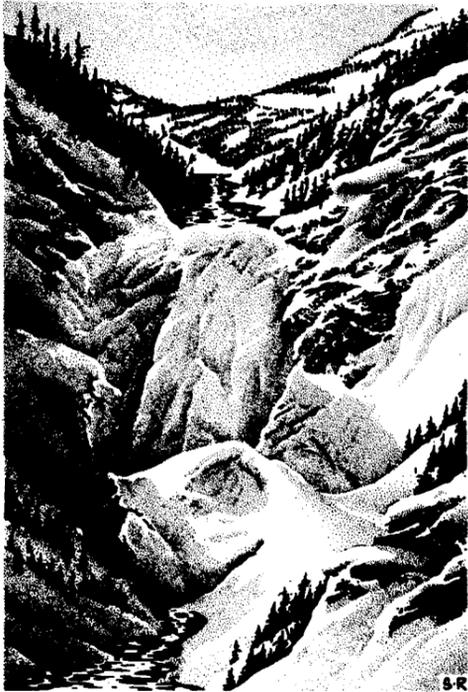


CANYON AREA SKI TRAILS



Yellowstone National Park

Welcome

Yellowstone offers a variety of enjoyable and challenging trails for skiers. Trails are marked for summer use and may not have ski tracks. On some trails, the difficult sections can be avoided by skiing part way in and returning by the same route. The quality of your experience will depend upon the amount of planning and preparation you do prior to your trip. We suggest that you stop at a visitor center or ski shop and discuss your trip. The staff will be happy to provide current information on weather, trail, snow conditions, and alert you to any special winter hazards.

Backcountry trails in Yellowstone are in the wilderness. These trails are maintained and marked for summer use. Many of them are difficult to find and follow, as they are not well marked for winter. Only experienced parties with appropriate equipment should attempt them. Overnight camping requires a free backcountry use permit that must be obtained in person from the Mammoth or Old Faithful visitor centers, the West Yellowstone Visitor Information Center, or the south entrance station. Wood fires are not permitted

Trail Etiquette

- Do not snowshoe or walk directly on ski tracks.
- Skiers/snowshoers going uphill yield to those going downhill.
- Fill in depressions in the snow after falling to reduce hazards to others.
- Ski within your ability. If you find the trail too difficult, turn back.

Safety

Trails may have natural hazards such as animals, avalanches, thermal features, downed trees, steep slopes and cliffs. When skiing near thermal areas, stay on marked trails. Approaching thermal features is dangerous and prohibited. The snow in these areas is often icy and what appears to be bare ground may be a thin crust over boiling water.

Winter weather in Yellowstone changes rapidly and can be severely cold and windy. Wear proper clothing layers. Watch yourself and other members of your party for signs of frostbite and hypothermia. For your safety, always ski with someone else. Tell someone where you are going, by what route, and when you plan to return. Carry extra clothing, food, water, map and compass, matches, flashlight, and a whistle.

Consider elevation when deciding on a ski trail. Many ski trails are at high elevation, above 6000 feet (1,829 m) and may require you to move slowly when you are out of breath. Always drink plenty of water.

Avalanche danger: avalanches can occur on any slope and hazards will not always be marked. In avalanche-prone areas carry a shovel, avalanche transceiver, probe, and first aid kit—and know how to use them. Cross slopes one at a time, while others watch from safety.

Wildlife

Do not approach wildlife. Large mammals survive on stored fat and low quality food during winter. Causing them to move will cost them precious calories vital for survival. Park regulations require you to remain *at least* 75 feet (23 m) from bison and other large animals; 300 feet (91 m) from bears and wolves. You are travelling through essential winter habitat. Never approach animals, give them time to move away from you. Travel around a herd, not through it. Always allow animals an escape route through shallow snow or on a packed trail. Pets are not allowed on ski trails or in backcountry areas.

Trail Ratings

Trails are rated by the National Park Service with trail ratings specific to Yellowstone National Park. We strongly encourage all skiers to inquire at a visitor center or Xanterra Ski Shop before beginning their first ski trip. Weather conditions may cause icy trails, deep snow, or barren sections, and in some instances make trails difficult to follow, increasing the difficulty of a trail. Trails are not groomed or checked daily.

