

Calaveras Big Trees & Moaning Caverns Hiking, Zip-lining, Rappelling, Car Camp

June 4-7, 2010 – (3-day weekend) \$39.00

Trip Leader: Klaus Gerhart (LAGoodGuy@gmail.com)

There are 2 highlights to this trip, and 7 hours of driving time from LA, which is why we couldn't squeeze this adventure into a regular 2-day weekend. By extending our reservation for our secluded group camp site (which holds 40 people!) to include Monday, you have the choice of either doing-it-all and getting home late Sunday evening or spend the extra night camping with us and designate Monday your return-home travel day. Either way, this is a trip not to be missed!

First of all, Calaveras Big Trees is where the first groves of giant Sequoias were discovered. This park is amazing. Trails through the woods; trails around the Sequoia groves; trails to the Stanislaus River; many trails to choose from ... or, if you stick to my itinerary, you'll get to hike most of them! This park alone is worthy of a weekend. However, we're also planning an excursion to Moaning Caverns which is the tallest cavern in California (the Statue of Liberty would fit inside). There's a docent led tour of the caverns ... which is for normal people. The brave, however, will join me in a rappel into the cavern from 165 feet above! If that's still not enough cave exploration for you, you can go spelunking another 160 feet deeper, through some of the caves for a few hours with a guide. Once we're through *inside* the cave, we'll take our adventure *outside* to their 1500 ft long, 60 ft high, 35mph twin ziplines where the craziest of us will quench our need for speed and our desire to fly, simultaneously.

If it isn't your need for speed that needs to be quenched, a few miles from our campsite is the quaint town of Murphys with blocks and blocks of cute boutiques and wine rooms. Also in Murphys is another cavern worth exploring, Mercer Caverns. Their guide is just as hilarious as the caverns are spectacular (stalagmites, stalactites, columns, helictites, calcite, curtains, flowstone, aragonite, Angels Wings, etc). The tour descends and ascends about 16 stories. They also have a great gift shop.

This Great Outdoors outing has something for everyone! So, come join me for a whole lotta adventure and action ...or come join me for some peace in nature ... or BOTH!



ITINERARY:

Friday: Arrive anytime after 2:00pm

Dinner on your own or before you arrive

6:30ish North Grove 1.5mi Easy Loop Hike,

(If you miss this, find time to take it on your own,
it's pretty cool!)

8:00pm Campfire

Saturday: Breakfast on your own

9:00am Head to Moaning Caverns for Rappelling, Caving, Ziplining

(Options: Mercer Caverns, Murphy's Wine Rooms &
Shopping, Fishing on Stanislaus River)

Lunch either back at camp or at a restaurant on-the-way back

2:00pm Hike Lava Bluffs Trail (2.5 mile Moderate Loop Trail)

4:00pm Tea (Apple Cider, Wine, Apple Turnovers & Strudel, Cheese)

6:00pm Potluck (check with trip leader to coordinate your contribution)

8:00pm Campfire

Sunday: Day of Hiking!

(Those leaving today, can stay as long as you like before you head out!)

Breakfast on your own and then join me on any or all of these hikes!

8:30-ish Bradley Grove Trail (2.5 mile loop)

10:00-ish South Grove Trail (5 mile Moderate Trail ... Gorgeous!)

Lunch on the Stanislaus River (bring a sack lunch)

2:00-ish River Trail (4 mile moderate/strenuous hike back to camp ... or 8 mi RT if you want!)

6:00-ish Leftovers from Tea and Potluck?

