Welcome to Yellowstone National Park. If you are a newcomer to the Yellowstone Forever Institute, you will be amazed at what awaits you during each day of exploration. If you are a veteran of our programs, you will know the many perspectives from which learning can take place in this diverse place. We are glad that you are able to join us. Our goal is to provide you with an enjoyable, high-quality educational experience and a safe and memorable visit to Yellowstone.

The following information is provided to help you prepare for your tour. Please read it thoroughly and call us at 406.848.2400 or email contact@yellowstone.org if you have any questions. We recommend all first time visitors seek general park information through the National Park Service at 307.344.2107 or www.nps.gov/yell.

Important information included in this document:

- What’s Included
- How to Prepare for your tour
- Yellowstone Forever Park Store Information
- Yellowstone Forever Supporter Information
- Cancellation Policy
- Code of Ethics
- Park Map and Travel Information

What’s Included?
Your private tour includes an 8-hour program with a Yellowstone Forever Institute instructor, in-park transportation, high-powered spotting scopes and binoculars. Your instructor will be carrying a first aid kit, an emergency communication device, and enough bear spray to equip the group (if needed).

Gratuities for your Yellowstone Forever naturalist guide are not included, but are recommended, greatly appreciated, and can be made as donations to Yellowstone Forever to support our work in the park.

Be sure to bring your lunch, snacks and any drinks with you and plan to eat during your 8 hour tour. All food and snacks will be eaten in the field.
How to prepare for this program

How fit do you need to be?
Participants residing at lower elevations may want to arrive a day early to adjust to the altitude. To learn more about how specific medical conditions can be affected by Yellowstone's environment and our activities, please visit [www.Yellowstone.org/experience/health-information/](http://www.Yellowstone.org/experience/health-information/).

General clothing and equipment list
Much of your time will be spent outdoors and all programs are held rain, snow or shine. You should be prepared for a variety of mountain weather conditions and temperatures. Appropriate clothing, equipment and footwear are very important. Spring, summer and fall temperatures can range from below freezing in the mornings to 85 degrees Fahrenheit in the afternoons. The layered use of garments for protection against the wind, sun and temperature extremes should guide your clothing choices. Loose-fitting layers allow you to maintain a comfortable and dry body as outside temperatures change, and as your own body temperature and moisture output changes with different levels of exertion. Some colder-weather items may not be needed in July or August, but please keep in mind that Yellowstone's weather is unpredictable.

**Summer clothing:**
- **Insulating underwear**, capilene, polypropylene, wool, or similar wicking fabric.
- **Mid-weight insulating layer**, light, 200-weight synthetic fleece or wool shirt/pullover.
- **Heavyweight insulating layer**, wool, down, or heavy-weight fleece jacket, for less-active times.
- **Waterproof and windproof outer layer**, lightweight and breathable. Jackets and pants are recommended.
- **Short-sleeve shirt**, cotton is okay in summer, but synthetic wicking shirts are ideal.
- **Pants**, synthetic hiking pants, lightweight pile/fleece pants or tights or similar. Jeans are not recommended.
- **Hats**, both a brimmed sun hat and an insulating hat for cool weather.
- **Gloves**, lightweight glove liners and a pair of wool/fleece gloves or mittens.
- **Socks**, light wool or synthetic liner sock with heavier wool or synthetic outer sock. The inner-outer sock combination helps prevent blistering, wicks moisture and reduces friction. Cotton socks do not wick moisture and are not recommended.
- **Hiking boots**, that provide stability, traction, and comfort. Unless you’ve consistently hiked in athletic shoes, bring boots that provide ankle support.
- **Off-duty shoes**, sandals, athletic shoes, or other leisure footwear.
Equipment:
- **Daypack**, with enough capacity to carry extra clothes, water, lunch, camera, binoculars, field guides, etc.
- **Water bottle**, one-quart is the minimum. Camelback or similar hydration systems work well in summer but can freeze in winter.
- **Sunglasses**
- **Sunscreen/lip protector**. Sun at high altitude can burn unprotected skin quickly.
- **Camera, binoculars**.
- **Notebook/pencil**.
- **Pocket hand and foot warmers**—recommended November through May.
- **Alarm Clock**: Make sure you’re ready for early mornings! Not all hotel rooms/cabins have alarm clocks.

