

Sequoia National Park – Winter-Spring Itinerary

The reddish-brown bark of giant sequoias is strikingly beautiful against the brilliance of snow in the winter and spring at Sequoia National Park. Even without snow, you can stand next to towering trees that may be over 3,000 years old and ponder what has happened during their “lifetimes.” Or, take a hike in the foothills to see the stunning beauty of wildflowers, which can start blooming as early as January through early May. Enjoy the peace and quiet that abounds during much of this time of year.

Winter Weather and Driving in Sequoia National Park:

The Kings Canyon Scenic Byway (Hwy. 180), which leads to Cedar Grove, is closed from fall to late spring/early summer. In addition, the road between Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks may be closed, depending upon weather. Main roads are generally plowed and maintained, but may close or have restrictions during the winter. Motorists are advised to always carry tire chains or cables (for traction) and check weather and road conditions before travel. Icy and wet roadways can exist throughout the Park! For conditions, call 559-565-3341 for roads inside the Park. For information about road conditions outside the Park, call 800-427-7623 or visit www.dot.ca.gov. Visit www.nps.gov/seki for trip-planning information.

Take a stunning drive along Moro Rock/Crescent Meadow Road after the road opens (-date of road opening varies each year). For details, call 559-565-3341 or visit www.nps.gov/seki.

SEQUOIA IN A DAY:



Stop 1: SIERRA NEVADA FOOTHILLS

Stop in at the Foothills Visitor Center (open daily) for park information and road conditions information (as you can find winter-like conditions in the spring at higher elevations). View exhibits about the diverse foothills area. Check out the bookstore. Be sure to ask about available ranger-led programs in the Park, including possible wildflower walks (in the foothills) and guided snowshoe walks (by the Big Trees). Consider taking a hike to see wildflowers, rushing rivers, and abundant wildlife that await you in this lush seasonal landscape.



Stop 2: GENERAL SHERMAN TREE

The General Sherman Tree—the largest tree on Earth (by volume)—is nearly 275 feet tall or larger than a 27-story building. It is 36.5 feet in diameter, and has a circumference of nearly 102 feet. At the ripe old age of approximately 2,200 years old, it stands near several other giant sequoias that range between 250-300 feet tall with a diameter of 15 feet or more. Be sure to stop at the exhibits in the grove. Bring your camera!

***CONSIDER ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES FOR THE REST OF THE DAY.
Be sure to ask at a park visitor center about current conditions and safety tips first.***



Stop 3: GIANT FOREST

Once snow falls, the trails in Giant Forest become a cross-country ski or snowshoe paradise. Peek at the grandeur from the High Sierra Trail at Eagle View. Obtain more details about the possible trails, including the Congress Trail, at the Foothills Visitor Center (open daily) or Lodgepole Visitor Center (open Fridays through Mondays until late spring), where you can purchase a map. Rent skis or snowshoes at Wuksachi Lodge or bring your own. If it hasn't snowed yet, hike through the area for beautiful views. Be sure to bring your camera!

Stop 4: BIG TREES TRAIL

Take a peaceful 1-mile-long stroll or snowshoe/cross-country ski trek along the Big Trees Trail from the Giant Forest Museum parking lot. Exhibits along the way tell the story of giant sequoias and the history of this area. Bring your camera! *(Note: The museum is closed from mid-fall until late-spring.)*



Stop 5: WUKSACHI LODGE

Located in the heart of the Park, Wuksachi Village offers visitors and lodge guests the perfect retreat to reconnect with family, friends and the great outdoors! Step outside the lodge, peer up at the tall trees and majestic landscape and get a glimpse into mountain life. Enjoy lunch or dinner at the restaurant with views all around, stop at the gift shop, or visit the market to rent snowshoes or cross-country skis.

OTHER THINGS TO SEE AND DO IF YOU HAVE MORE TIME:

EDVENTURES - Explore the park or nearby area on a 1- to 10-day Edventure class. Topics include backpacking, creative arts, family, natural history, water, or winter activities. For more information, contact the Sequoia Natural History Association at www.sequoiahistory.org or call 559-565-4251.

HIKE, CROSS-COUNTRY SKI, OR SNOWSHOE A LONGER DISTANCE - For more outdoor adventures, check at the visitor center for suggestions of longer trails of up to 12 miles.

CRYSTAL CAVE - *(The cave may be open as early as mid-May, weather-permitting.)* Travel into a magical underground world made of marble, which stays at a brisk 50°F (10°C). Stroll along a 1/2-mile steep trail (.8 km) to the cave to meet for the tour. Not wheelchair accessible. Tickets are sold only at the Lodgepole & Foothills visitor centers. Tours are weather-dependent and subject to change. For more information, contact the Sequoia Natural History Association at www.sequoiahistory.org or call 559-565-4251.

For Lodging, Tours & More Information visit:

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SEQUOIA AND KINGS CANYON NATIONAL PARKS

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