

Where to Stay & Eat in Yosemite

There is no lack of choices for accommodations in and near Yosemite National Park. Yosemite Valley is the hub for lodging, dining, and other services within the park, and is usually quite crowded in summer, but it offers the best location—close to Yosemite’s main attractions and with easy access to the park’s shuttle-bus system.

A more narrow scope of choices is available outside the valley, but still within the park: You can camp at Wawona, Tuolumne Meadows, White Wolf, and a host of other campsites; and there are privately owned cabins and bed-and-breakfasts. In addition, there are some delightful (and generally less expensive) accommodations, campgrounds, and restaurants outside the park in the gateway communities of El Portal, Mariposa, Oakhurst, and Groveland.

1 Lodging

INSIDE THE PARK

Lodging in the park is under the auspices of **Yosemite Concession Services Corp.** Rooms can be reserved up to 366 days in advance (☎ 559/252-4848; TTY 209/255-8345). You can make reservation requests online at www.yosemitepark.com. Reservations are also accepted by mail at Yosemite Reservations, 6771 N. Palm Ave. Fresno, CA 93704.

In addition, more than 130 private homes in the park can be rented through **Redwoods in Yosemite**, P.O. Box 2085, Wawona Station, Yosemite National Park, CA 95389 (☎ 888/225-6666 or 209/375-6666; www.redwoodsinyosemite.com). Offerings range from rustic cabins to luxurious vacation homes, and all are fully furnished and equipped with linens, cookware, and dishes. Rates range from \$193 a night for a one-bedroom cabin to \$500 a night for a five-bedroom spread; there are usually three-night minimum stays in summer, and two-night minimums in winter.

The Ahwahnee ★★ This hotel's accommodations are fit for a king or queen, and it has hosted both. Queen Elizabeth II slept here, as have U.S. President John F. Kennedy, actor Clint Eastwood, poet Alfred Noyes, and NFL quarterback Steve Young. It's tough to top the Ahwahnee, a six-story cement, concrete, and stone structure that offers beautiful views from nearly every window. The hotel has a number of common rooms on the ground floor. There are three fireplaces large enough to stand in, and the rooms are furnished with large overstuffed sofas and chairs, perfect for reading or playing games after a day of hiking. Guest rooms are upstairs, with suites located on the top floor, accessible only by a special elevator key. Suites include a pair of rooms: one for sleeping and another for sitting. The Sunroom Suite is a bright pair of rooms in lime and yellow with comfy lounges and floor-to-ceiling French windows that open out onto the valley. The Library Room's rich decor includes a fireplace and walls of books. Regular rooms offer a choice of two doubles or one king-size bed, with a couch, plush towels, and snugly comforters.

Yosemite Valley. ☎ 559/252-4848. 123 units. \$358 guest rooms and cottages; 2-room suites from \$793; 3-room suites from \$1,152. DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking available, or take the shuttle bus to stop no. 3. **Amenities:** Restaurant (see "Where to Eat," later in this chapter), bar; outdoor pool; tour desk; limited room service; in-room massage services; babysitting for children out of diapers; dry cleaning; laundry service; express checkout; valet parking. *In room:* TV, VCRs (available upon request), complimentary coffee and tea.

Curry Village Curry Village is best known as a mass of more than 400 white canvas tents tightly packed together on the valley's south slope. It was founded in 1899 as a cheap lodging option for valley visitors at a mere \$2 a day, but guests can kiss those \$2 days goodbye. Still, it's an economical place to crash, and gives you something of the feeling of a camping vacation without the hassle of bringing your own tent. One downside is that these tents are basically canvas affairs, and this is bear country, so you'll need to lock up all foodstuffs and anything that bears might think is food (even toothpaste) in bear-proof lockers (provided free), which may be a healthy walk from your tent-cabin. Curry Village also has just over 100 attractive wood cabins with private bathrooms; about 80 wood cabins that, like the tent-cabins, share a large bathhouse; and a number of motel rooms. Canvas tents have wood floors, sleep two to four people, and are equipped with beds, bedding, dressers, and electrical outlets. The wood cabins are much more substantial (and comfortable), and

the motel rooms are just what motel rooms should be—functional and adequate.

Yosemite Valley. ☎ **559/252-4848**. 628 units. Reservations suggested. \$59 double tent-cabin; \$77 double cabin without bathroom; \$88 double cabin with bathroom; \$110 double motel room. DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking is available, or take the shuttle bus to stops nos. 12, 13, 14, and 19. **Amenities:** 3 dining options (see “Where to Eat,” later in this chapter); outdoor pool; raft rentals; bicycle rentals; children’s programs; tour desk; mountaineering school; sports shop.

Housekeeping Camp *Value* A fun, funky place to spend the night, this is the closest thing to camping without pitching a tent. The sites are fence-enclosed shanties built on concrete slabs, each with a table, cupboard, electrical outlets, shelves, a mirror, and lights. The sleeping areas have two single-size bunks and a double bed.

Yosemite Valley. ☎ **559/252-4848**. 266 units, all with shared restrooms and shower facilities. Reservations required. \$58 per site (up to 4 people; \$4 per extra person). Shower house. DC, DISC, MC, V. Closed Nov–Mar. **Amenities:** Grocery store; self-serve laundry.

Tuolumne Meadows Lodge Not a lodge, but another group of canvas tent-cabins. Like White Wolf Lodge (see below), these have tables and wood-burning stoves and sleep up to four. The lodge is smack-dab in the middle of prime hiking territory that’s less crowded than the valley below, but there is still a fair amount of foot and vehicle traffic. This is also home base for wilderness trekkers and backcountry campers.

Tioga Rd., Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite National Park. ☎ **559/252-4848**. 69 canvas tent-cabins, all with shared bathroom and shower house. \$63 double; additional \$8 per adult or \$4 per child. DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking available in an adjacent lot. Closed in winter. From Yosemite Valley, take CA 120 east 60 miles (about 1½ hr.) toward Tioga Pass. **Amenities:** Restaurant (see “Where to Eat,” later in this chapter); tour desk; small general store; mountaineering store; gas station; post office; stables.

Wawona Hotel *AA* This is a classic Victorian-style hotel made up of six stately white buildings set near towering trees in a green clearing. Don’t be surprised if a horse and buggy rounds the driveway by the fishpond—it’s that kind of place. What makes it so wonderful? Maybe it’s the wide porches, the nearby nine-hole golf course, or the vines of hops cascading from one veranda to the next. The entire place was designated a National Historic Landmark in 1987. Clark Cottage is the oldest building, dating back to 1876, and the main hotel was built in 1879. Rooms are comfortable and quaint with a choice of a double and a twin bed, a king bed, or one

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double bed. (Most of the latter share bathrooms.) All rooms open onto wide porches and overlook green lawns. Clark Cottage is the most intimate. The main hotel has the widest porches and plenty of Adirondack chairs, and at night the downstairs sunroom hosts a pianist. Check out the whistling maintenance man who hits every high note in the “Star Spangled Banner” while the American flag is hoisted each morning (leaving many bystanders speechless as more than a few Wawona employees chime in to create a veritable whistling orchestra).

Wawona Rd., Wawona, Yosemite National Park. ☎ 559/252-4848. 104 units, 54 with shared bathroom. \$87–\$161 double. Additional charge for extra adults \$16. DC, DISC, MC, V. From Yosemite Valley, take CA 41 south 27 miles toward Fresno. **Amenities:** Dining room (see “Where to Eat,” later in this chapter), lounge; large outdoor pool; golf course; horseback riding; 2 outdoor tennis courts; information station; grocery store; gas station.

