

Yosemite National Park Day Hikes



Yosemite Falls (2,425 feet)

- **Rating:** Strenuous
- **Trip Distance:** 7.2 miles/11.6 km round-trip; 6 to 8 hours.
- **Elevation:** 2,700 feet/823 m elevation gain.
- **Start Point:** Yosemite Falls Trailhead/Camp #4/Shuttle Stop #7.
- **Flows:** November through July with peak flow in May.
- **Physical:** Look for the ice cone at the base of the upper fall during winter and for roaring runoff April through June. Yosemite Falls, one of the world's tallest, is actually made up of three separate falls: Upper Yosemite Fall (1,430 feet), the middle cascades (675 feet), and Lower Yosemite Fall (320 feet). Enjoy spectacular views from Columbia Rock located one mile (and dozens of switchbacks) from the trailhead. You can walk to Lower Yosemite Fall in just a few minutes or hike to the top of Upper Yosemite Fall as a strenuous, all-day hike.
- **Historical:** One of Yosemite oldest historic trails (built 1873 to 1877), the Yosemite Falls Trail leads to the top of North America's tallest waterfall 2,425 feet (739 m) above the Valley floor.
- **Safety!** *Do not stray off the marked path, as you will find steep drops adjacent to the trail.*

Vernal Fall (317 feet)

- **Rating:** Moderate to Strenuous
- **Trip Distance:** 3 miles/4.8 km round-trip; 3 hours. *(Vernal Fall footbridge is half way point and 1.6 miles/2.6 km round-trip).
- **Elevation:** 1,000 feet/366 m elevation gain (via Mist Trail).
- **Start Point:** Happy Isles/Shuttle Stop #16.
- **Flows:** All year though by mid-to-late summer it narrows and separates into one, two, or three falls as water flows decrease; peaks in late May.
- **Physical:** You'll find an excellent view of Vernal Fall from the footbridge at 0.75 miles (1.3 km). Beyond the bridge, at 0.2 miles, the Mist Trail and the John Muir Trail diverge. To proceed directly to the top of Vernal Fall, follow the Mist Trail 0.5 mile (0.8 km) up a steep granite stairway of over 600 steps. Best seen from Glacier Point or by hiking up alongside it via the Mist Trail.
- **Safety!** *Prepare for slippery footing and a tremendous amount of waterfall spray in spring and early summer. This portion of trail is closed in winter due to risk of falling ice and rock.*

References: www.nps.gov & www.ronjones.org/Weblinks/Hiking.html