**Park Stores**
Our Park Stores features more than 900 books, maps, and videos to help you plan your visit, along with a wide selection of shirts, hats, and other logo items to remind you of your visit to Yellowstone. Yellowstone Forever supporters receive a 15 percent discount on merchandise online or at any of our 11 locations in and around Yellowstone. Proceeds directly support Yellowstone. Visit: [Shop.Yellowstone.org](http://Shop.Yellowstone.org)

**Supporter Program**
Yellowstone Forever Supporters directly fund priority park programs and projects. Supporters also provide scholarships for teachers and help expand programming for underserved youth. Benefits include a subscription to our magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly*, early registration and discounts for Yellowstone Forever Institute programs, and discounts on retail purchases throughout Yellowstone (exclusions apply). If you are not yet a supporter of Yellowstone Forever, an introductory subscription (one year) to our magazine *Yellowstone Quarterly* is included with your tuition. For more information, visit: [Yellowstone.org/donate](http://Yellowstone.org/donate)

**Cancellation and Refund Policy**
The following policies apply to private tour program and lodging payments. If you cancel:

- **60 days or more prior to the start of your program**, 100% of your payment will be refunded minus a $50 per group processing fee.
- **30 days or more prior to the start of your program**, 50% of your payment will be refunded minus a $50 per group processing fee.
- **If you cancel with fewer than 30 days before the start of your program**, your full payment will be forfeited.

If Yellowstone Forever must cancel a private tour due to unforeseen circumstances, you will receive a full refund of your payment.
Code of Ethics
The Yellowstone Forever Institute is committed to demonstrating a high standard of appropriate and ethical behavior in Yellowstone. As a participant in a Yellowstone Forever Institute program, we ask you to adhere to the following Code of Ethics. In addition to the ethics highlighted below, the Yellowstone Forever Institute abides by all National Park Service rules and regulations. We also practice Leave No Trace guidelines for traveling responsibly in the wilderness.

Observing wildlife: We will do our best to have as little impact on wildlife as possible. Animals will be observed from a distance, using high-powered spotting scopes to help keep our presence from affecting their behavior. Participants should not expect to get close-up photographs of wildlife. The Yellowstone Forever Institute will adhere to National Park Service regulations by keeping a minimum distance of 25 yards from bison, elk, bighorn sheep, deer, moose, coyotes and nesting birds and 100 yards from bears and wolves. We will not entice wildlife with food, animal calls or any actions that change their behavior.

Leave what you find: It is illegal to remove natural or cultural artifacts (plants, animals, bones, rocks, etc.) from Yellowstone. Yellowstone Forever Institute instructors have permission from the National Park Service to manipulate plants, rocks, bones, etc. for educational purposes and will return them to their natural positions and locations.

General etiquette: Yellowstone Forever Institute groups will be considerate of other visitors and respect the quality of their experience. Voices and vehicle sounds carry great distances and affect both wildlife and people—remaining silent or very quiet while watching wildlife lets the sounds of Yellowstone (including wolf howls) prevail.

Roads and vehicles: Expect wildlife on the road, and drive at or below the posted park speed limits. When stopping to observe wildlife or other park features, the Yellowstone Forever Institute will move vehicles entirely off the road. If there is no safe pullout available, we will drive to the next safe place and walk back to observe the wildlife. We will not stop in the middle of the road, and should a traffic jam develop as a result of our activities, we will cease the activity.

Properly dispose of waste: We will pack out all trash, leftover food, and litter. Your instructor will discuss techniques for properly disposing of human waste in the field.

Traveling lightly: When hiking or walking in Yellowstone, we will use existing trails and boardwalks. We will follow appropriate techniques when walking off-trail. Walking around muddy or wet places in the trail increases erosion and negatively affects the resource; proper equipment is essential to hiking ethically. Participants should come adequately prepared with the equipment listed for their program and should expect to walk through mud, snow or puddles in the trail.

Thank you for helping us set a good example in Yellowstone!
Plan on extra driving time in the park. The speed limit is 45 mph or lower. There may also be construction delays. Visit [www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/hours.htm](http://www.nps.gov/yell/planyourvisit/hours.htm), call the recorded NPS Road Report at 307.344.2117, or contact a visitor center for up-to-date travel information.

**The road between Tower Fall and Chittenden Road will be completely closed until April 2022.**