White Wolf Lodge Imagine a smaller, quieter, cleaner Curry Village with larger tents, each equipped with a wood-burning stove. This small outpost was bypassed when Tioga Road was rebuilt. White Wolf Lodge is not a lodge, but a cluster of canvas tent-cabins, with a few wooden cabins out front. It’s halfway between the valley and the high country, and generally isn’t overrun with visitors. It’s a popular spot for midweek hikers and weekend stopovers. It can get crowded but retains a homey feeling. Maybe it’s the fact that there’s no electricity after 11pm when the generator shuts off. Wood cabins all have a private bathroom and resemble a regular motel room, with neat little porches and chairs out front. Canvas cabins beat the Curry Village style by a mile. Each sleeps four in any combination of twin and double beds. There’s a table, and the helpful staff will show guests how to work the wood-burning stove. Benches outside give guests a place to rest their weary feet and watch the stars. Bathrooms here are clean, and guests control access to the facilities except for a few midday hours when nearby campers can pay for showers.

Tioga Rd., White Wolf, Yosemite National Park. ☎ 559/252-4848. 24 canvas tent-cabins, 4 cabins. All canvas cabins share bathroom and shower house. \$59–\$84 double. Additional charge of \$10 per adult in cabins, \$8 adult in tents, and \$4 per child in cabins or tents. DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking available across a 2-lane road. Closed in winter. From Yosemite Valley, take CA 120 east 33 miles toward Tioga Pass. **Amenities:** Restaurant (see “Where to Eat,” later in this chapter); tiny general store.

Yosemite Lodge *Kids* The comfortable and clean motel-type rooms here are popular because of the lodge’s location, with some

units offering views of Yosemite Falls. Rooms have two double beds, or one double bed with two twin beds, and most rooms have balconies or patios. It's not uncommon to see deer and other wildlife scamper through this area. Spring mornings bring a wonderful orchestra of songbirds and stunning views at sunrise.

Yosemite Valley. ☎ **559/252-4848**. 245 units. Reservations suggested. \$110–\$143 double. Lower rates Nov–Mar. DC, DISC, MC, V. Parking available or take the shuttle bus to stop no. 6. **Amenities:** Food court (see “Where to Eat,” later in this chapter), lounge; ice cream stand; large outdoor pool; bicycle rentals; children’s programs; tour desk; babysitting; general store.

Yosemite West Lodging For the unforgettable experience of living in Yosemite National Park (if only for a few nights), rather than just visiting, what could be better than renting a private home, cottage, or condominium unit located right in the park? Yosemite West rents a variety of privately-owned accommodations, ranging from fairly simple rooms with one queen-size bed and a kitchenette, suitable for one or two people, to luxurious vacation homes with full-size kitchens, two bathrooms, living rooms, and beds for up to eight people. Kitchens and kitchenettes are fully equipped, all bedding is provided, TVs and VCRs are on hand, and there are outdoor decks. All units also have gas or wood-burning fireplaces. The homes are in a forested section of the park, about 10 miles from Yosemite Valley and 8 miles from Badger Pass.

P.O. Box 36, Yosemite National Park, CA 95389. ☎ **559/642-2211**. www.yosemitewestreservations.com. A fluctuating number of privately-owned cottages and private homes. Most units \$99–\$265 double. Lower rates early Sept to mid-Dec and early Jan to early May. Take CA 41 for 12 miles north of Wawona. *In room:* TV/VCR.

OUTSIDE THE PARK

If you choose to stay outside the park, you’ll find a plethora of choices, many of which are less expensive than lodging in the park.

ALONG CALIFORNIA 120 (WEST OF THE PARK)

Groveland Hotel 🏨 There’s enough history, good food, and conversation here to give travelers pause before heading into Yosemite. Groveland is about as quaint a town as you can get, and Peggy and Grover Mosley have poured their hearts into making their hotel an elegant but comfortable place to stay. The building was vacant for years and on the verge of crumbling when the Mosleys decided to forgo a quiet retirement from very interesting careers (you’ll have to ask for yourself) to renovate and reopen the hotel. They’ve done a great job, and the hotel is now a historic landmark.

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The hotel consists of two buildings—one constructed in 1849 to house gold miners and the other built in 1919 for workers constructing the nearby Hetch Hetchy Dam. Standard rooms are spacious, with feather beds, hair dryers, and phones with dataports. Some have TVs. All rooms are filled with antiques, and have thick down comforters, beds you want to jump on, and plush robes. Suites have large spa bathtubs and fireplaces. Many rooms are named after women of the Sierra and local characters, although Lyle's Room is named for the hotel's resident ghost. Return patrons swear it's true. Then there's Charlie's Room, named for a hard-driving, tobacco-spitting stagecoach driver and farmer. When he died, the townspeople learned that he was a she.

18767 CA 120, Groveland, 95321. ☎ 800/273-3314 or 209/962-4000. Fax 209/962-6674. www.groveland.com. 17 units, including 3 suites. \$135–\$210 double. Extra person \$25. Rates include buffet breakfast. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Pets accepted with approval. **Amenities:** Small dining room (see “Where to Eat,” later in this chapter); 18-hole golf course 1 mile away; tennis courts; room service; safe on premises; stables. *In room:* A/C, TV (in some rooms), dataport, hair dryer.

Hotel Charlotte 🏡 Walking into the Charlotte is like stepping back in time. Built in 1918 by an Italian immigrant of the same name, it's warm, comfortable, no-nonsense, and a good choice for those who enjoy the ambience of a historic western hotel. The hotel's rooms—all upstairs—are small, quaint, and offer the basics, but nothing more. The rooms have twin, double, and queen beds. Several rooms adjoin each other and have connecting bathrooms (perfect for families). Two units have showers only; the rest have shower/claw-foot tub combos. There are two common television rooms. The continental breakfast is great—strong coffee, fresh warm muffins, cereals, fruit, and juices.

18736 CA 120, Groveland. ☎ 800/961-7799 or 209/962-6455. Fax 209/962-6254. www.hotelcharlotte.com. 10 units. \$67–\$83 double. Rates include continental breakfast. AE, MC, V. **Amenities:** Restaurant (see “Where to Eat,” later in this chapter). *In room:* A/C.

Inn at Sugar Pine Ranch This whitewashed inn, set among tall pine trees on 62 acres, is just outside of Groveland, in the direction of the park. Its buildings date back to the turn of the century and beyond. (They underwent an extensive rehab in 2003.) The historic main building is an 1860 farmhouse, and there are also separate cottages from the mid-20th century. Rooms are comfortable with knotty pine furnishings, and three of the cottages have fireplaces and whirlpools. Some rooms have balconies; all units offer pleasant views.

21250 CA 120, Groveland, 95321. © 209/962-7823. Fax 209/962-7823. www.bizware.com/sugarpineranch. 12 units and cottages. \$110–\$150 double. Extra person \$25. Rates include continental breakfast. MC, V. Children 5 and older welcome. **Amenities:** Outdoor pool. *In room:* A/C, no phone.

ALONG CALIFORNIA 140

Best Western–Mariposa These are typical motel accommodations—clean, comfortable, and attractive, but nothing fancy. This is a good choice for park visitors who are seeking a comfortable bed and a hot bath for a reasonable price.

4999 CA 140, Mariposa. © 800/528-1234 or 209/966-7545. Fax 209/966-6353. www.yosemite-motels.com. 78 units. \$84–\$89 double. Rates include continental breakfast. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Outdoor pool; whirlpool; restaurants and shops within walking distance; public transportation into the park nearby. *In room:* A/C, TV.

Cedar Lodge Eight miles outside of the park, this lodge offers big rooms in a wooded setting, with easy access to the Merced River. Variety makes this property an attractive option for visitors, with units ranging from standard motel-type rooms to luxurious king suites with whirlpools for two. There are also family units and rooms with kitchenettes.

