


MEDIA KIT

 Tuolumne Grove of Giant
Sequoias, Yosemite National Park

Only In Tuolumne County

A single destination with three incredible vacations. Experience iconic **Yosemite** adventures, make golden discoveries in California's **Gold Country** or explore the potential of an exciting **High Sierra** trip. Just 2 ½ hours east from the San Francisco Bay Area and 2 hours from the Sacramento area, Tuolumne County is close, affordable and uniquely amazing at creating unforgettable memories.

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Fun Facts

The two highest mountain passes in the Sierra Nevada are in Tuolumne County, **Highway 120** in Yosemite National Park and **Highway 108** to the north.

Columbia State Historic Park is an authentic Gold Rush town featuring the largest single collection of existing Gold Rush-era structures in California.

Columbia was once the 2nd largest city and is the birthplace of the **Cinco de Mayo** celebration.

The **Bennett Juniper** is the largest known juniper tree in the United States and is located in the Stanislaus National Forest. It is said to be 3,000-6,000 years old.

A replica of Mark Twain's cabin is built around the fireplace and chimney of his original cabin where the infamous author resided during the winter of 1864-1865. It's located about one mile off Highway 49 near the northern boundary of Tuolumne County.

Over **300** movies, television shows and commercials have been filmed in Tuolumne County.

Featured in *Wild Wild West*, *Back to the Future III*, and many more movies and TV shows, the **Sierra No. 3**[®], one of the most recognizable steam locomotives, is on display and operates at Railtown 1897 State Historic Park in Jamestown.

Hurst Ranch offers a unique wine tasting experience in the railroad station from Clint Eastwood's movie, *Unforgiven*, situated on-site, which also happens to be where Grizzly Adams once lived.

A 77-mile section of the **Pacific Crest Trail** traverses Tuolumne County's High Country between Tuolumne Meadows in Yosemite National Park and Sonora Pass.

The **Iron Door Saloon** in Groveland is California's oldest continuously operating saloon.



GETTING HERE

Natural Wonders Well Within Reach

By car and by air, it's easy to visit Tuolumne County. The closest airports are located in San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento and Fresno with a scenic 2 – 3-hour drive that follows. Road conditions are generally favorable, however during the winter months drivers may be required to have chains on their tires – or at least packed in their car – to access certain roads, particularly those in Yosemite National Park.

Driving Distance

FROM SACRAMENTO: 95 MILES (153 KM), 1 HOUR AND 57 MINUTES

FROM DUBLIN/PLEASANTON: 98 MILES (157 KM), 1 HOUR AND 54 MINUTES

FROM OAKLAND: 124 MILES (199 KM), 2 HOURS AND 15 MINUTES

FROM SAN JOSE: 129 MILES (209 KM), 2 HOURS AND 29 MINUTES

FROM SAN FRANCISCO: 132 MILES (213 KM), 2 HOURS AND 31 MINUTES

FROM FRESNO: 148 MILES (238 KM), 3 HOURS AND 19 MINUTES



Map not to scale

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Fun fact: Over half of Yosemite National Park is located in Tuolumne County and it is the less crowded half. Yosemite National Park sees millions of visitors a year. As many visitors flock to the popular Yosemite Valley Floor and fight crowds to snap the perfect picture of Half Dome or El Capitan, very few will make their way to places like Hetch Hetchy, Carlon Falls, Tuolumne Meadows and the Tuolumne Grove of Giant Sequoias. These less crowded areas are just as awe-inspiring as the popular landmarks but come with many bonuses.

Another appealing factor is sustainable travel. By visiting the less crowded areas of Yosemite National Park, visitors can help to reduce their footprint and preserve this natural gem for generations to come.

Lesser-known Yosemite Trails:

Hetch Hetchy Reservoir (where park reservations are not required) is an expansive deep blue lake, is a water source for San Francisco. It is just as awe-inspiring as the iconic Yosemite Valley, but with less crowds. The trails along Hetch Hetchy Reservoir lead to views of the tremendous granite walls, deep river canyons, and hidden waterfalls like Wapama Falls.

The Tuolumne Grove of Giant Sequoias is another lesser-known trail in Yosemite National Park. Comparable in beauty to its famous rival the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias, visitors will find this 1.5 mile trail less crowded and just as jaw dropping with ancient giants. In the winter this trek can be experienced with snowshoes.

Tuolumne Meadows in the upper region of Yosemite National Park is a large, open subalpine meadow graced by the winding Tuolumne River and surrounded by majestic peaks and domes. This area is seasonal due to its high elevation. Trails here range in difficulty from easy to strenuous and can be enjoyed in a day or multi-day backpacking trips. The views are breathtaking with crystal clear lakes like Tioga Lake, sprawling meadows, granite domes and mountain peaks.

