 1 hour)

Drive the road through the park

Set up camp at Conata Picnic Area – allowed to camp non-visible from road

Hike from campsite – no official trails

Go into Wall for dinner and to shop at Wall Drug

July 4 – Beartooth Highway (560 miles; 9 hours)

Drive out the Pinnacle Entrance

Continue drive to Beartooth Highway

Drive the scenic Beartooth Highway stopping at various viewpoints

Find campground along Beartooth Highway

July 5 – Yellowstone (60 miles; 1.5 hours)

Enter park through northeast entrance

Set up camp at Canyon Village Campground

Do the Mount Washburn Hike – 6 miles RT (90 minutes)

Explore Canyon area that evening

- North Rim Drive (one way from campground)
 - Drive out to Inspiration Point - steep descent down 57 steps to an overlook with a wonderful view of the Lower Falls and Canyon
 - Stop at Grandview Point – one of the best views of the Canyon
- Main road between two drives
 - Upper Falls Viewpoint – ¼ mile trail to the brink of the Upper Falls and an overlook within splashing distance
- South Rim Drive
 - Uncle Tom's Trail - steep descent down 328 steps to the river
 - Artist Point - one of the best views of the canyon--especially in early morning. It is reached via a short trail from the South Rim Drive.

July 6 – Yellowstone (96 mile lower loop)

Get up at sunrise to photograph Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone

Do the lower loop drive:

- Hayden Valley – lots of buffalo
- Mud Volcano – 2/3 mile trail through bubbling mud pots, steaming vents, and hissing pools, which fill the air with the aroma of rotten eggs
- Old Faithful area
 - Old Faithful Geyser – erupts about every 79 minutes

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- Another way to view Old Faithful is to take the .5 mile (15 minute) Observation Point Trail to an observation area that provides views of the entire geyser basin – no crowds and spectacular view of eruption
 - Old Faithful Inn
 - Upper Geyser Basin - 1.3 mile loop on boardwalk from the Old Faithful area past Castle Geyser (largest cone), Grand Geyser (tallest predictable geyser), Beehive Geyser, and Morning Glory Pool
 - Black Sand Basin - 20-minute stroll along a level boardwalk past some of the most beautiful thermal scenery in the park, such as Emerald Pool
 - Midway Geyser Basin - 20-minute stroll across the bridge over the Firehole River to an area with much thermal activity, including the Grand Prismatic Spring, the largest and one of the most beautiful of Yellowstone's hot springs, and Excelsior Geyser, the third largest geyser in the world
 - Fountain Paint Pot Trail - .5 mile roundtrip hike along boardwalk with lots of thermal activity to the bubbling pink, orange, and blue mud of the Fountain Paint Pots. There are usually about six geysers erupting at the same time in this area.
 - Firehole Canyon Drive – one-way so you have to go past it and then drive down it – this is where the swimming hole is (hot tub temperatures and 15 foot cliff to jump off)
 - Norris Geyser Basin
 - Porcelain Trail - .75 mile roundtrip hike on a level boardwalk through thermal springs and geysers
 - Back Basin Loop - 1.5 mile roundtrip hike on a level boardwalk through thermal springs and geysers past Steamboat Geyser, the world's largest
- Stay at Canyon Village Campground again

July 7 – Grand Teton (109 miles; 2.5 hours)

Stop at Colter Bay Visitor Center and inquire about camping availability

Stop at various viewpoints along the scenic drive

Drive to Moulton Barn on Mormon Row to take photos

Take a drive to Snake River Overlook for sunset shots

Camp at Gros Ventre Campground

July 8 – Grand Teton

Get up early to get a highly coveted Jenny Lake campsite

Do the Jenny Lake hike

- Boat shuttle leaves Jenny Lake marina every half hour (\$10 RT)
- Hidden Falls/Inspiration Point Trail to Cascade Canyon Trail (11 miles)

Drive into Jackson Hole and have dinner at Billy's Burgers

Camp at Jenny Lake

July 9 – Bryce (558 miles, 10 hours)

Drive the 10 hours to Bryce

Stop at Cabela's in Lehi, Utah

Camp at Ruby's Inn Campground (just outside park)

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Swim in pool

July 10 – Bryce (15 miles; .5 hours)

Get up early to get a site at Sunset Campground (first come first serve) in the park
Do the Sunset to Sunrise hike with some variations (Navajo Trail, Peekaboo Trail, etc.)

Go back to Ruby's Campground for a swim in the pool

Camp at Sunset Campground

July 11 – Grand Canyon (Mather Campground) (226 miles; 5 hours)

Drive the 5 hours to Grand Canyon

Go over to village – El Tovar Hotel, etc – walk along Rim Trail

Hike Bright Angel Trail late afternoon

Camp at Mather Campground

July 12 – Grand Canyon (Desert View) (23 miles; .5 hours)

Spend the day at South Rim

Shuttle to Hopi Point to watch sunset

Camp at Mather Campground again

July 13 – Monument Valley (160 miles; 4 hours)

Drive the 17-mile scenic drive stopping at various viewpoints

Stay at primitive campground in the Park (Mitten View Campground?)

July 14 – Moab (158 miles; 3 hours)

Drive to Moab

Stay at Canyonlands Campground right in Moab

Swim in pool

Have Dinner at Moab Brewery

July 15 – Arches National Park

Get up early to get a campsite at Devils Garden Campground in the Park

Hike to Double O Arch (4.8 mile RT) in the morning

Drive the scenic drive during the heat of the day

- Turn off at Windows section – hike up into Double Arch

Hike to Delicate Arch for sunset (3-miles RT)

Camp at Devils Garden Campground

July 16 – Rocky Mountain National Park (370 miles; 8 hours)

Drive to Rocky Mountain National Park west entrance

Drive through the park on the 48-mile scenic Trail Ridge Road making various stops

Camp at Moraine Park Camground

Go into Estes Park for dinner and some mini golf

July 17 – Rocky Mountain to Lake McConaughy (273 miles; 4.5 hours)

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Drive to Lake McConaughy

Swim in Lake

Set up camp on beach

Watch storm coming and decide to abort camping and start driving east

July 18 – Home (1600 miles; 27 hours)

Drive 27 hours to get home

Total Trip Mileage: 5976 miles

Average Miles per Day: 332 miles per day