The eastern edge of the Sierra Nevada mountain range is rugged, steep, and beautifully remote. This sliver of wilderness is home to some of the most iconic mountain peaks in the world and hundreds of hidden alpine lakes. This small group of new Bruins will explore glistening lakes, rushing creeks, glacial valleys, and starry skies in a way that only a backpacking trip can offer. Many experience backpacking to be a uniquely intimate, remote, and rewarding way to both enjoy the outdoors and connect with newfound friends. This experience, however, comes at the hard-earned cost of carrying all of our belongings in a big backpack, and often hiking uphill and at elevation, which can be challenging even for physically fit individuals. The challenge, however, like all of the best things in life, is also a part of the reward.
Approximate Itinerary*

Day 1
Meet at 10:00 AM at the Outdoor-Adventures Center to depart for your trip. At this time you can pick up any gear you would like to borrow. Our drive to the Eastern Sierra is, on average, 5 hours. Bring cash/card to purchase lunch at a roadside stop. We will arrive at the campground in the late afternoon, where we will set up tents, get oriented to our campsite, and make a delicious dinner. Get excited for a full day tomorrow!

*This itinerary is approximate and subject to change. It is meant to provide a rough idea of what to expect or plan for, such as meals, activities, and departure/return times. Exact details are planned by the Guide Team in the weeks leading up to the trip and are contingent on conditions. Changes may be made to this itinerary at any time, as appropriate in adapting to weather conditions, goals, group abilities, traffic, and any other factors that may or may not be within our control. Flexibility and unpredictability are part of the adventure of outdoor trips!

Meals included: dinner
Bring food or funds to purchase lunch on the drive

Days 2 and 3
We will be hiking the Big Pine Creek North Fork trail in Inyo National Forest. The Guide Team will teach the group about how to pack their backpacks, trail etiquette, water purification, and other backpacking essentials. We’ll trek up to 10 miles into the wilderness, taking most of the day. Then, we’ll find a good place to set up camp for the evening and settle in, enjoying the peace and adventure of our remote wilderness location. On day 3, we will hike some more, further exploring our surroundings. The exact hikes and campsites will be planned by the Guide Team and may differ from trip to trip, depending group size, abilities, weather, etc. It is sure to be fantastic and beautiful, regardless!

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks

Day 4
In the morning we will make breakfast and pack up camp. Then, we will backpack out of the wilderness and begin driving back to campus. Return time to UCLA generally varies from 4:00pm to as late as 10:00pm (or even later), depending on traffic and other variables that may or may not be within our control. Make plans to be flexible in allowing for a potentially late return time.

Meals included: breakfast, lunch, snacks

Trip Type and Facilities

This is a backpacking trip, which means that we will carry all of our food, equipment, clothes, etc. in big backpacks. Each person will carry their personal gear and a portion of the shared group gear (tent, food, stoves, water treatment supplies, etc.). Packs may weigh up to or exceed 60 pounds or 40–45% of body weight, depending on the trip length and weather conditions. Look forward to being deep in the wilderness; there will be very few other humans, potential wildlife sightings, no cell phone reception, and no showers or bathrooms. Our guides will teach you how to take care of personal hygiene and human waste in the wilderness.

Level of Difficulty

Challenging
We’re definitely going to be moving! Participants should be accustomed to physical activity and should be able to hike several miles while carrying heavy weight in their backpack. Additionally, we will be hiking at elevations up to or over 10,000 feet, which means that the air will be “thinner,” and most people will be more short of breath than they are used to. All participants should be prepared with the perseverance to push themselves through a physical challenge. We will take breaks, encourage each other, and look out for one another’s needs. Like all OA trips, this is a shared group adventure, so we will hike at a pace that everyone can enjoy.
Weather

The Eastern Sierra spans elevations of 4,000–10,000 feet or greater. Conditions of this environment may vary from cold (below minus 20º F) to hot (above 90º F) and may include, but is not limited to, rain, snow or hail, uninterrupted sun and/or wind, or the absence thereof. Prepare yourself for success by thoroughly reading the What-To-Bring list and bringing enough warm layers, sun protection, and adequate footwear. When in doubt, pack more than you think you need; you are welcome to leave any layers or accessories in the van.

The OA Way

Outdoor Adventures (hereafter, OA) prioritizes safety and responsible stewardship of the environment and our natural resources. All UCLA OA trips are designed to be cooperative, educational, inclusive, and safely adventurous. Participants can look forward to learning about aspects of outdoor recreation, such as setting up tents, cooking meals, natural history, and wilderness ethics. Everyone will work together, learn together, and look out for each other’s needs throughout the trip. If you are looking for some outdoor-minded community and to learn valuable skills, then OA trips are for you!
When and where to meet
Our trips depart from (and return to) the Bike Shop/Outdoor Adventures Center which is located in the northwest corner of the John Wooden Center. It is highly recommended that students are dropped-off and picked-up by someone. Visitor parking is available at an hourly rate in the nearby Parking Lot 4 using the self-service kiosks.