9966 CA 140 (P.O. Box C), El Portal, CA 95318. © 800/321-5261 or 209/379-2612. Fax 209/379-2712. www.yosemite-motels.com. 211 units, some family units, 1 3-bedroom suite with private pool and Jacuzzi. \$99–\$135 double; \$289–\$399 suite. AE, MC, V. **Amenities:** 2 restaurants; large outdoor pool; smaller indoor pool; whirlpool; public buses to the park. *In room:* A/C, TV, rental VCRs and movies.

Comfort Inn–Mariposa Adjacent to a historic church and a historic jail, this well-kept modern motel offers large, clean rooms, an attractive outdoor swimming pool, and a whirlpool. It's conveniently located within walking distance of several restaurants and is also close to public transportation to Yosemite.

4994 Bullion St. (P.O. Box 1989), Mariposa, CA 95338. © 800/321-5261 or 209/966-4344. Fax 209/966-4655. www.yosemite-motels.com. 61 units; some suites with full kitchens. \$79–\$89 double; \$189–\$359 suite. Rates include continental breakfast. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Outdoor pool; whirlpool. *In room:* A/C, TV.

Highland House Bed & Breakfast Secluded on 10 forested acres, with easy access to hiking and horseback trails that lead into the nearby Sierra National Forest, this bed-and-breakfast inn is a wonderful place to relax. A mix of Cape Cod and Colonial styles of architecture, Highland House is comfortably and tastefully decorated. Common areas include the living room, with a large stone fireplace with woodstove insert, and a great den.

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Rooms include Forest Retreat, with a stone fireplace, king-size four-poster bed, TV/VCR/CD player, a tub for two, and a large separate shower with two shower heads—the usual one plus another aimed to sooth your aching back muscles. The other two guest rooms are also inviting. Spring Creek is blue and white with a queen bed; and Morning Dove is a cozy dormer room with a queen. The big deal, though, is breakfast, with fresh baked goods and a hot entree such as biscuits and sausage gravy or caramel apple French toast. Those who want to get an early start into the park can request breakfast to go. The inn is completely nonsmoking. There's a great den, with books and a pool table.

3125 Wild Dove Lane, Mariposa, CA 95338-9037. ☎ 888/477-5089 or 209/966-3737. Fax 209/966-7277. www.highlandhousebandb.com. 3 units. \$85–\$140 double. Rates include full breakfast. AE, MC, V. From Mariposa head east (toward Yosemite National Park) on CA 140 for about 4 miles, turn south (right) onto Triangle Rd. for about 6 miles, and shortly after a 1-lane bridge, turn left onto Jerseydale Rd. Go 1½ miles and turn right onto Wild Dove Lane, then watch for marked driveway off to the right for the Highland House. **Amenities:** Stables. *In room:* A/C, TV/VCR.

Mariposa Lodge Three generations of the Gloor family have run this top-notch motel on Mariposa's main drag for over 30 years, and their standards are surprisingly high. The place has grown over the years from one building to three, with smaller (albeit reliably clean and maintained) rooms in the original structure, and larger, more expensive rooms in the newer two. The suites here are not truly two-room suites, but oversize rooms with Mission decor, impressive vanities, and many private balconies. Landscaping is also superlative for a roadside motel, especially the garden courtyard around the pool. High-speed wireless Internet access (Wi-Fi) is a modern touch.

5052 CA 140 (P.O. Box 733), Mariposa, CA 95338. ☎ 800/966-8819 or 209/966-3607. Fax 209/966-5021. 45 units. \$69–\$99 double. AE, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Outdoor pool, Jacuzzi; restaurants and shops within walking distance. *In room:* A/C, TV, fridge, microwave, coffeemaker, iron.

Miners Inn Located in a rustic setting, Miners Inn is a standard motel that strives to recapture the Old West. Deluxe rooms include spa tubs and fireplaces, and kitchenette units are available. There is a wine shop on-site.

CA 140 and CA 49 N., Mariposa, CA 95338. ☎ 209/742-7777. Fax 209/966-2343. 78 units. \$50–\$139 double. Extra person \$6. AE, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Restaurant; lounge, outdoor pool; whirlpool; public transportation directly to Yosemite. *In room:* A/C, TV.

Poppy Hill Bed & Breakfast ★★ This restored country farmhouse, surrounded by large oak and pine trees, provides a delightful escape from the hustle and bustle of the developed areas of the park and nearby gateway communities. The inn is decorated with a variety of antiques, most from the 1800s, but also including “new” furnishings such as the 1925 Wurlitzer baby grand piano in the parlor. (You’re welcome to tickle its ivories.) Each of the three attractive rooms declares its name in its individual decor—Mariposa lily, iris, and of course, poppy—all area flowers. Rooms have queen-size beds (the Mariposa lily room also has a twin-size day bed), down comforters, bathrobes, antique furnishings, and lots of personal touches. The Mariposa lily room has a shower/tub combo; the other two rooms have large showers.

There are outside sitting areas, and a great amount of rolling lawn and flowers—one hillside bursts into color when the poppies bloom in spring. The second floor balcony overlooks an ancient spreading oak tree, which entices the birds to entertain you while you relax in quietude. An aboveground swimming pool and large whirlpool nestle in an attractive rose arbor. The full homemade breakfasts are extra special, with a hot entree such as eggs picante, puffed apple pancake, or croissant French toast. The entire inn is non-smoking.

5218 Crystal Aire Dr., Mariposa, CA 95338. ☎ 800/58-POPPY [587-6779] or 209/742-6273. www.poppyhill.com. 3 units. \$110–\$125 double. Rates include full breakfast. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Take CA 140 east out of Mariposa (toward Yosemite National Park) 3 miles, turn left on East Whitlock Rd., travel for 1¼ miles, turn right onto Crystal Aire Dr., and go ⅛ mile to the B&B. **Amenities:** Outdoor pool; whirlpool. *In room:* A/C, no phone.

The Yosemite Bug ★ *Finds* Much more than a hostel, The Yosemite Bug literally has something for everybody, with accommodations that range from well-maintained dorm rooms and tent-cabins to delightful, handsomely appointed private rooms. The dorm rooms (single-sex, coed, or group) are basic, with bunk beds, heat, ceiling fans (no air-conditioning), individual lockable storage boxes, and conveniently located communal bathrooms. The tent-cabins have wooden floors and framing, no heat, and different bed combinations, including family units with a double and two single beds. Private rooms are all different, offering a variety of bed combinations and attractive, fun decors ranging from modern Western to Victorian to the tie-dye-heavy “Austin Powers” room. Private rooms are heated and have swamp coolers, and those with private bathrooms have showers only (no tubs); others share a communal bathroom.

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There are no room phones, although public phones are available on site. There are also a limited number of campsites (tents only), each with a table and grill, and access to restrooms and showers.


Situated in the forest, most of the units have woodsy, national park–like views. There are handicap-accessible rooms and cabins, and a kitchen is available for those who are staying in the hostel dorm rooms. In addition, there is a self-service laundry and a computer for checking e-mail (\$1 for 10 min.). Mountain bike rentals are available in summer (\$12 per day guests, \$15 non-guests), and in winter you can rent snowshoes (\$8 per day for everyone). Non-guests can take a shower for \$4. The Yosemite Bug is along the route for the shuttle bus into Yosemite National Park (\$10 round-trip). Maybe the best feature of all is the idyllic swimming hole right down the slope from the main lodge, especially on those dog days of summer.

6979 CA 140 (P.O. Box 81), Midpines, CA 95345. ☎ 209/966-6666. Fax 209/966-9667. www.yosemitebug.com. 67 hostel beds, 14 private rooms with private bathrooms, 10 private rooms with shared bathrooms, 12 tent-cabins. Hostel beds \$14–\$16 per person; private room with bathroom (2–5 people) \$65–\$125; private room with shared bath (2–5 people) \$40–\$70; tent-cabin or walk-in campsite (2–4 people) \$17–\$50. DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Restaurant (see “Where to Eat,” later in this chapter); kitchenette for dorm lodgers.

