Wheeler Gorge campsite is a forest retreat nestled in the Los Padres National Forest near Ojai, California. Hike along the creek that runs through the gorge, featuring lush vegetation and exciting wildlife. Watch for red-tailed hawks soaring overhead, listen for splashing mallards, or breathe in earthy scents of the sycamores, oaks, or evergreen shrubs. Together, you and your fellow campers can explore this nearly 100-year-old campsite, while enjoying hearty camp meals, playing games and activities, and learning about responsible outdoor recreation.
Approximate Itinerary*

Day 1
Meet at the Outdoor-Adventures Center at 9:00am. Our drive to Wheeler Gorge in Los Padres National Forest is, on average, 2-3 hours. We will enjoy lunch in the fresh forest air, set up tents and the camp kitchen together, and embark on a mild hike to explore the area. Afterwards, we will settle into camp, and the Guide Team will cook a hearty, delicious dinner. We will get to know each other while appreciating the starry sky, and then turn in for bed.
Meals included: lunch, dinner, snacks

Day 2
The bulk of this day will be spent on several small hikes, or one long all-day hike. We’ll visit some stunning vistas, babbling creeks, and/or a historic stone house while learning about natural history and outdoor recreation ethics. The exact hikes will be planned by the Guide Team and may differ from trip to trip, depending on group size, abilities, weather, and interests.
Meals included: breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks

Day 3
In the morning we will make breakfast and pack up camp. Then we will visit a few sights and/or explore a short hike. We will hit the road and exit the Ojai area around midday. Return time to UCLA generally varies from 4:00pm to 10:00pm, 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
Bring funds to purchase dinner on the drive

*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 will be communicated at the Pre-Trip Meeting. 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. The Guide Team is prepared to make changes and decisions regarding the itinerary as needed. Flexibility and unpredictability are part of the adventure of outdoor trips!

Trip Type and Facilities

This is a “car-camping” trip, which means that we will stay in one of the park campgrounds, with our vans parked next to us. There will be access to simple facilities, like bathrooms. If running water is available, it will be cold.
Trip Difficulty

Moderate
Participants should be accustomed to physical activity and should be able to hike several miles a day while carrying a small amount of weight in daypacks. 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 weather in the Los Padres National Forest has the potential to be stormy, hot, or cold. Prepare yourself for success by bringing enough warm layers, sun protection, and adequate footwear. When in doubt, pack more than you need; you are welcome to leave any layers or accessories in the van.

The OA Way

Outdoor Adventures 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!