

Tioga Road/Big Oak Flat Road

This byway offers a spectacular passage over the Sierra Nevada. Drive through the highest automobile pass in California and experience an elevation change of over one mile. Experience glacier-carved granite peaks, pristine lakes, wildflower-covered meadows and lush evergreen forests with Giant Sequoia groves in this serene yet rugged landscape.



Local Information

Yosemite National Park

209-372-0200 (visitor info)

(209) 379-1075 (roads & trails)

Length: 64 miles / 102.4 km

Time 1.5 hours to drive or 3 hours
to to visit places along the

Allow: way.

Visitor Services

Fees



There is a fee to enter Yosemite National Park.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities



Due to the nature of Yosemite National Park, it is common to see pedestrians and mountain bikes along the byway. National Park entrance fees are reduced for people entering on foot, bicycle, or motorcycle.

Camping



For nearby campground reservations:

- ReserveUSA.com(National Forest Campgrounds).
- ReserveAmerica.com(State and Federal Campgrounds).

Food



Food services can be found at White Wolf and Tuolumne Meadows.

Gasoline



Gas is available at Crane Flat, located at the intersection of Big Oak Flat Road and Tioga Road, except in the winter. White Wolf and Tuolumne Meadows also offer fuel services.



Lodging

Lodging services can be found at White Wolf and Tuolumne Meadows.

Special Considerations

The maximum speed limit is 45 mph along the byway. There are limited fueling opportunities, and there is a National Park entrance fee. To protect Yosemite's wilderness, there are quotas for overnight use. Free wilderness permits are required and are available at ranger stations and visitor centers. Be sure to read the information you receive with your permit and observe all regulations.

The byway is closed by snow in late winter. Please call ahead for conditions at 209-372-0200.

Restrictions

Tioga Road is closed during the winter from Crane Flat Junction to Lee Vining due to snowfall. Please call 209-372-0200 for updated road and weather information. Also, there is a National Park entrance fee.

Seasons

Best Time to Drive

The best time to drive the byway is from mid to late May through mid-November.

High Season

June, July, and August are the busiest months to drive the byway.

Map and Directions



Legend:

■ Point of Interest	▲ Campground	▬ Featured Byway	🌊 Water	🗺️ State Border and Background
🌲 Park	⛺ Picnic/Rest Area	▬ America's Byways	🌿 Wildlife Refuge	🏙️ Urban Area
⚡ Mountain	🛣️ Interstate	▬ Other Byway	🌲 National Forest and National Park Land	🏘️ Tribal Nation
🏙️ City	🛣️ U.S. Highway	▬ Other Road	🌿 Wilderness Area	🏢 Military Base
🌟 Capital	🛣️ State Highway	⋯ Trail		

Driving Directions

The byway begins at the Big Oak Flat Yosemite National Park entrance, at the State Route 20 junction south of Mather. Follow State Road 120 as it winds through Yosemite National Park. The byway ends at the Tioga Pass gate.


Getting to the Byway



Nearby Cities

Sacramento, CA (136 miles / 218.87 km, 2 hours 45 minutes)

[Context map](#)

Start:  2892 N St. Sacramento, CA
[N 38.569° W 121.470°](#) [?]


Directions:

- Get on CA-99 south.
- Turn left on CA-4 east.
- Turn right on CA-4 east.
- Turn onto CA-120.
- Stay on CA-120 until you reach Yosemite National Park.
- The byway begins on CA-120 at Yosemite National Park.

Junction with byway: * CA-120 at the N entrance of Yosemite National Park near Aspen Valley, CA
[N 37.810° W 119.873°](#) [?]

San Francisco, CA (132 miles / 212.43 km, 3 hours 15 minutes)

[Context map](#)

Start:  500 5th St. San Francisco, CA
[N 37.778° W 122.400°](#) [?]

Directions:

- Get on I-80.
- Merge onto I-580 east.
- Continue straight as you merge onto I-205.
- Get onto I-5 north and get off on CA-120 east.
- Stay on CA-120 until you reach Yosemite National Park where the byway begins.

Junction with byway: * CA-120 at the N entrance of Yosemite National Park near Aspen Valley, CA
[N 37.810° W 119.872°](#) [?]

Road Trip:

National Park Tour: Yosemite National Park

Departure:	Tioga Pass Ent.
Destination:	Big Oak Flat Station
Time to allow:	2 days

The Tioga Road/Big Oak Flat Road National Scenic Byway is nestled within the borders of Yosemite National Forest. Full of scenic, natural and historical treasures, the byway offers numerous opportunities for both learning and recreation.