8:00-ish Campfire

Monday: Breakfast on your own

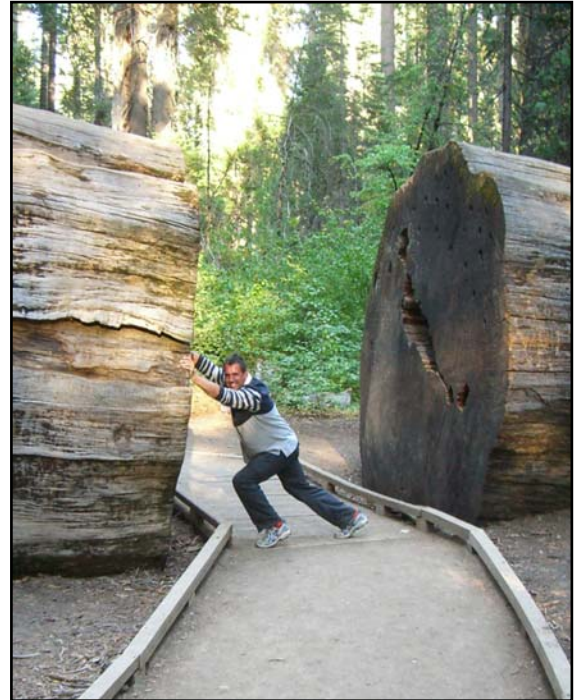
9:00 Scenic Overlook Hike (2 miles round trip)

Checkout time is at 12:00 noon

NOTES:

Bears, Raccoons and Squirrels are native to this area and commonly visit the campgrounds. In order to protect you, your food and the animals, it is required that all food and coolers remain in the trunk of your car or in the green food lockers that are provided, at all times - EVEN IN THE DAYTIME, when you are not actually engaged in food preparation. Do not keep food in your tent, sleeping area or in exposed ice chests. Place all trash in dumpsters as soon as possible. Please do not feed the animals on purpose or by accident. Improper food storage could result in a citation, with a maximum fine of \$1,000 and/or ejection from the park.

Dogs must be leashed and controlled at all times. They must be inside a tent or vehicle at night. Dogs are



permitted on paved roads, fire roads, day use areas and in camp-grounds, but prohibited from the five developed trails. Do not leave your dog unattended at the campsite at any time.

Campground: Private, wooded Lower Group Campground, 40 people/15 cars, no RV's. Quarter showers, flush toilets, potable water, campfire rings, BBQ's, picnic tables, bear boxes.

Directions from Southern California: Take either I-5 or US99 North. From I-5 you can cross to the other side of Stockton on State Hwy 4 to 99/4 South a few miles, then follow Hwy 4 towards and beyond Farmington to Calaveras Big Trees State Park. Hwy 4 makes a jog right in Angel's Camp, then jogs left just before leaving town.

Calaveras Big Trees is about 35 minutes driving time from Angel's Camp. [Click here for map.](#)

Weather: Typically highs in the 70-80's and lows in the 50's, afternoon thundershowers possible.

RVers: I didn't reserve any individual sites that can hold RV's. I welcome you to make your own arrangements/reservations and to still join us for all our events including teas, potlucks, hikes, excursions and campfires. The satellite RV price for this outing is \$9.00.

Trip Fees:

Camping Fee \$39.00/member; \$59.00/non-member (includes 1-year e-membership); RV \$9.00

Calaveras Big Trees:

The colossal trees of Calaveras Big Trees State Park stand in quiet testimony to a time when giants ruled the Earth. These massive relics, which can reach a height of 325 feet and a diameter of 33 feet, are a surviving species from a time when dinosaurs roamed, and birds, mammals and flowering plants began to appear. Some of these trees are thought to be as much as 2,000 years old.

Located at the mid-elevation level of the western Sierra Nevada, Calaveras Big Trees State Park is a prime example of a mixed conifer forest in the yellow pine belt. Giant sequoias dominate ponderosa pines, sugar pines, incense cedars and white fir. The Pacific dogwood displays white blossoms in the spring, and wildflowers along the Lava Bluffs Trail include leopard lily, Hartweg's iris, crimson columbine, monkey-flowers, harvest brodiaea, wild hyacinth and lupine. www.parks.ca.gov

Moaning Cavern:

The name was inspired by the sound generated by drops of water that fall into bottle-shaped holes at the bottom of a tall flowstone formation.