Yosemite View Lodge Just outside the national park’s Arch Rock entrance, this lodge offers guests accommodations on the Merced River. Rooms are attractively decorated with dark wood furnishings and floral bedspreads. Some units feature fireplaces and spa tubs for two.

11136 CA 140 (P.O. Box D), El Portal, CA 95318. ☎ 800/321-5261 or 209/379-2681. Fax 209/379-2704. www.yosemite-motels.com. 279 units, some with kitchenettes. \$109–\$149 double. MC, V. **Amenities:** 2 restaurants; 2 outdoor pools, indoor pool; 3 outdoor whirlpools; public buses into the park available. *In room:* A/C, TV, microwave (some rooms), refrigerator (some rooms).

ALONG CALIFORNIA 41

Château du Sureau  One of the standout B&Bs in all of California (and for that matter the entire U.S.), the lavish Château du Sureau is as close as you get to Europe on the west side of the Atlantic. A world away from the rest of Oakhurst, the 9,000-square-foot inn has an elegant, near-magical ambience to it (which you pay for in spades), radiating from the villa that houses the stylish, uniquely decorated guest rooms, such as the extraordinary Saffron Room with a king-size ebony and ivory bedroom set from 1834, and the Sweet Geranium Room, with a private balcony overlooking

sumptuous gardens and a canopied king. There are details both rustic (fresh fruit and fireplaces) and modern (CD players), and scads of impressive objects of art around every corner. The grounds here are similarly phenomenal—featuring a lawn-size chessboard with 3-foot-high pawns!—and the restaurant, Erna's Elderberry House, is sublime (see “Where to Eat,” later in this chapter).

48688 Victoria Lane (P.O. Box 577), Oakhurst, CA 93644. ☎ 559/683-6860. Fax 559/683-0800. www.chateausureau.com. 11 units, including a private house. \$350–\$550 double; \$2,800 guesthouse. Rates include full breakfast. AE, MC, V. **Amenities:** Restaurant; outdoor pool; bocce court. *In room:* A/C, no phones.

Comfort Inn–Oakhurst This attractive Comfort Inn offers generic motel-style accommodations with large, clean, pleasantly-decorated rooms. This is one of the larger motels outside the park and may have that last-minute room you need.

40489 CA 41, Oakhurst, CA 93644. ☎ 800/321-5261 or 559/683-8282. Fax 559/658-7030. www.yosemite-motels.com. 113 units, including 3 suites. \$89–\$95 double; \$129 suites. Rates include continental breakfast. Lower rates off season. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** Outdoor pool; whirlpool. *In room:* A/C, TV, fridge, hair dryer, iron, coffeemaker.

The Homestead ✨ Secluded on 160 acres of woodland with plenty of trails, this off-the-beaten-path establishment is a gem. The delightful cottages here are rustic yet modern, with four-poster log beds, saltillo tile floors, stone fireplaces, and separate sitting and dining areas, plus the conveniences of TVs and air-conditioning. Each cabin has its own unique bent, from the romantic Garden Cottage to the rustic Ranch Cottage (which is the only family-friendly option at this adult-oriented getaway). Kitchens are part of the package in all rooms except the cozy Star Gazing Loft, which is smaller but an astronomy buff's dream. The top-rated River Creek Golf Club is just a mile away. Smoking is not allowed.

41110 Rd. 600, Ahwahnee, CA 93601. ☎ 559/683-0495. Fax 559/683-8165. www.homesteadcottages.com. 5 cottages. \$134–\$214 double; \$40 per additional person. DISC, MC, V. 4½ miles north of Oakhurst on CA 49, then south on Rd. 600 for 2½ miles. *In room:* A/C, cable TV, kitchen, hair dryer, iron, no phone.

Hounds Tooth Inn ✨ With a Victorian look and a birth date in 1997, the Hound's Tooth is a good choice for those who want easy access to Yosemite from the south side, but want more intimacy than a motel or sprawling resort can offer. Set a few hundred feet from the highway, the off-white exterior here sheaths a dozen very similar guest rooms, each with modern conveniences of phone and TV and the flair of antique reproductions and in-room sinks.

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There's also a private summer house (850 sq. feet) with a king bed and a kitchenette, plus a Jacuzzi and private patio. The garden area out back is something of a work of art, perfect for whiling away an evening in peace and quiet. Smoking is not allowed.

42971 CA 41, Oakhurst, CA 93644. ☎ **888/642-6610** or 559/642-6600. Fax 559/658-2946. www.houndstoothinn.com. 13 units, including 1 cottage. \$95–\$175 double; \$225 cottage. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. *In room:* A/C, cable TV, in-room hot tubs, kitchenette.

Tenaya Lodge ★★ The top-rated Tenaya Lodge seems to have one foot in the Adirondack Mountains and another in the Southwest. This 3- and 4-story resort opened in 1990 on 35 acres full of hiking trails, with a full slate of organized recreational activities. The comfortable rooms are ultramodern, and the grand lobby has an impressive fireplace built of river rock that towers three stories. Tenaya Lodge is a cozy choice for winter visitors.

1122 CA 41, Fish Camp. ☎ **800/635-5807** or 559/683-6555. Fax 559/683-0249. 244 units, including 20 suites. \$149–\$319. Add \$20–\$80 for suites. Children stay free in parents' room. Buffet breakfast \$30 per couple. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. **Amenities:** 3 restaurants; indoor and outdoor pools; health club; game room; room service; on-site massage; general store; activity desk; seasonal sleigh or hay rides. *In room:* A/C, TV, minibar, safe.

2 Camping

There are numerous camping opportunities both within and surrounding Yosemite National Park. Brief descriptions of individual campgrounds follow, and you'll find additional details in the campground chart in this chapter.

It's important to remember that when camping in this area, proper food storage (bear-proof canisters or lockers) is *required* for the sake of the black bears in the parks, as well as for your safety. See local bulletin boards for instructions.

INSIDE THE PARK

First, the bad news: Yosemite Valley lost half of its roughly 800 campsites during a flood in early 1997. The lost campsites will eventually be replaced elsewhere in the park, but no one's predicting when. Therefore, campsite reservations are a really good idea. Reservations are accepted beginning on the 15th of each month and can be made up to 5 months in advance. That said, make your reservations (☎ **800/436-7275**; www.reservations.nps.gov) as soon after the 15th of the month, 5 months in advance, as you can, especially for sites in the valley. Unless noted otherwise, pets are accepted in

all of the following campgrounds. Additional campground information is available by touch-tone phone at ☎ **209/372-0200**.

Wilderness permits are required for all overnight backpacking trips in the park, whether you decide to use an established campsite or pick out your own camping area. No wilderness camping is allowed in the valley. For more information on wilderness camping, including Yosemite's High Sierra camps, see chapter 4, "Hikes & Other Outdoor Pursuits in Yosemite."

The busiest campgrounds in the park are in Yosemite Valley. All four of the following campgrounds are in Yosemite Valley and have flush toilets and access to the showers nearby at Camp Curry (\$2). Upper, Lower, and North Pines Campgrounds require reservations. **Upper Pines** is pretty and shady, but you won't find peace and quiet here in the summer. Parking is available or you can take the shuttle bus to stops no. 15 or 19. **Lower Pines Campground** is wide open with lots of shade but limited privacy. Still, it's a nice place with clean bathrooms, and it's bordered on the north by a picturesque meadow. Parking is available, or take the shuttle bus to stop no. 19. **North Pines** ☘ is beautifully situated beneath a grove of pine trees that offer lots of shade but little privacy. The campground is near the river, roughly a mile from Mirror Lake. Parking is available, or take the shuttle bus to stop no. 18. **Camp 4** (also called Sunnyside Walk-In) has tent sites only. It's a small campground that's become a magnet for hikers and climbers taking off or returning from trips. It's situated behind Yosemite Lodge, near the trail head for Yosemite Falls, and close to rocks frequently used by novice rock climbers. Pets are not permitted. Parking is available about 50 yards away, or take the shuttle bus to stop no. 7.

