ROAD TRIP · UNITED STATES

Your 14-day road trip from Los Angeles

National parks: 7 towns, flying home from Los Angeles.

Length	14 days, 13 nights
Distance	1,760 km, 8 driving days
Behind the wheel	24 h 40 min
Travellers	2, 1 room, 1 car
Hotels	Comfort: a good hotel (3 stars)
Flights	Amsterdam – Los Angeles (LAX), Los Angeles (LAX) – Amsterdam

CONTENTS

Los Angeles	Days 1–2	**8**
Palm Springs	Day 3	**10**
Twentynine Palms	Days 4–5	**12**
Furnace Creek	Days 6–7	**14**
Mammoth Lakes	Days 8–9	**16**
Mariposa	Days 10–11	**18**
Three Rivers	Days 12–13	**20**

Day by day

DAY	DATE	NIGHT	KM	DRIVE	°C
1		Los Angeles	30	30 min	
2		Los Angeles			
3		Palm Springs	170	2 h	
4		Twentynine Palms	80	1 h 10 min	
5		Twentynine Palms			
6		Furnace Creek	380	5 h 40 min	
7		Furnace Creek			
8		Mammoth Lakes	330	4 h 30 min	
9		Mammoth Lakes			
10		Mariposa	210	3 h 40 min	
11		Mariposa			
12		Three Rivers	230	3 h 10 min	
13		Three Rivers			
14		Flight home from LAX	320	4 h	

1,760 km · 24 h 40 min behind the wheel · on average 220 km a driving day

Kilometres and drive times by road (OSRM, OpenStreetMap), without stops: plan generously.

The route



Map: US Census Bureau (public domain) · roads © OpenStreetMap contributors

ON THE ROAD

Day 1	Land at Los Angeles (LAX), drive to Los Angeles · About 30 km (20 mi), 30 min
Day 3	Los Angeles, drive to Palm Springs · About 170 km (110 mi), 2 h
Day 4	Palm Springs, drive to Twentynine Palms · About 80 km (50 mi), 1 h 10 min
Day 6	Twentynine Palms, drive to Furnace Creek · About 380 km (240 mi), 5 h 40 min
Day 8	Furnace Creek, drive to Mammoth Lakes · About 330 km (200 mi), 4 h 30 min
Day 10	Mammoth Lakes, drive to Mariposa · About 210 km (130 mi), 3 h 40 min

Well prepared

ESTA

Dutch and Belgian travellers need no visa for a holiday of up to 90 days, but do need an approved ESTA before boarding. It costs about $40, is valid for two years (or until your passport expires) and is applied for online. Apply at least 72 hours before you fly, and only on the official site.

esta.cbp.dhs.gov

Passport

An electronic passport (with the chip symbol), valid for the whole stay. Children need their own passport and ESTA.

nl.usembassy.gov

Driving licence

Your Dutch driving licence is accepted for renting and driving a car as a visitor. An international driving permit next to it helps with police and some rental desks.

anwb.nl

Renting a car

The renter is the main driver and pays with a credit card in their own name (no debit or prepaid card); the deposit is held on it. Usually from 21, and from 21 to 24 you pay a young-driver fee of about $25 a day. Book from home with insurance included (CDW/LDW and extra liability, SLI) and an extra driver if you want to take turns. Returning the car elsewhere (a one-way trip) costs extra. Fuel is sold by the gallon (3.8 litres); fill it up yourself before you bring it back.

Driving in the USA

Keep right; speeds are in miles an hour (65 mph is 105 km/h). Turning right on red is allowed after stopping, unless a sign says no. At a 4-way stop, whoever stopped first goes first. For a stopped yellow school bus with flashing lights you stop in both directions. Toll roads are often electronic only: ask your rental company about its toll pass. On remote stretches (parks, desert) there's little signal and a long way to the next pump: fill up at half and download the map.

Renting an RV

You can rent an RV from about 21 with an ordinary car licence. On top of the rent, count on mileage (often per mile), a kit with bedding and kitchen things, cleaning and the campsite: in the popular parks you book those months ahead on recreation.gov. Big RVs aren't allowed on every park road. Take photos of the RV when you pick it up: damage and missing items are the most heard complaint.

recreation.gov

National parks

Most big parks charge per car. Visitors from abroad pay $100 a person extra at 11 popular parks; the annual pass for non-residents is $250. Some parks need a timed-entry reservation in high season.

nps.gov

Money and tipping

Prices are without sales tax, which is added at the till. In restaurants a tip of 15 to 20% is usual. Cards are accepted almost everywhere; at the pump you may be asked for a ZIP code, so pay inside.

Travel insurance and health

Care in the USA is very expensive: take travel insurance with worldwide medical cover, and check whether your health insurance covers the USA. Cancellation insurance covers the trip if you can't go; insure the rental car with the rental company (see Renting a car). Take medicines in their original packaging, with a prescription in English. Emergency number: 911.

