



Sequoia & Kings Canyon National Parks

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Best Hikes

- ➔ General Sherman Tree to Moro Rock (p164)
- ➔ Tokopah Falls (p164)
- ➔ Lakes Trail (p172)
- ➔ Zumwalt Meadow Loop (p167)
- ➔ Mist Falls (p168)
- ➔ Rae Lakes Loop (p169)

Best Places to Sleep

- ➔ Lodgepole Campground (p185)
- ➔ Sheep Creek Campground (p190)
- ➔ Hume Lake Campground (p189)
- ➔ John Muir Lodge (p190)

Why Go?

Claiming a cleft deeper than the Grand Canyon and forests harboring the world's largest trees, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks dazzle visitors with superlatives. Throw in opportunities for spelunking, splashing in swimming holes, horseback riding and backcountry hiking through granite-carved Sierra Nevada landscapes, and you have all the ingredients for a peak national-park experience.

Although larger than Yosemite, Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks receive less than half as many annual visitors as their more iconic neighbor to the north. Luckily, that makes solitude easy to find in these southern Sierra Nevada parks, even with five-star geological highlights, towering giant sequoias and Technicolor wildflower meadows all within reach. The two parks are administered together as one unit, with a section of the Giant Sequoia National Monument in the Sequoia National Forest looking like a bite out of a cookie.

Road Distances (miles)

Three Rivers	25			
Mineral King	50	30		
Grant Grove Village	25	55	75	
Cedar Grove Village	55	80	100	30
Lodgepole Village				
Three Rivers				
Mineral King				
Grant Grove Village				

Note: Distances are approximate

Entrances

Both national parks are only accessible by car from the west, and no roads cross the Sierra Nevada mountain range, only trails. Furthest south, Sequoia National Park's main entrance is at Ash Mountain in the foothills. Furthest north, Big Stump is Kings Canyon National Park's only entrance.

All park entrances are open 24 hours a day year-round. Some roads – including Mineral King Rd beyond Three Rivers in Sequoia National Park, Hwy 180 past the Hume Lake turn-off in Kings Canyon National Park, and Big Meadows Rd in the Sequoia National Forest off the Generals Hwy – are closed during winter. Exact opening and closing dates vary by area of the park and depend on the weather from year to year. The most remote and hazardous roads may be inaccessible from autumn's first snowfall until the snow melts in late spring or early summer.

DON'T MISS

Although there's a lot to see just inside both national parks, the neighboring Sequoia National Forest also has amazingly scenic spots, from ancient sequoia groves to alpine lakes. In fact, to drive between the national parks on the Generals Hwy, or from Grant Grove to Cedar Grove via the Kings Canyon Scenic Byway, you'll pass right through the Sequoia National Forest and its Giant Sequoia National Monument, making it easy to stop off and see the sights, score a campsite or hike less-trammeled trails into the wilderness.

When You Arrive

- Although administered as a single unit by the National Park Service (NPS), Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks are actually two national parks.
- The two parks together are commonly referred to as 'SEKI.' The phrase 'Kings Canyon' may refer to the national park or may just mean the canyon itself.
- The 7-day entrance fee (per vehicle \$20) covers both national parks and the nearby Hume Lake District of the Sequoia National Forest.
- If you arrive at night when park entrance stations are unstaffed, pay the entrance fee the next morning at the closest entrance station or upon exiting the park.
- The national parks' free seasonal newspaper, *The Visitor Guide*, is loaded with information on activities, campgrounds, lodging, shuttles, visitor services, safety tips and more.

PLANNING TIPS

For 24-hour recorded info, including road conditions and construction updates, call ☎ 559-565-3341. The park website (www.nps.gov/seki) offers free downloads of the seasonal newspaper and trip-planning tips.

Fast Facts

- Total area: 1353 sq miles (865,964 acres)
- Foothills (Sequoia) elevation: 1720ft
- Grant Grove (Kings Canyon) elevation: 6589ft

Reservations

- **DNC Parks & Resorts** (☎ 801-559-4930, 866-807-3598; www.visitsequoia.com) Lodging in Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks.
 - **NPS & USFS Campgrounds** (☎ 877-444-6777, 518-885-3639; www.recreation.gov)
 - **Sequoia-Kings Canyon Park Services Company** (☎ 877-828-1440, 559-565-3388; www.sequoia-kingscanyon.com) Some Sequoia National Forest lodgings.
- ## Resources
- **NPS** (www.nps.gov/seki/planyourvisit/lodgingoutsideparks.htm) More area accommodations.
 - **Sequoia National Forest** (www.fs.usda.gov/sequoia) All about the Giant Sequoia National Monument.