Overnight parking
Multi-day overnight parking is available at numerous sites on campus, but we highly recommend you park in Lot 4 for maximum proximity to the departure site; the Outdoor Adventures Center is located right above Parking Lot 4. To park for more than one full day in the aforementioned lot, you will need to use the Bruin ePermit system and purchase the “Yellow / 7 Day Summer Short” permit. Be sure to enter your vehicle’s license plate correctly and to use your UCLA logon if possible; set the Effective Date to the day you will first park on campus (e.g., your trip departure date). We recommend that you complete these steps before your departure. If you choose to use the self-service kiosks on campus when you arrive, you will be restricted to purchasing only one full day of parking at a greater cost.

Airport transfers
Transportation to and from LAX is available through a myriad of public transportation options or ride-sharing services.

Coordinating your trip with Orientation
If you are attending an Orientation session just prior to or right after your trip, you may contact Orientation directly to arrange an extra night in the dorms. Extended stay arrangements cannot be made through OA.
**Additional overnight options**
Should you need to arrive a day in advance, or depart a day after your trip’s conclusion, we recommend booking a room at the following on-campus hotels: the UCLA Luskin Conference Center (1 minute walk to Outdoor Adventures Center), the UCLA Guest House (5-10 minute walk to Outdoor Adventures Center), or the UCLA Tiverton House (15-20 minute walk from the Outdoor Adventures Center). Other nearby accommodations can be found here.

**Returning to campus**
Trips generally return to campus between 4:00pm–10:00pm; however returns have the potential later than 10:00pm depending on traffic, weather, and other variables. If you plan to get picked up, we recommend that the person picking them up be flexible. While there will not be cell phone reception during the trip, there will be cell reception once the group is on the road a few hours away from campus.

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**Health Forms**
In the weeks prior to each trip, we email all participants asking them to complete the Health Form online. All enrolled participants must complete the Health Form a minimum of 30 days prior to the trip departure date. We aim to provide responsible, accessible trips, including doing our best to accommodate health and personal needs. Failure to complete the Health Form within this deadline will risk the participant losing their spot on the trip and without a refund. Furthermore, OA cannot guarantee accommodations for medical or personal needs that are disclosed after this deadline.

**Inherent Risk & Safety**
It is our mission to provide cooperative, challenging, and empowering experiences based in the outdoors. Because we recognize that the risks of serious injury or death are inherent to outdoor recreation, effectively managing risk is among our highest priorities. From providing extensive training on this topic to our Guides to requiring all of our Guides to be certified as Wilderness First-Responders, risk management is at the core of what we do and at the core of what we expect from our Participants. Participants must commit to behaving responsibly and in accordance with our Guides’ instructions, including reviewing and signing in agreement to our Code of Conduct prior to trip departure.
Frequently Asked Questions

I've never been camping or backpacking before. Is this the right trip for me?
Yes! Our trips are suitable for beginners; no experience is necessary. The Guide Team is excited to teach everyone about backpacking. Experienced backpackers are welcome, too. OA trips are full of camaraderie and are focused on a shared, group experience. We will support one another in challenging situations and get excited for your collegiate endeavors.

Where can I store my extra luggage while I am on my trip?
OA does not have a secured storage facility. Students are welcome to leave belongings in our side office at their own risk. However, OA cannot guarantee the security of this space, which is not supervised and often accessed by many people. The office is usually occupied during the day and always locked at night.

Does my trip have to line up with my Orientation session?
You may attend any trip regardless of if/when you plan to attend an Orientation session.

How can my family contact me while I am on my trip?
There is no cell phone reception in the wilderness. This is part of its beauty. Plan to be un-reachable by cell phone for the entirety of your trip, save for the few hours’ drive outside of campus.

What will we eat on the trip?
The Guide Team tailors the backpacking menu to suit the dietary needs that you supply on your health form. We craft hearty, nutrient-dense meals to keep everyone nourished on the trail. Past trips have included oatmeal for breakfast, wraps for lunch, and couscous for dinner. We also provide snacks, such as trail mix and energy bars.

Can I bring my own snacks?
All foods, personal toiletries, and other scented items must be stored in bear cans. If you have must-have snacks and choose to bring them, we ask that they be as compact as possible so they fit in your bear can.

What will the sleeping arrangements be?
OA provides 4-person tents, so you will be sharing tent space with other participants and/or guides. If you have concerns or preferences, please make them known to the guides. The Guide Team will do their best to make tent arrangements comfortable for everyone.

Additional questions?
We're happy to help. Please email us at oa@recreation.ucla.edu.