Power, phone and time

110 volt with flat two-pin plugs (type A/B): bring an adapter. A US eSIM is cheaper than roaming. The mainland has four time zones, Arizona mostly without daylight saving time.

Customs

Fresh food, meat and fruit may not be brought in. Declare food you carry.

Packing list

- [ ] Passport (valid for the whole trip)
- [ ] ESTA, printed
- [ ] Driving licence (and an international one)
- [ ] Credit card in the driver's name
- [ ] Travel and cancellation insurance
- [ ] Confirmations: flights, car, hotels
- [ ] America the Beautiful pass for the parks
- [ ] Plug adapter for type A/B (110 volt)
- [ ] Car charger and phone holder
- [ ] eSIM or offline maps
- [ ] Sunscreen, sunglasses and a cap
- [ ] Water bottles for the desert
- [ ] Hiking shoes
- [ ] Layers: the coast and the nights get cold
- [ ] Medicines, in your hand luggage
- [ ] A pen, for this booklet

DON'T FORGET

Notes



DAYS 1–2

Los Angeles CA

Sunset Boulevard's palm trees

Land at Los Angeles (LAX), drive to Los Angeles: about 30 km (20 mi), 30 min

2 nights

DON'T MISS

- The Hollywood Walk of Fame and the Hollywood sign
- Griffith Observatory at sunset
- Santa Monica Pier and Venice Beach
- The Getty Center

With an extra night

With a second night: Universal Studios or Warner Bros., or Malibu's beaches along Highway 1.

EXCURSIONS

- [ ] Warner Bros. studio tour — roughly €70 a person
- [ ] Universal Studios Hollywood — roughly €110 a person
- [ ] Hollywood sign hike — roughly €50 a person

HOTEL

- [ ] FOUND Hotels, Santa Monica, Series by Marriott · 3★ — roughly €200
  12311 Santa Monica Blvd
- [ ] Residence Inn by Marriott Los Angeles LAX/Century Boulevard · 3★ — roughly €150
  5933 W Century Blvd
- [ ] Holiday Inn Express Hollywood Walk of Fame by IHG · 3★ — roughly €220
  1921 N Highland Avenue
- [ ] Holiday Inn Express West Los Angeles by IHG · 3★ — roughly €350
  11250 Santa Monica Blvd
- [ ] Residence Inn by Marriott Los Angeles L.A. LIVE · 3★ — roughly €190
  901 W Olympic Blvd

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DAY 3

Palm Springs CA

Past the wind farms into the desert

Los Angeles, drive to Palm Springs: about 170 km (110 mi), 2 h

1 night

PALM SPRINGS · DAY 3

HOTEL

- [ ] Hotel California - A Town & Desert Boutique Hotel · 3★ — roughly €250
  424 E Palm Canyon Dr
- [ ] Holiday House Palm Springs · 3★ — roughly €440
  200 W. Arenas Rd.
- [ ] Inn at Palm Springs · 3★ — roughly €130
  2525 North Palm Canyon Drive
- [ ] Del Marcos Hotel · 3★ — roughly €210
  225 W Baristo Rd
- [ ] The Monkey Tree by AvantStay – Mid-Century Modern Oasis with Pool · 3★
  2388 E Racquet Club Road

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DAYS 4–5

Twentynine Palms CA

Joshua Tree National Park

Palm Springs, drive to Twentynine Palms: about 80 km (50 mi), 1 h 10 min

2 nights

DON'T MISS

- Joshua Tree National Park: Hidden Valley and Skull Rock
- Cholla Cactus Garden
- Keys View over the Coachella Valley
- The darkest night sky of the trip

With an extra night

With a second night: Palm Springs and its aerial tramway, or a sunrise climb in the park.

EXCURSIONS

- [ ] Joshua Tree guided hike — roughly €90 a person
- [ ] Joshua Tree stargazing tour — roughly €70 a person

HOTEL

- [ ] Cali Desert Oasis w/ Hot Tub + Mtn Views! · 3★
  6244 Mojave Ave
- [ ] Chic Joshua Tree Pad w/ Mountain Views & Hot Tub · 3★
  72616 2 Mile Rd
- [ ] Cowboy Pool, Fire Pit, Backyard Chic Ranch Retreat Asteroid by Avantstay · 3★
  6929 Mantonya Rd
- [ ] Serene Home w/ Yard - 8 Mi to Joshua Tree! · 3★
  4435 Bullion Ave
- [ ] Twentynine Palms Desert Oasis w/ Pool & Hot Tub! · 3★
  80277 Wikieup Rd

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DAYS 6–7

Furnace Creek CA

Badwater Basin in Death Valley

Twentynine Palms, drive to Furnace Creek: about 380 km (240 mi), 5 h 40 min

2 nights

DON'T MISS

- Badwater Basin, 86 metres below sea level
- Zabriskie Point at sunrise
- Artists Drive and Artists Palette
- Mesquite Flat Sand Dunes

With an extra night

With a second night: Dante's View and the Racetrack, or a night under the stars. Not in summer: it is the hottest place on earth.