[VisitTuolumne.com/yosemite](https://www.visitTuolumne.com/yosemite)

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

Park Entry Requires a Reservation 

A reservation is required to enter the park on some dates in 2024.

Peak-Hours Reservation
required between 5 am and 4 pm

APRIL 13 – JUNE 30 Saturdays, Sundays, & holidays only

JULY 1 – AUGUST 16 Daily

AUGUST 17 – OCTOBER 27 Saturdays, Sundays, & holidays only

RESERVATIONS ARE NOT REQUIRED TO VISIT THE HETCH HETCHY AREA OF THE PARK OR TO GO WITH A PARK-AUTHORIZED GUIDE SERVICE OR ON YOSEMITE AREA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM (YARTS).



STORY IDEA

Tuolumne County's Beer, Wine, & Cider Scenes

There's a little slice of California Wine Country plus excellent craft beverage indulgences in Tuolumne County. Wine connoisseurs or just those who love enjoying a glass of award-winning wine, craft beer, or apple cider are in for a real treat. Whether exploring Yosemite National Park, Gold Country or the High Sierra, plan a stop at one or all of the area's wonderful tasting rooms, breweries, and wineries. Before visiting, join the [Tuolumne County Craft Beverage Trail](#), a mobile passport featuring discounts and opportunities to win prizes.

For Wine Lovers

The varietals of Tuolumne County and the surrounding region fit tastefully into the ranks of California wines. Great outdoor adventures complement your visit to boutique tasting rooms, where friendly ambiance is paired with unique, award-winning Sierra foothill varietals.

Gianelli Vineyards: This family vineyard has a long history steeped in wine. The original owners had strong ties to Italy, and they created a little piece of Italy in Tuolumne County. As the winery and vineyards continue to thrive, the winemaker and owners continue to educate their fellow vintners and the public about the wonderful, expressive character of Italian varietals grown in the Sierra Foothills. The tasting room is located in the scenic rolling foothills outside of Jamestown.

Inner Sanctum Cellars Winery & Tap Room at Basecamp: From the bountiful foothills of Tuolumne County comes a limited and premium wine. Inspired by the Gianelli Family, owners Karen and Pete ensure Inner Sanctum is driven by lasting friendships, deep family roots, and the creation of remarkable wines. The tasting room, tap room, and picnic grounds are located between Sonora and Columbia.

Arthur Michael Vineyards and Winery: This family-owned boutique vineyard and winery produces and serves excellent high-quality Cabernet, Barbera, Primitivo, Zinfandel, Petite Sirah and Sangiovese. The tasting room is located in downtown Jamestown and the vineyard is located on volcanic soil below Table Mountain, five miles west of town.

Hurst Ranch Depot: A wine tasting experience doesn't get more unique than indulging in some great wine in the railroad station from Clint Eastwood's movie, *Unforgiven*, situated on-site. The site also happens to be where Grizzly

Adams once lived! At Hurst Ranch in Jamestown, their grapes are all grown on-site where the vineyard gets a perfect balance of hot, bright sunshine, and the sustainable farming techniques that produce a low-yielding and exceptionally high-quality grape.

For Beer Afficionados

"Hop" on the Tuolumne County craft beer scene. From long-established breweries to brand new establishments, each of Tuolumne County's craft breweries offer unique brews, atmospheres, and stories.

Around the Horn Brewing Company: The fun-spirited micro brewery makes something for everyone, including those who don't particularly care for beer. Their beers are always changing, so there's no getting bored there. Located on Highway 120 just a few minutes west of Groveland, it's a great stopping off point on the way to Yosemite National Park.

Bear Tent Brewing Company: The small batch brewery is located in historic Jamestown and is named after a tavern from 1853 that was located on the same property where the brewery stands today. Owned by two close friends, guests feel like they are their friend too while enjoying their assortment of hand crafted beer. There's also a dog-friendly patio.

Sonora Brewing Company: Located in historic downtown Sonora, it was the first brewery in the Sonora city limits since 1907. They offer 12 delicious in-house brewed beers on tap, brewed weekly, plus an extensive dining menu.

For Cider Enthusiasts

Indigeny Reserve: This family-owned apple farm and cider distillery serves up delicious and refreshing organic hard apple cider, flavored vodkas, and apple brandy. The beautiful park-like setting offers picnic grounds, easy hiking trails, creek-side grassy areas, gift shop, and tasting room located on the outskirts of Sonora. The outdoor spaces are dog-friendly.