This spectacular vertical cavern contains a chamber large enough to hold the entire Statue of Liberty. Walk in via the 100-foot spiral staircase on the 45 minute Family Walking Tour (\$15) to learn about the fascinating geology and history of the cavern.

For the best view of the size and grandeur of the chamber and its massive formations, Rappel 165 feet to the bottom in a thrilling rope descent (\$65). No experience is

necessary, just plenty of courage! Instruction is given by an expert; gloves, hard-hat and the highest quality equipment are provided.

Take a 3-hour Adventure Trip beginning with the optional rappel for a challenging and exhilarating experience through deep chambers and passageways (\$130). Most areas are undeveloped, so there are no lights, stairs or walkways. Instead, visitors daringly explore by climbing and belly crawling with lighted helmets to show the way. Areas with names like Godzilla's Nostril, the Pancake Squeeze and the Meat Grinder are navigated with assistance as needed from a trained cavern naturalist. This trip reaches a depth of 300 feet, 160 feet below the bottom of the main chamber. It is available by reservation.

1500 ft parallel 60ft high 35mph twin zip lines (\$39 first run/\$24 each additional run)

5350 Moaning Cave Road, Vallecito, CA; temp 61F year round

Mercer Cavern:

In Mercer Caverns you will see, at very close range, an enormous variety of beautiful and unusual natural crystalline formations of all sizes, textures and shapes. These will include stalactites, stalagmites, columns, helictites, curtains, flowstone and others. You will be dazzled by the superb artistry which Nature, through the centuries has lavished upon this magnificent subterranean wonderland. (\$12.00) www.mercercaverns.com



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Make check payable to **Great Outdoors** and mail to:
Klaus Gerhart, 427 S Serrano Ave, Los Angeles, CA 90020
Phone: 323-493-0104

Name (*please print*) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

GO Member # _____ Chapter: _____

Phone #: _____ E-mail: _____

Emergency contact: _____

Relationship: _____ Phone #: _____

Medical Insurance Carrier: _____

Group/Policy # _____

Physician: _____

Physician's Phone #: _____

I am carpooling with _____

I need a ride? Yes or No I Can offer a ride? Yes or No

I can be ready
to leave around:

I'm planning
to leave around:

Registration Fee

Member \$39

Non-member \$59
(includes eMembership)

Satellite RVs \$9

Total Enclosed _____

Please note: There are no cancellations unless approved on a per-case-basis by the primary trip leader.

For trip leader's use

Date: _____

Check#: _____

Amount: _____

WAIVER OF LIABILITY, MEDICAL RELEASE AND ASSIGNMENT

I am aware that my participation in this GREAT OUTDOORS Inc. trip may include potentially hazardous activities, and I am voluntarily participating in these activities with the knowledge and understanding that I will use my best judgment to avoid injury to others and myself. I agree to follow the directions of the trip leader and abide by the rules of the facility I am using. I hereby release GREAT OUTDOORS Inc. including its officers, trail or trip leaders, agents or other persons working with GREAT OUTDOORS Inc. from any liability for injuries, physical or mental, which I may suffer by reason of participation in these activities.

I recognize in waiving this liability that I assume sole responsibility for my actions and cannot blame any injuries or losses on any other persons connected with GREAT OUTDOORS Inc. Our registration & cancellation deadline is one week prior to the first day of each outing. I hereby agree to assume full financial responsibility for any bills incurred by me for medical treatment as a result of my participation this GREAT OUTDOORS Inc. activity. In the event that I am unable to consent to medical care, I hereby authorize the trip leader to consent to emergency medical treatment for me, including hospitalizations and surgery, as may be determined under the circumstances.

Health problems/allergies: It is the responsibility of participants to carry on their person a record of significant allergies, medications, and medical history in the event of a medical emergency.

Signature _____ Date _____