EXCURSIONS

☐ Death Valley tour — roughly €200 a person

HOTEL

Name, address, confirmation number:

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DAYS 8–9

Mammoth Lakes CA

Tioga Pass and Mono Lake

Furnace Creek, drive to Mammoth Lakes: about 330 km (200 mi), 4 h 30 min

2 nights

MAMMOTH LAKES · DAYS 8–9

HOTEL

- [ ] Luxury Oasis Village Ski-in Ski-out · 3★
  1111 Forest Trail #1222
- [ ] Luxury Townhome w/ Views, Private Jacuzzi & Garage · 3★
  100 Juniper Springs Drive #11
- [ ] Mammoth Lakes Condo - Steps to Ski Lift! · 3★
  865 Majestic Pines Dr
- [ ] Quiet, Updated, Corner Condo in the Village! Parking, Pool & Spa · 3★
  100 Canyon Blvd. #3302
- [ ] Sherwin Villas Retreat · 3★
  362 Old Mammoth Road

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DAYS 10–11

Mariposa CA

Yosemite Valley

Mammoth Lakes, drive to Mariposa: about 210 km (130 mi), 3 h 40 min

2 nights

MARIPOSA · DAYS 10–11

HOTEL

- [ ] Historic Mariposa Stagecoach Stop w/ Gas Fire Pit! · 3★
  3086 Wass Rd
- [ ] Oak Meadows House - A unique home near Yosemite · 3★
  5465 Oak Meadows Road
- [ ] Peaceful + Private Mariposa Cabin on 2 Acres! · 3★
  3502 Comet Mine Ln
- [ ] Private Hot Tub! Pet-friendly Mariposa Retreat · 3★
  5313 Carleton Rd
- [ ] Waterfront Mariposa Hideaway: Hot Tub & Mtn Views! · 3★
  4872-A Usona Rd

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DAYS 12–13

Three Rivers CA

Sequoia National Park

Mariposa, drive to Three Rivers: about 230 km (140 mi), 3 h 10 min

2 nights

THREE RIVERS · DAYS 12–13

HOTEL

- [ ] Beautiful Retreat 4 Miles to Park Entrance Steps to Dining · 3★
  43635 Encina Dr
- [ ] Cozy Condo 4 Miles to Park Entrance with BBQ and Steps to Dining · 3★
  43653 Encina Dr
- [ ] Tranquil Retreat 4 Miles to Sequoia Park Entrance with BBQ and Balcony · 3★
  43647 Encina Dr
- [ ] Spacious sequoia Park retreat, best panoramic views · 3★
  40613 Crystal Dr
- [ ] Muniz Village · 3★
  40981 Old Three Rivers Road

NOTES

What it costs

DAY	PLACE	HOTEL	TOURS	CAR	TOTAL
1	Los Angeles	€200	–	€60	**€260**
2	Los Angeles	€200	–	€60	**€260**
3	Palm Springs	€160	–	€60	**€220**
4	Twentynine Palms	€140	–	€60	**€200**
5	Twentynine Palms	€140	–	€60	**€200**
6	Furnace Creek	€250	–	€60	**€310**
7	Furnace Creek	€250	–	€60	**€310**
8	Mammoth Lakes	€160	–	€60	**€220**
9	Mammoth Lakes	€160	–	€60	**€220**
10	Mariposa	€160	–	€60	**€220**
11	Mariposa	€160	–	€60	**€220**
12	Three Rivers	€160	–	€60	**€220**
13	Three Rivers	€160	–	€60	**€220**
14	Flight home from LAX	–	–	€60	**€60**

Flights	€1,700
Hotels	€2,300
Excursions	€0
Car hire	€840
Total	**€4,840**
	€2,420 a person

An estimate to plan with (prices of 2026-10): hotels, the ticked excursions, car hire and flights. No fuel or meals.

Notes

About this booklet

Made on rondreis.expert. Your trip is still there, to change and print again: usa.roundtrip.expert/planner/?theme=parks

PHOTOS

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Palm Springs	The Hotel California, a boutique hotel in Palm Springs, California LCCN2013631304.tif · Carol M. Highsmith, Public domain
Twentynine Palms	190805-M-EH454-1075C.jpg · Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Jose Gonzalez, Public domain
Furnace Creek	Distant view of the Furnace Creek Resort, which effectively forms a lush oasis in the middle of the otherwise arid and forbidding Death Valley National Park in California LCCN2013631155.tif · Carol M. Highsmith, Public domain
Mammoth Lakes	Mammoth Lakes, California LCCN2013633536.tif · Carol M. Highsmith, Public domain
Mariposa	Mariposa County Courthouse January 2025.jpg · Guywelch2000, CC0
Three Rivers	Generals Highway, Clover Creek Bridge, Spanning Clover Creek on Generals Highway, approxi, Three Rivers vicinity (Tulare County, California).jpg · Brian C. Grogan, Photographer, Public domain

MAP AND TYPE

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