Easiest - “Green”

Skiers need basic knowledge and limited experience in the diagonal stride, snow plow, and side stepping. Trails may have short downhill and uphill stretches.

More Difficult - “Blue”

Skiers need to be able to ski varied terrain requiring turning, snow plowing, herringboning, and diagonal stride.

Most Difficult - “Black”

Skiers need to be experienced. Trails are hazardous and terrain is frequently extreme. Turns are often sharp and linked together with no room to snow plow or herringbone.

National Park Service

P.O. Box 168
Yellowstone National Park, WY 82190

For emergencies, dial 911

Revised 1/2024

Trail Descriptions

Canyon Rim Trail

4.5 miles (7.24 km), **easiest to more difficult**,

Begin at the Canyon Visitor Education Center and follow the North Rim Drive east for 1 mile (1.6 km). The trail turns sharply left and continues down a moderately steep hill to Inspiration Point. From there, follow the loop and return back up the hill. Further up the road, towards the North Rim Drive, the trail turns sharply left and onto a road. Continue along the edge of the canyon rim for 1 mile (1.6 km) providing excellent views of the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone. At Grand View Point, the trail crosses the road and follows a marked trail through the pine forest and up into the summer cabin area. Ski past the lodging area and into the summer developed visitor use area, past the Canyon Lodge and back to the warming hut.

Caution should be taken while skiing along the Canyon Rim. Skiers are advised to remove their skis and walk out to the viewpoints.

Roller Coaster Trail

1.8 miles (2.9 km), **more difficult**,

From the Canyon Visitor Education Center, go east along the North Rim Drive for 100 yards (91 m). Turn left 90-degrees and continue up a service road for approximately 0.3 miles (0.5 km). Ski down a short, moderate slope into a meadow and veer right, off the service road and up into the pine forest. From here the trail is well-defined through the trees with a series of moderate to steep ups and downs. The trail merges with the Canyon Rim Trail. At the junction you can turn right to return to the Canyon Visitor Education Center, or left to continue along the Canyon Rim Trail. The Roller Coaster is fast and fun.

Note: “Compression Hill” is very steep. You may need to sidestep down/up for safety.

Old Canyon Bridge Trail

1 mile (1.6 km), **easiest**

Begin at the Chittenden Bridge or near the entrance to the South Rim Drive starting on the Brink of the Upper Falls overlook trail. This is a very short easy ski along the North Rim Trail with beautiful views of the Yellowstone River and Upper Falls.

Cascade Lake Trail

3 miles (4.8 km), **easiest**,

Begin on the left (west) side of the Washburn Hot Springs Overlook road, approximately 0.3 miles (0.5 km) north of Canyon Junction. The trail follows a service road for the first 200 yards (183 m) then takes a 90 degree right turn down a wide trail. The turn will be marked with a directional ski sign. The trail winds through a lodgepole pine forest opening into Cascade Meadows. **Caution** should be taken to avoid bison in the meadow. Be alert as you continue north along the meadow to Cascade Creek—it can be difficult to navigate through drifts to narrow crossing. Cross the creek one at a time, and use your poles to test each step. Continue north for 1 mile (1.6 km). The trail turns gradually to the left (northwest) and enters a lodgepole pine forest. The trail is clearly marked at this point and continues northwest across an open meadow to ice-covered Cascade Lake. The trail provides a good view of the Washburn Range. For more experienced skiers, the hills above Cascade Lake are ideal for downhill skiing. Inquire at the Canyon Visitor Education Center for ski conditions and avalanche danger.

Current Trail Information

Please visit YellowstoneNationalParkLodges.com or visit the Bear Den Ski Shops at Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel and Old Faithful Snow Lodge for up-to-date trail grooming schedule, trail information, rentals, lessons, tours and accessories.

Printed by:

Xanterra Travel Collection
Authorized Concessioner of the
National Park Service
Phone (307) 344-7311