STORY IDEA

Tuolumne County, Surprisingly Sustainable

Tuolumne County is a small community with a large impact on sustainability and stewardship practices. With over half of Yosemite National Park, California Gold Country and the High Sierra, over 70% of Tuolumne County is public land. From sustainable business practices to tourism lead initiatives, Tuolumne County is leading the way to preserve the natural beauty of this Northern California outdoor destination.

Local Businesses Stewardship and Sustainability Initiatives:

- **Rush Creek and Evergreen Lodges:** Rush Creek and Evergreen Lodges at Yosemite are sister properties that are both B Certified Corporations. Evergreen Lodge was the first gray-water system property in Tuolumne County and Rush Creek Lodge has one of the largest gray-water systems in the state of California. They use some of their recycled water to maintain the growth of the surrounding landscape and forests.
- **Echo Adventures Cooperative:** Echo Adventures Cooperative is a local outfitter and Certified B Corporation. They offer socially and environmentally sustainable guided adventures, vacation packages and travel experiences in Yosemite National Park and throughout the Sierra. Echo was founded in 2016 and prioritizes quality guest experiences, member empowerment, environmental sustainability and community development over profits.

- **Indigeny Hard Cider Reserve:** Nothing at this 160-acre apple orchard goes to waste. Opened to the public since 2012 by the Watson family, Indigeny Reserve uses every last apple, apple waste and wood. The building that contains the tasting room, gift shop, cidery and distillery reflects the Watson's sustainability commitment and was constructed using harvested and re-purposed cedar and oak wood that was milled on-site. And for the leftover product that is produced from the crafting the hard cider is used to make brandy and vodka.

Regional Stewardship and Sustainability Initiatives:

- **Yosemite Facelift:** Yosemite Facelift is an annual stewardship project started OVER 20 years ago by Ken Yager, a Yosemite climber and guide. Yosemite Facelift is responsible for collecting over a million pounds of trash over the past decade. The week-long event brings in people of all ages and abilities from all over the world to contribute anything from one hour of simple trail or roadside trash collection to several days of major cleanups. Some local companies even offer initiatives like Rush Creek Lodge and Spa where Facelift participants can trade trash for spa treatments, for which the lodge won the prestigious Visit California Poppy Award for Stewardship and Sustainability in 2024. In 2022, Visit Tuolumne County and partners worked to expand Facelift into the Yosemite Gateway town of Groveland. Groveland Facelift® is now an annual event.

Firefall Ranch- With its 2024 grand opening, Firefall Ranch proudly joins its two long-established sister properties. Firefall sits on 300 sprawling acres of meadowland and Sierra foothills along Yosemite's Highway 120 West corridor, the most direct route from the San Francisco Bay Area. With 55 standalone cottages and villas spread throughout the property, there is space for guests to enjoy a secluded, nature-forward getaway enveloped in pristine natural beauty.

firefallranch.com

Chicken Ranch Casino Resort- Coming in Summer 2024! On Highway 108 and near the gateway to Yosemite, Chicken Ranch Casino Resort will be a premier destination for leisurely getaways and conferences and meetings in Northern California with over 190 rooms and a 9,600 sq. ft. convention center.

chickenranchcasino.com

The Sonora Inn Renovation- New renovations completed in 2024 bring this historic hotel beyond its roots to embrace modern elegance and comfort. Located conveniently in the Gold Rush town of Sonora, California, The Sonora Inn once hosted celebrities like Grace Kelly and Drew Barrymore while they were in town filming, and it continues to offer unparalleled hospitality. The stylish selection of rooms and suites offers something for everyone, with distinct options to suit any traveler. Upgraded meeting space is available also.

thesonorainn.com

Yosemite Flights- The husband and wife team at Yosemite Flights bring you highlights of the spectacular nature of the Sierra Nevada Mountains and Yosemite National Park, giving you an unforgettable aerial experience.

yosemiteflights.com



Yosemite Flights

Black Oak Casino Resort Expansion- The Black Oak Casino Resort in the town of Tuolumne is raising to a new level with the opening of Elevate, an all ages indoor action park featuring a trampoline park, golf simulators, and much more. Coming in 2024, the new pool area will feature an adult only pool with bar and lounge and an all new kids zone filled with slides and water features.

blackoakcasino.com

Miller's Off Road Adventures- Miller's takes thrill seekers on guided Jeep tours via the back roads of Tuolumne County through the Stanislaus National Forest. Each tour is led by a knowledgeable and professional guide, but guests can drive their own Jeep if they wish to do so. There are designated stops to take in the scenery and snap the perfect picture to cherish memories made.

millersoffroadadventures.com



Accommodations

Waking up to breath-taking beauty is one of the many rewards waiting in Tuolumne County. There are **lodging accommodations** available spanning a wide variety of types. Relax in a secluded mountain resort, soak up the charm of a historic B&B, snuggle up in a cozy vacation home, glamp in luxury, camp in a covered wagon or stay under the stars at one of the convenient campgrounds. There's a welcoming place to stay for every budget.