Travel time along the byway itself is about 90 minutes, however, visitors will want to dedicate an entire day or more to really discover the unique treasures of Yosemite National Park. This tour of Yosemite along the Big Oak Flat and Tioga Roads and Highway 41 (Wawona Road) will take you through the following:

- The nearly 10,000 ft. Tioga Pass from the Inyo National Forest into Yosemite
- The beautiful Tuolumne Meadows
- Views of Tuolumne Peak, Tenaya Lake, and Mt. Hoffmann
- Crane and Big Oak Flat
- The Merced and Tuolumne Sequoia Groves
- Hetch Hetchy Reservoir
- Yosemite Valley (including Bridalveil Falls, Glacier Point, and Half Dome)
- Historic Wawona
- The Tunnel Trees of Mariposa Grove

Day 1

- **Start: Tioga Pass Ent.**

- **Stop 1: Tuolumne Meadows**

Directions from previous place:	Continue down Tioga Road/Big Oak Flat Road
Distance from Previous Site:	10 miles / 16.0 km
Travel Time from Previous Site:	20 minutes
Suggested Time at This Site:	30 minutes



Get out here and take advantage of all the the tours and tram rides available. Expect to spend several hours learning and exploring. You might also take advantage of the concessions offered by the Park. There are many sights to see and various activities not mentioned here, but take your time and enjoy this national treasure.

- **Stop 2: Tenaya Lake**

Directions from previous place:	Continue along the Byway.
Distance from Previous Site:	15 miles / 24.0 km
Travel Time from Previous Site:	30 minutes
Suggested Time at This Site:	30 minutes

Surrounded by forest, grassland, and granite cliffs, Tenaya Lake is the perfect spot to stop along the Byway. If it's hot out, brave the alpine waters or just relax on the sandy beach.

- **Stop 3: Tuolumne Grove**

Distance from Previous Site:	10 miles / 16.0 km
Travel Time from Previous Site:	20 minutes
Suggested Time at This Site:	1 hour

The former route of the Big Oak Flat Road leads downhill from Crane Flat into the Tuolumne Grove of Big Trees, a cluster of about 25 sequoias. A self guided nature trail guides visitors.

- **Stop 4: El Capitan**

Distance from Previous Site: 15 miles / 24.0 km
Travel Time from Previous Site: 30 minutes
Suggested Time at This Site: 30 minutes



World-famous for rock climbing, BASE jumping, and other frightening activities, El Capitan is the tallest cliff in the valley. Watch the climbers from a distance for a few minutes, or spend a week clinging to the finely textured granite.

- **Overnight Point: Yosemite Village**

Directions from previous place: Continue along Big Oak Flat Road for a few miles.
Distance from Previous Site: 5 miles / 8.0 km
Travel Time from Previous Site: 10 minutes

Yosemite Village is the heart of the National Park. Here you'll find lodges, gift shops, and all kinds of amenities.

Total Distance Traveled in Day 1: 55 miles / 88.0 km

Day 2

- **Stop 1: Yosemite Falls**

Distance from Previous Site: 15 miles / 24.0 km
Travel Time from Previous Site: 30 minutes
Suggested Time at This Site: 30 minutes

At 1,430 feet, Yosemite Falls is the tallest waterfall in North America. Take a short walk to the lower falls or embark on the all-day hike to the upper falls for a rewarding view.

- **Stop 2: Half Dome**

Directions from previous place: From Yosemite Village, take the shuttle to the trailhead.
Suggested Time at This Site: 20 minutes



One of the most famous sights in the valley, Half Dome's unique shape soars over 1300 feet from the valley floor. Take a couple of days to climb the 8.5 mile trail and cable climb to Half Dome's top or just photograph it from the bottom.

- **Stop 3: Merced Grove**

Directions from previous place: Park at the trailhead and hike in to Merced Grove.

Distance from Previous Site: 2 miles / 3.2 km

Travel Time from Previous Site: 45 minutes

Suggested Time at This Site: 20 minutes

The Merced Grove is one of three sequoia groves in Yosemite Park. Merced is the only grove in the park that is not accessible by car. A rewarding two-mile hike leads the traveler to the grove of about 20 trees.

- **End: Big Oak Flat Station**

The Big Oak Flat Information Station offers an immense amount of information about Yosemite National Park. A definite stop for those wanting to learn more about the area.

Total Distance Traveled in Day 2: 17 miles / 27.2 km