Elsewhere in the park, **Bridalveil Creek Campground** at Glacier Point is set along Bridalveil Creek, which flows to Bridalveil Fall, a beauty of a waterfall, especially after a snowy winter or wet spring. Near beautiful Glacier Point, and featuring flush toilets, this campground is away from the valley crowds but within a moderate drive to the valley sights. The campground can accommodate some pack animals; call for information. Take CA 41 (from either direction) to Glacier Point Rd. The campground is about 8 miles down the road.

Several campgrounds are located in the vicinity of Big Oak Flat Entrance, roughly 20 to 25 miles from Yosemite Valley. **Hodgdon Meadow**, which has RV and tent sites, including some walk-in sites, requires reservations May through September. It has flush toilets and is located about 1 mile inside the entrance along North Crane

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Creek and near the Tuolumne River's south fork. The Big Trees are 3 miles southeast. **Crane Flat**, a large, pleasant campground with flush toilets, is located on Big Oak Flat Road near the Tioga Road turnoff. **Tamarack Flat Campground** is a bit off the beaten path and therefore more secluded than most, which means fewer folks rest their heads here. Equidistant from Yosemite Valley and Tuolumne Meadows, it has pit toilets, does not allow pets, and is not suitable for large RVs or trailers. Take Tioga Road east from Big Oak Flat Road about 3 miles and turn right onto the access road. The campground is another 3 miles down the road.

Campgrounds in the White Wolf area include **Porcupine Flat**, which offers lots of shade, shrubs, and trees, although facilities are pretty much limited to pit toilets. Located near Yosemite Creek, you have a chance of finding a spot here if you're in a pinch. Pets are not permitted. It's along Tioga Road, 16 miles west of Tuolumne Meadows and 38 miles east of Yosemite Valley. The **White Wolf Campground**, secluded in a forest, is a generally delightful campground where you might want to spend several days. It has flush toilets and offers easy access to nearby hiking, with trails that lead to several lakes, including Grant Lake and Lukens Lake. Showers are available at nearby White Wolf Lodge for \$2. On the down side, mosquitoes make their presence felt here in summer. From Big Oak Flat Road, turn east onto Tioga Road, drive 15 miles to White Wolf Road, and turn left. The road dead-ends at the campground.

Among Yosemite's other campgrounds is **Tuolumne Meadows**, the biggest campground in the park and, amazingly, often the least crowded. Its location in the high country makes it a good spot from which to head off with a backpack. The site is also near the Tuolumne River, making it a good choice for anglers. In addition to standard RV/tent sites, the campground has 25 walk-in spaces for backpackers and eight group sites that can accommodate up to 30 people each. There are flush toilets, and showers can be bought nearby at Tuolumne Lodge for a fee. From Big Oak Flat Road, head east on Tioga Road for about 45 miles to Tuolumne Meadows.

Wawona Campground, which requires reservations May through September, has flush toilets and can accommodate pack animals; call for information. There's not much seclusion here, but the location, shaded beneath towering trees, is beautiful. The campground is near the Mariposa Grove of Giant Sequoias and is also close to the Merced River, which offers some of the better fishing in the park. The campground is about 1 mile north of Wawona. The

Yosemite Creek Campground (♠), set along Yosemite Creek, has pit toilets and little else but sometimes has sites available when the park's other campgrounds are full. From Big Oak Flat Road, head east on Tioga Road for about 30 miles and turn right on the access road. The campground is 5 miles down the road.

OUTSIDE THE PARK

Yosemite is surrounded by national forests that offer campgrounds that are comparable to the ones in the park, although often less developed and less crowded. There are also private campgrounds, which usually provide level sites, complete RV hookups, hot showers, coin-operated laundries, convenience stores, and other amenities.

WEST ALONG CALIFORNIA 120

The following campgrounds, located along CA 120 west of the park, are all in the Stanislaus National Forest's **Groveland Ranger District**, 24545 CA 120, Groveland, CA 95321 (☎ 209/962-7825; www.fs.fed.us/r5/stanislaus/groveland). They all have vault toilets and can accommodate rigs up to 22 feet long.

Lumsden Campground is located along the Tuolumne River, on a scenic stretch between the Hetch Hetchy and Don Pedro reservoirs. The campground offers fishing in a primitive setting but can get unbelievably hot in the summer. From Groveland, take CA 120 about 9 miles east to Ferretti Road, turn left and drive about 1 mile to Lumsden Road, turn right at Lumsden Road and travel about 5 miles on a steep, narrow, dirt road to the campground. **Lumsden Bridge Campground** is about 1½ miles past Lumsden Campground (on Lumsden Rd.). Set in a pine and oak forest along the Tuolumne River, it is a favorite of rafters because the location is close to some of the Tuolumne River's best (and most scenic) stretches of whitewater. The **South Fork Campground**, also located along Lumsden Road, near Lumsden and Lumsden Bridge Campgrounds, is a pretty spot near the Tuolumne River. It is recommended that trailers or vehicles with low ground clearance not be taken to any of the above three campgrounds.

The Pines Campground is located about 9 miles east of Groveland via CA 120, and although it's in a mixed conifer forest, it can get hot in the summer. Drinking water is available only in the summer. **Lost Claim Campground**, located about 12 miles east of Groveland via CA 120, offers easy access on a paved road. There are some trees and the river is nearby. Drinking water is supplied by a hand pump. Trailers are not recommended. Pretty **Sweetwater**

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Yosemite Campgrounds													
CAMPGROUND	ELEV. (FT.)	TOTAL SITES	RV HOOKUPS	DUMP STATION	TOILETS	DRINKING WATER	SHOWERS	FIRE PITS/ GRILLS	LAUNDRY	PUBLIC PHONES	RESERVATIONS POSSIBLE	FEES	OPEN
INSIDE YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK													
Bridalveil Creek	7,200	110	0	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	\$12	June-Oct
Camp 4	4,000	35	0	No	Yes	Yes	Nearby	Yes	Nearby	Yes	No	\$5	All year
Crane Flat	6,191	166	0	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	\$18	June-Oct
Hodgdon Meadow	4,872	105	0	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	May-Sept	\$18	All year
Lower Pines	4,000	60	0	Nearby	Yes	Yes	Nearby	Yes	Nearby	Yes	Yes	\$18	Mar-Oct
North Pines	4,000	81	0	Nearby	Yes	Yes	Nearby	Yes	Nearby	Yes	Yes	\$18	Apr-Sept
Porcupine Flat	8,100	52	0	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	\$8	July-Sept
Tamarack Flat	6,315	52	0	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	\$8	July-Sept
Tuolumne Meadows	8,600	304	0	Nearby	Yes	Yes	Nearby	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	\$18	June-Sept
Upper Pines	4,000	238	0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Nearby	Yes	Nearby	Yes	Yes	\$18	All year
Wawona	4,000	93	0	Nearby	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	May-Sept	\$18	
White Wolf	8,000	74	0	No	Yes	Yes	Nearby	Yes	No	Yes	No	\$12	July-Sept
Yosemite Creek (tent only)	7,659	75	0	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	\$8	July-Sept

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Campground, located 15 miles east of Groveland on CA 120, is in a mixed conifer forest with shady sites, but it also gets hot in summer.