Popular Annual Events

Mother Lode Round-Up Parade & Rodeo - May

“Saddle up” for a tribute to the Western heritage of the Mother Lode with the Round-Up Parade and Rodeo in Downtown Sonora on Mother’s Day weekend.

Cinco de Mayo Celebration in Columbia State Historic Park - May

Columbia is birthplace of the Cinco De Mayo celebration in 1862. Enjoy the annual family event with street dancers, mariachis, vendors, food and much more.

Columbia Diggins 1852 - May

Step back in time to the year 1852 with over 150 volunteers who recreate a gold diggings encampment during the early Gold Rush period.

Twain Harte Outhouse Races - June

It is just as it reads--Outhouse Races! Every summer, enthusiasts from all over bring their own unique versions of outhouses to race to win coveted trophies in front of enthusiastic spectators.

Groveland Grind Mountain Bike Race - June

Presented by the non-profit organization, Groveland Trail Heads, this mountain bike race is a multi-terrain, adventure ride at Yosemite National Park's doorstep.

Groveland 49er Festival & Chili & Salsa Cookoff - September

Experience a fun small town tradition with a parade, vendors, live music and dancing, beard contest, and a chili and salsa cook-off.

The Polar Express at Railtown 1897 State Historic Park - November/December

Relive the magical journey of The Polar Express on a train ride to the North Pole with many of the story’s characters.



California State Parks



Christina Wilkinson



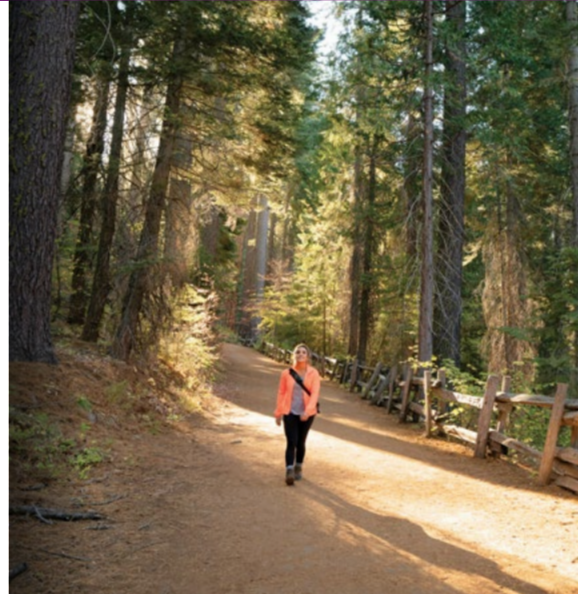
In Yosemite National Park, walk in the splendor of ancient giant sequoias in the Tuolumne Grove of Giant Sequoias, which is located just off of Highway 120 East (also known as the Tioga Road) and is accessible year-round. Or, travel a bit further during the summer months to the incomparable expanse of the subalpine meadow, Tuolumne Meadows. At Hetch Hetchy Reservoir, visitors find the expansive deep blue lake, that is a water source for much of San Francisco, surrounded by granite peaks. Also, an uncrowded trail that leads to uncommon waterfalls that are comparable in beauty to their more famous rivals in Yosemite Valley follows the edge of the reservoir.*

The Highway 120 corridor, the most direct highway into Yosemite from the San Francisco Bay Area, does not fall short of recreation, history and culture. In the town of Groveland, the Groveland Yosemite Gateway Museum provides a vast look at the natural and cultural history of the area. While in Groveland, wander through town to discover unique shops and stop by the Iron Door Saloon, California’s longest continuously operating saloon. The stunning Pine Mountain Lake 18-hole championship golf course is open to the public year-round, and horseback riding is available during summer.

On the Stanislaus National Forest, which is adjacent to Yosemite, whitewater rafting with one of several renowned outfitters on the Wild and Scenic Tuolumne River is an adventure like no other. Hiking, mountain biking, exciting off-road Jeep tours and more easily fill up the days. There are several restaurants to relax in at the end of a full day, and call it a night at one of the historic lodging properties or enjoy a private rental near scenic and private Pine Mountain Lake or in the beautiful countryside.

Yosemite Area Itinerary

*See Yosemite Peak-Hour Reservation information on page 4.



Miller's Off-Road Adventures

Tuolumne County’s Gold Country offers an authentic Gold Rush experience with its rich, lively and thriving historic towns such as Jamestown, Sonora, and Columbia. Your treasure, new or old, is waiting to be discovered in unique specialty shops or fine art galleries that line the streets. Enjoy food and drink in an historic inn, take in a superior live theatre performance in a venue where shows have entertained for over a century, or try your luck with 24-hour gaming action. Springtime offers massive wildflower displays along several popular trails. Wineries, craft breweries and a hard apple cider distillery enthusiastically share their local beverage creations in unique locations.

Two California State Historic Parks, Railtown 1897 and Columbia, transport visitors to a past era when the West was bustling with those searching for gold or a new way of life.

Railtown 1897 State Historic Park, located just a few blocks from Main Street in Jamestown, is a must-see with one of the few remaining working railroad roundhouses in the U.S., steam locomotives and railroad cars of the historic Sierra Railway. The highlight of this state park is truly a movie star—Sierra No. 3®, known as the movie star locomotive, has been seen in hundreds of movies, television shows and commercials.

There’s no place better to get immersed in California’s Gold Rush history than in Columbia State Historic Park where visitors stroll along wooden sidewalks, ride an authentic stagecoach, pan for gold and chat with knowledgeable and friendly townspeople dressed in period attire. Unique restaurants, a working blacksmith shop, an old-fashioned bowling alley, a theatre and shops supplied with treats and trinkets add to the ambiance of the town where a new surprise is around every corner. The park features the largest collection of Gold Rush era brick buildings in California.

[Gold Country Itinerary](#)

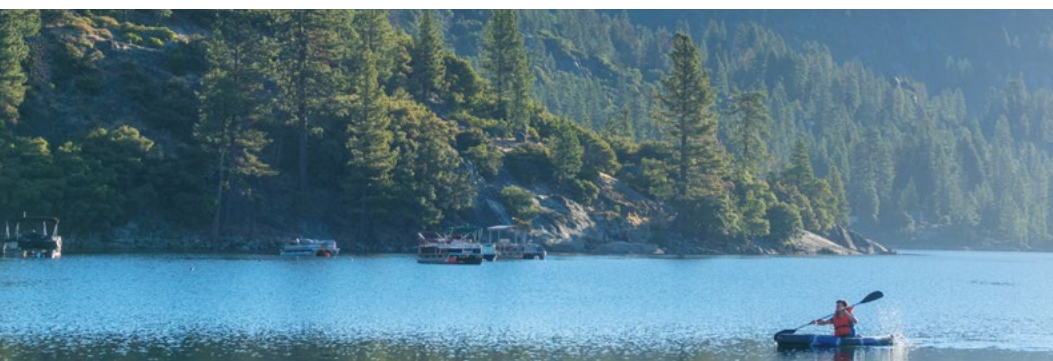


Explore the town of Twain Harte and try your hand at the retro Twain Harte Miniature Golf, California's oldest miniature golf course, then gear up for an adventurous day in the High Sierra. The Summit Ranger Station is an ideal place to start, and to get information on hiking trails, fishing spots and more. Across the street from the Ranger Station, the Shadow of the Mi-Wok Trail offers an easy ¼ mile walk through an outdoor exhibit showing the Me-Wuk Indians' way of life. Down the street, Pinecrest Lake is popular for summertime camping, swimming, fishing (ADA fishing dock available), boating, hiking, horseback riding and paddle boarding.

Nearby Dodge Ridge Mountain Resort is a year-round attraction and is the closest downhill skiing and snowboarding mountain to the Bay Area. It's known for its old-school vibe with uncrowded slopes and is the kind of place where devotees learned how to ski as kids and then return with their own kids. As part of the Powder Alliance passholders have access to 23 resorts around the globe.

Along Upper Highway 108, the Trail of the Gargoyles is an easy hike and features some interesting volcanic formations that resemble gargoyles. The views look like those on another planet. Donnell Vista provides a short, easy walk to a dramatic scenic overlook safely perched high above Donnell Reservoir. Sweeping views of the reservoir below and the peculiar rock formations off in the distance, the Dardanelles, are mesmerizing. Kennedy Meadows is a great spot for camping, fly-fishing and horseback riding, while Clark Fork Meadow is ideal for a relaxing picnic, hiking, camping and fishing as well.

[High Sierra Itinerary](#)





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