ALONG CALIFORNIA 140

Jerseydale Campground, located in the Sierra National Forest, 1600 Tollhouse Rd., Clovis, CA 93611-0532 (☎ 559/297-0706; www.fs.fed.us/r5/sierra), is a great base for exploring the area, and provides refuge from the crowds. There are vault toilets and hiking trails, and you can get to the Merced River via a nearby trail head. From Mariposa, drive about 12 miles northwest on CA 49 to Jerseydale Road, which leads to the campground and adjacent Jerseydale Ranger Station.

A good choice for those who want all the amenities of a top-notch commercial campground is the **Yosemite-Mariposa KOA**, 7 miles northeast of Mariposa at 6323 CA 140; mailing address P.O. Box 545, Midpines, CA 95345 (☎ 800/562-9391 for reservations, or 209/966-2201; www.koa.com). Located 23 miles from the park entrance, this KOA has pines and oaks that shade many of the sites, a catch-and-release fishing pond, pedal-boats in the summer, a swimming pool, and a playground. There's also a convenience store and propane for sale. A kids' favorite is the train caboose containing video games. There are also a dozen camping cabins (you share the bathhouse with campers), with rates from \$48 to \$60.

ALONG CALIFORNIA 41

Two Sierra National Forest campgrounds (see contact information for Jerseydale Campground, above) offer pleasant camping, with vault toilets, in a woodsy atmosphere along CA 41, southwest of Yosemite. **Summerdale Campground** is about a mile north of Fish Camp via CA 41, on the south fork of the Merced River, and is often full by noon Friday. **Summit Campground**, in the Chowchilla Mountains, about 5 miles west of Fish Camp via a Forest Service Road, is a little campground that's often overlooked.

EAST ALONG CALIFORNIA 120

The Inyo National Forest operates a number of small, attractive campgrounds along CA 120, east of the national park. These include **Big Bend Campground**, offering flush toilets, 7 miles west of Lee Vining via CA 120. Located on the eastern Sierra along Lee Vining Creek, this campground is sparse but breathtaking. **Ellery Lake Campground**, which also has flush toilets, is at scenic Ellery Lake, about 9 miles west of Lee Vining via CA 120. **Junction**

Campground is near Ellery and Tioga lakes, with easy access to the Tioga Tarns Nature Trail. It has vault toilets and is 10 miles west of Lee Vining along CA 120.

At 10,000 feet, **Saddlebag Lake Campground** is the highest elevation drive-to campground in the state. The campground is situated along Saddlebag Lake and near Lee Vining Creek. It's beautiful and is worth staying and exploring for a while. It's also a great base for those who want to head out into the wilderness with a backpack. It has flush toilets. From Lee Vining, drive 10 miles west on CA 120, then turn north on Saddlebag Lake Road and go about 2 miles to the campground. **Tioga Lake Campground**, another high-elevation campground, is a pretty place to camp and has flush toilets. From Lee Vining, drive 10 miles west on CA 120.

Information on these U.S. Forest Service campgrounds is available from the **Mono Basin Scenic Area Visitor Center**, located on the west shore of Mono Lake (P.O. Box 429, Lee Vining, CA 93541; ☎ 760/647-3044), and the **Inyo National Forest**, 351 Pacu Lane, Suite 200, Bishop, CA 93514 (☎ 760/873-2400; www.fs.fed.us/r5/inyo).

3 Where to Eat

There are plenty of dining possibilities in and near the park, so you certainly won't go hungry. However, you won't find many bargains, so be sure to bring a full wallet.

IN THE VALLEY

Ahwahnee Dining Room 🌟🌟 AMERICAN/INTERNATIONAL Dining here takes your breath away. Even if you are a dyed-in-the-wool, sleep-under-the-stars backpacker, the Ahwahnee Dining Room will not fail to make an impression. This is where the great outdoors meets four-star cuisine, and it's a wonderful place to celebrate a special occasion. With understated elegance, the cavernous dining room, its candelabra chandeliers hanging from the 34-foot-high beamed ceiling, seems intimate once you're seated at a table. Don't be fooled—it actually seats 350. The walk from entrance to table is a long stroll that sets the restaurant's grand, open atmosphere. The menu changes frequently and offers a good variety of creative yet recognizable dishes, such as herb-crusted halibut with lobster risotto, a veal chop with spinach ravioli, and pan-seared filet mignon with forest mushroom ragout, a potato cake, and truffle sauce. The dinner menu includes suggested wines (from an extensive wine list) for each entree. Breakfast includes a variety of egg

Fun Fact **Food for Thought**

Yosemite Concession Services reports that Yosemite visitors consume over 100,000 gallons of milk, 100,000 hot dogs, 30,000 gallons of ice cream, and 2.5 million cups of coffee annually.

dishes, hotcakes, and the like, plus specialties such as a thick apple crepe filled with spiced apples and raspberry purée. Lunch choices include a grilled turkey quesadilla and grilled portobello mushrooms on a sun-dried tomato roll; and a variety of plates and salads. An evening dress code requires men to wear a coat and long pants (ties are optional).

Ahwahnee Hotel, Yosemite Valley. ☎ 209/372-1489. Dinner reservations required. Breakfast \$7.50–\$17; lunch \$7.50–\$16; dinner \$20–\$31; Sun brunch \$32 adults, \$17 children. DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Sat 7–10am, 11:30am–3pm, and 5:30–9:15pm. Sun 7am–3pm and 5:30–9:15pm. Shuttle bus stop no. 3.

Curry Dining Pavilion *Kids* AMERICAN A good spot for the very hungry. All-you-can-eat breakfast and dinner buffets offer a wide variety of well-prepared basic American selections at fairly reasonable prices.

Curry Village. Breakfast \$9.25 adults, \$5.50 children; Dinner \$12 adults, \$6.25 children. DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 7–10am and 5:30–8pm. Shuttle bus stops nos. 12, 13, 14, and 19.

Curry Taqueria Stand MEXICAN A good place for a quick bite, this taco stand offers spicy tacos, burritos, taco salads, beans, and rice.

Curry Village. \$3–\$6. No credit cards. Daily 11am–5pm; Fri–Sun also 8–11am. Closed in winter. Shuttle bus stops nos. 12, 13, 14, and 19.

Curry Village Coffee Corner COFFEE SHOP Specialty coffees and fresh-baked pastries are the fare here, and you can also get ice cream after 11am.

Curry Village, Yosemite Valley. Most items \$1–\$3. DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 6am–10pm. Shuttle bus stops nos. 12, 13, 14, and 19.

Curry Village Pizza Patio *Kids* PIZZA Need to watch ESPN? This is the place, but you may have to wait in line. One of the park's few big screens awaits inside, and if you're a sports buff, this is the place to be. The scenic outdoor patio offers large umbrellas, table service, and a great view of Mother Nature, plus or minus a hundred

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kids. The lounge also taps a few brews—nothing special, but a mix aimed to please. This is a great place to chill after a long day.

Curry Village, Yosemite Valley. Pizza \$8–\$16. DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily noon–9pm. Shuttle bus stop nos. 12, 13, 14, and 19.

Degnan's Cafe AMERICAN Adjacent to Degnan's Deli, this cafe offers specialty coffee drinks, fresh pastries, wrap sandwiches, and ice cream. It's a good place for a quick bite when you're in a hurry.

Yosemite Village. Most items \$1–\$4. DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 7am–7pm. Shuttle bus stop nos. D, 2, and 8.

Degnan's Deli ★★ *Value* DELI A solid delicatessen with a large selection of generous sandwiches made to order (plus incidentals), this is our top choice for a quick, healthy lunch or supper. Sometimes the ordering line gets long, but it moves quickly. This place is half market and half deli; in addition to the made-to-order sandwiches there is a selection of prepared items—soups, salads, sandwiches, desserts, and snacks—to carry off for a day on the trail. There's also a fairly good selection of beer and wine.

Yosemite Village. \$3–\$8. DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 7am–7pm. Shuttle bus stops nos. D, 2, and 8.

Degnan's Loft *Kids* ITALIAN This cheery restaurant, with a central fireplace and high-beamed ceilings, is adjacent to Degnan's Deli and Degnan's Cafe. This is a good choice for families due to the restaurant's kid-friendly atmosphere. The menu features pizza, calzones, lasagna, salads, and desserts.

Yosemite Village. Entrees \$4.25–\$21. DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily noon–9pm. Shuttle bus stop nos. D, 2, and 8.

Mountain Room Restaurant AMERICAN The best thing about this restaurant is the view. The food's good too, but the floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking Yosemite Falls are spectacular. There's not a bad seat in the house. We suggest the grilled chicken breast, which is flavorful and moist, as is the rainbow trout almondine and the Pacific salmon. Meals come with vegetables and bread. Soup or salad is extra. There are also entrees for vegetarians and an amazing dessert tray. The Mountain Room also has a good wine list, and the Mountain Room Bar and Lounge (open 4–10pm Mon–Fri and noon–10pm Sat–Sun) has an à la carte menu available.

Yosemite Lodge. Entrees \$17–\$29. DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 5:30–9pm. Shuttle bus stop no. 6.

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Village Grill AMERICAN The Village Grill is a fast-food joint that's a decent place to pick up a quick bite. It offers burgers, chicken sandwiches, and the like, and has outdoor seating.

Yosemite Village. Most items \$3.75–\$5.25. No credit cards. Daily 11am–5pm. Closed in winter. Shuttle bus stop nos. 1, 2, and 8.

Yosemite Lodge Food Court AMERICAN You'll find breakfast, lunch, and dinner at this busy restaurant (serving about 2,000 meals each day), which is a vast improvement over the traditional cafeteria. It's set up with a series of food stations, where you pick up your choices before heading to the centralized cashier and then to a table inside or else the outside seating area, which features tables with umbrellas and good views of Yosemite Falls. Food stations specialize in pasta (with a choice of sauces), pizza, deli sandwiches and salads, a grill (offering burgers, hot dogs, and hot sandwiches), meat-based and vegetarian entrees, desserts and baked goods, and beverages. There's also a hot breakfast food station offering traditional American breakfast items.

Yosemite Lodge. Entrees \$5–\$14. DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 6:30–10am, 11:30am–2pm, and 5–8:30pm. Shuttle bus stop no. 8.

ELSEWHERE IN THE PARK

Tuolumne Meadows Lodge AMERICAN One of the two restaurants in Yosemite's high country, the lodge offers something for everyone. The breakfast menu features the basics, including eggs, pancakes, fruit, oatmeal, and granola. Dinners always include a beef, chicken, fish, pasta, and vegetarian specialty, all of which change frequently. The quality can swing, but the prime rib and New York steak are consistently good.

Tuolumne Meadows, CA 120. ☎ 209/372-8413. Reservations required for dinner. Breakfast \$3.55–\$6.95; dinner \$8.65–\$19. DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 7–9am and 6–8pm.

Wawona Hotel Dining Room 🍴 AMERICAN The Wawona dining room mirrors the hotel's ambience—wide open, lots of windows and sunlight. And the fare is great. For breakfast choose from a variety of items, including the Par Three, a combo of French toast or pancakes, eggs, and bacon or sausage—just what you need before hitting the golf course. Lunch features a variety of sandwiches and salads. Dinner is delectable. In addition to some exceptional entrees, such as brown sugar-rubbed pork loin with apple-onion relish and bourbon sauce, Prime rib, and several seafood and veggie dishes, there are amazing appetizers. The cumin-crusting ahi, roasted whole garlic, and rock shrimp and potato risotto are sumptuous.

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Wawona Hotel, Wawona Rd. ☎ **209/375-1425**. Breakfast \$3–\$8; lunch \$5–\$10; dinner \$14–\$25. Sun buffets \$9.95 breakfast, \$16 brunch. DC, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Sat 7:30–10am, 11:30am–1:30pm, and 5:30–9pm; Sun 7:30am–10am (breakfast buffet), 10:30am–1:30pm (brunch buffet), and 5:30–9pm.

White Wolf Lodge AMERICAN A changing menu in this casual restaurant, with a mountain lodge atmosphere, offers a variety of American standards, with generous portions. Breakfast choices include eggs, pancakes, omelets, or biscuits and gravy; and dinner always includes beef, chicken, fish, pasta, and vegetarian dishes. Takeout lunches are also available from noon to 2pm.

White Wolf, Tioga Rd. ☎ **209/372-8416**. Reservations required for dinner. Breakfast \$3.85–\$6.95; dinner \$7–\$17. DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 7:30–9:30am and 5–8:30pm.

OUTSIDE THE PARK

In addition to the following restaurants, you'll find an outlet for the reliable **Pizza Factory** chain in Mariposa at CA 140 and 5th Street (☎ **209/966-3112**), which offers delivery service to downtown Mariposa.

Café at the Bug ☞☞ *Value* AMERICAN Ask the locals for their favorite secret place to get a great meal at a very reasonable price, and, if they'll tell you, it will likely be this bustling eatery. It's a noisy, busy, somewhat self-service restaurant at the Yosemite Bug, a hostel, lodge, and campground 10 miles from Mariposa on the way to Yosemite National Park. This casual restaurant contains several rooms with knotty pine walls, hardwood floors, wooden chairs, Formica tables, and an open-beamed ceiling which features suspended skis and a kayak. There's a wood stove, some games, and couches where lodgers lounge. You order at a counter and your food is delivered to your table.

The food is great: innovative American dishes with Mediterranean and California influences. Although the dinner menu changes nightly, popular entrees include a 16-ounce broiled top sirloin with pepper sauce and baked salmon with cantaloupe mango salsa. You also might have baked trout filet with butter pecan sauce, or baked portobello mushrooms stuffed with tomatoes, mushrooms, onions, garlic, basil, and feta cheese. From Memorial Day to Labor Day, smoked and barbecued pork ribs, salmon, beef sirloin kabobs, and half chickens are served on the outdoor deck on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays from 2 to 6pm. Breakfasts here range from bacon and eggs to pancakes or granola; and lunches, available from 7am to 3pm, include a variety of sandwiches prepared as sack lunches for those heading out into the park.

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At the Yosemite Bug, 6979 CA 140, Midpines. ☎ 209/966-6666. Breakfast and lunch items \$4–\$6; dinner entrees \$6.50–\$13. DISC, MC, V. Daily 7am–9pm.

Castillo's Mexican Food MEXICAN Established in 1955, this cheerful, cozy cantina serves generous portions of well-prepared Mexican favorites. Entrees come with salad, rice, and beans, and can also be ordered a la carte. A house specialty, the *Tostada Compuesta*, fills a hungry belly with your choice of meat, plus beans, lettuce, and cheese, stuffed into a bowl-shaped crisp flour tortilla and topped with avocado dip and sour cream. A variety of Mexican combo plates are served, and you can also choose several steak specialties or seafood dishes such as jumbo shrimp fajitas. For those who like their hot food with extra fire, there's *camarones a la diablo*—shrimp sautéed in butter, garlic, and crushed red chile peppers. The outdoor seating in a garden area is divine.

4995 5th St., Mariposa. ☎ 209/742-4413. Reservations recommended in summer. Lunch entrees \$5.95–\$11; dinner entrees \$7.95–\$15. AE, DISC, MC, V. Mon–Thurs 11am–9pm; Fri–Sat 11am–9:30pm. Closed Sun. Closes 1 hr. earlier in winter.

Charles Street Dinner House ★★☆☆ AMERICAN Locally famous for its charbroiled steaks (marinated and herb-crusted filet mignon and New York steak, 10 oz. each), the Charles Street Dinner House has been the locals' choice for fresh seafood and a variety of other specialties for more than 25 years. We especially recommend the New Zealand rack of lamb, broiled, with mint glaze; and the broiled Peking breast of duck, served with orange sauce. Or try the scallone—abalone and scallops sautéed with lemon butter and toasted almonds. The restaurant is located in a historic building from the 1800s, and decor is straight out of the Old West, with a huge wagon wheel in the front window and touches that include family photos and fresh flowers. Service is excellent.

5043 Charles St., Mariposa. ☎ 209/966-2366. Reservations recommended. Entrees \$8.50–\$31. AE, DISC, MC, V. Tues–Sun 5–9pm. Closed Jan.

Erna's Elderberry House ★★☆☆ EUROPEAN/CALIFORNIAN One of the most renowned eateries in the Yosemite area, this elegant restaurant at Château du Sureau is a feast for the eyes, with a contemporary seating area with purple walls and modern prints adjoining a more traditionally elegant room. Likewise, it is a feast for the taste buds, with a nightly changing menu that might include any number of European culinary traditions sculpted into a meal that is definitively Californian. Offerings might range from marinated mussels and chilled carrot-coconut soup to red pepper and prosciutto barded beef tenderloin, spinach gnocchi, and blueberry

yogurt terrine. Each menu comes with a list of recommended wines. Proprietor Erna Kubin-Clanin and company also offer regular gourmet cooking classes here.

48688 Victoria Lane (at Château du Sureau), Oakhurst. ☎ 559/683-6800. Reservations recommended. Prix-fixe dinners \$82, prix-fixe brunch \$33. AE, DISC, MC, V. Daily 5:30–8:30pm; Sun also 11am–1pm.

Groveland Hotel's Victorian Room 🍷🍷 CALIFORNIAN Top-notch food in a casual atmosphere is what you'll experience at this fine restaurant. The menu has something for everyone and is constantly changing to reflect what's fresh and in season. There's a sumptuous rack of lamb marinated in rosemary and garlic, salmon with fresh cucumber and dill, chicken breast with fresh fruit salsa, and more. The menu usually has fresh seafood and pasta specials, as well as an innkeeper's special. All entrees are served with soup or salad and fresh warm bread. The *Wine Spectator* award-winning wine list—wine being one of owner Peggy Mosley's passions—is fantastic, and in summer there is also courtyard dining.

18767 CA 120, Groveland. ☎ 800/273-3314 or 209/962-4000. Fax 209/962-6674. Reservations suggested in summer. Entrees \$17–\$24. AE, DC, DISC, MC, V. Daily 6–9pm in summer and 6–8pm in winter.

Happy Burger Diner 🍷🍷 *finds* AMERICAN One of the best fast-food joints we've seen anywhere, the Happy Burger offers practically any type of fast food you can think of—it claims to have the region's largest menu—with everything cooked fresh to order. The food here takes a few minutes longer than at your usual chain fast-food restaurants, but it's worth it. Breakfasts (served until 11:30am) include numerous egg dishes, French toast, pancakes, oatmeal, and the like. The lunch and dinner menu, served all day, features a multitude of charbroiled burgers, sandwiches, stuffed potatoes, Mexican dishes, salads, and dinner plates such as chicken fried steak, roasted or fried chicken, and fried fish and shrimp. Delivery to Mariposa motels is provided.

In typical fast-food style, you order and claim your food at the counter; then you can sit inside at booths, among the record album covers from the 1960s and '70s and a vintage pinball game, or go outside to picnic tables next to a children's play area.

5120 CA 140 (at 12th St.), Mariposa. ☎ 209/966-2719. Menu items \$3–\$15. AE, DISC, MC, V. Daily 6am–9pm.

Hotel Charlotte MEDITERRANEAN You'll find generous portions of beef, seafood, and pastas in a fine-dining atmosphere in the small dining room at this historic hotel. A variety of seasonal

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specials are offered, and staples include charbroiled filet mignon, New York steaks and daily seafood specials. You'll also find delicious artichoke chicken on the menu as well as several vegetarian choices. All meals include veggies, potato or rice, and bread, and the wine list is quite good.

18736 CA 120, Groveland. ☎ 800/961-7799 or 209/962-7872. Reservations suggested. Entrees \$9–\$20. AE, MC, V. Thurs–Mon 5–9pm. Closed Nov–Mar.

PJ's Cafe and Pizzeria PIZZA/SANDWICHES Best known as a pizzeria and burger house, PJ's serves a hearty breakfast with an eye toward helping lower our fat and cholesterol intake. That being said, you can still order bacon and eggs without getting the evil eye. All meat and egg dishes use low-cholesterol cooking oil, and PJ's also uses only lean ground chuck in the chili, taco meat, and meat sauces that are available for lunch and dinner. The taco and Cobb salads are especially tasty. We like the pizzas, too, which range from create-your-own to a yummy pesto-artichoke-tomato combination; and Prime rib is featured on weekends.

18986 CA 120, Groveland. ☎ 209/962-7501. Entrees \$3–\$7; pizza \$5–\$15. No credit cards. Daily 7am–8pm.

Savoury's ✨ INTERNATIONAL FUSION In the Art Deco confines of a former California Highway Patrol office, this eatery quickly won the hearts of locals after opening in spring 2003. Not surprising, since proprietor-chef Mirriam Wackerman had catered in the area for years, and customers often urged her to follow her dreams and open a restaurant. Now that she has, the results are top-notch, with a menu of simple, fresh dishes that meld culinary traditions near and far: jambalaya linguini, chipotle pesto chicken, grilled lemon-chive scallops, and the only flat-iron steak in town, Cajun-spiced and pan-seared. For dessert, bite into a decadent dish of panna cotta, the Italian equivalent of crème brûlée on a bed of strawberry sauce. There is a cozy but sleek main dining room, as well as a delightful vine-clad patio, sandwiched between historic redbricks, out back.

5027 CA 140, Mariposa. ☎ 209/966-77677. Entrees \$12–\$19. MC, V. Tues–Sat 5–9:30pm.

PICNIC & CAMPING SUPPLIES

If you forget something, chances are you'll be able to get it in the park in bustling Yosemite Valley, but elsewhere in the park it's tough to find equipment. The best place to get supplies and camping equipment in the valley is the **Yosemite Village Store**, which stocks

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groceries, film, and maps, and has an ATM. Nearby, the **Village Sport Shop** has fishing, camping, and other outdoor gear, plus it sells fishing licenses. The **Yosemite Lodge Gift Shop** and **Curry Village General Store** stock some supplies. The **Curry Village Mountain Shop** sells clothing and equipment for day hikes as well as backcountry excursions, and the **Tuolumne Meadows Gift & Mountain Shop** also carries backpacking supplies, including maps and dehydrated food. The **Badger Pass Sport Shop** (open only during the snow season) stocks ski clothing and other winter supplies. There are also several small convenience stores located throughout the park.

In **Mariposa** you'll find a good selection of groceries plus a deli at **Pioneer Market**, at 5034 Coakley Circle, behind the town rest area (☎ 209/742-6100). Our choice for a grocery store in **Oakhurst** is **Raley's** at 40041 CA 41 (☎ 559/683-8300). Just outside the park's **El Portal** entrance, on CA 140, is the well-stocked **El Portal Food Market** (☎ 209/379-2632). For a better selection (and better prices) you can stop at the **major supermarket and discount chains** in **Merced** or **Fresno**, the largest cities in the park vicinity.