

The Basics

About Wilderness Trek Christian Camp

Wilderness Trek provides faith-based wilderness experiences. We are a backcountry guide service dedicated to leading people spiritually and physically through wilderness areas. Since 1976 we have guided over 30,000 teens and adults to become better disciples and leaders through multi-day backcountry experiences.

What are the Key Elements of a Wilderness Trek Program?

There are 4 main elements of Wilderness Trek you will experience while on your program. No matter if you are rock climbing in Moab or backpacking in New Mexico or Colorado, these elements never change.

Grow: Every program we provide will give you opportunity to grow your faith and your skills. Nature is the best place to walk with God and discover God's purpose for your life.

Connect: You will connect with God, God's creation, other people, and your own journey.

Experience: You will have an experience of a lifetime and will experience God's creation. Each program is filled with fascination and excitement.

Challenge: Every program is designed to challenge our spiritual and physical norms and get our faith out of stagnation.

Safety - Our #1 Concern

Wilderness Trek makes every effort to ensure the safety of each individual. But, Wilderness Trek offers a range of outdoor experiences with a certain element of risk. The staff is current in Wilderness First Aid or Wilderness First Responder. The staff follow accepted practices of wilderness safety and constantly review every situation to improve response procedures. They also carry satellite devices with them in case of emergency. For our climbing excursions, gear is routinely inspected and our climbing and rappelling guides are certified in the necessary certifications for those activities.

The Area/Conditions

The Wilderness Trek base camp is located in the Sangre de Cristo range of the Southern Rocky Mountains of northern New Mexico. For onsite Wilderness Courses and customized group Wilderness Programs, we utilize the 2,400 acres of the Glorieta Adventure Camp property, along with the Santa Fe National Forest, Carson National Forest, Great Sand Dunes National Park, San Isabel National Forest, and the Pecos Wilderness. Elevation can range from 7,200 ft to 14,000 ft. The air is generally dry and crisp but there can be a lot of variation of weather, even in the summer. Temperatures can range from 30's overnight (depending upon elevation of campsite) to the low 90's mid-day. Rain comes and goes frequently in the summer (typically starting in July), so a rain jacket is necessary. We will be hiking in rocky terrain, so boots with ankle support are encouraged. We are also in black bear country, so we will be taking precautions and educating participants on proper practices such as using bear boxes on our property, and using bear hangs in the Forest and Wilderness areas. Additionally, our staff carry bear spray on overnight backpacking trips.

The Physical Demands

The Wilderness: Not all, but many programs through Wilderness Trek are full on Wilderness immersion trips that may be book-ended with the comforts and privileges of indoor living and fun camp activities. When you are “on trail,” all you have is the support of your team and the life you carry on your back. Prepare to “rough it” -- no shampoo or body wash, no mirrors or plumbing; just sleeping in the mountain air and doing business in the dirt. Life on the trail is a beautiful thing and a once in a lifetime experience for some. We want to prepare you mentally to enjoy your program.

Elevation: People feel the physiological effects of altitude in various ways, including headache, nausea, and increased respiration and difficulty “catching your breath”. In most cases, it will just feel like you are a bit out of shape. We combat the effects of altitude by asking students to **start hydrating before you arrive** at Wilderness Trek and continue to hydrate well during your stay. We also recommend that you prepare physically for your trip by keeping active at home. It is a good idea to do extra running or walking in preparation for your program. Elevations can range from 7,200 to 14,000 ft. Be prepared to feel the effects of the higher altitude/lower air pressure. Prepare to stay well hydrated and eat plenty of food.

Backpacking with Wilderness Trek: Pack weight, depending on the type of program and length of stay, can be 30-50lbs., or up to about a third of your body weight. We provide all of the backpacking gear, so we can provide the optimum comfort for your program. However, as much as we can work to make the pack fit your frame and show you how to distribute weight properly, backpacking is an inherently challenging activity. You may be hiking multiple miles and gaining 1,000' to 4,000' in elevation during a day's hike, all while carrying your home on your back. Backpacking exemplifies simplicity and caring for your community to a T, and those tasks are not easy and do not always come naturally to our society of class and comfort. Challenge will be complemented and contrasted with fun activities, relaxing conversation by the fire, and stargazing in the vast wonder of creation we call our home for the night. There is nothing better than being challenged personally, growing as a group, and being worn down physically during the day, then peeling off your socks and kicking back while eating the tastiest trail meal prepared by your friends.

What Does Wilderness Trek Provide?

- Backpacks
- Group Shelters
- Foam Sleeping Pads
- Sleeping Bags
- Tents
- Hand Sanitizer & Trowel for Backcountry Restroom Purposes
- Cooking Equipment
- Stoves & Fuel
- Food: Trail Meals (some snacks provided)
- Curriculum & Experience

Note about Personal Gear: You may bring any of the above items if you desire to. Our staff will assess your gear during orientation to see if it will be suitable for the program. If it is not, we will provide you with our gear.

How to Be Comfortable in the Backcountry

Layering: This is one of the best things you can do for yourself, take it from us! Your body temperature will fluctuate as you hike, rest, and relax at basecamp. We recommend layering as follows: short-sleeve, light weight long sleeve, mid-layer(such as a quarter-zip pullover), a warmer layer(like a puffy), and finish it off with a waterproof rain jacket. (Water-proof is not the same as water resistant). For your bottom half we recommend having a pair of shorts and a pair of long pants. If you are more likely to get cold, a pair of long underwear is nice to have for cold evenings and mornings.

Footwear: Bring two pairs! One pair for hiking with high ankle support, are preferably waterproof, and are worn in. And another pair of lightweight sandals or tennis shoes to wear around your tent and camp for the day that allow your feet to breathe.

Hygiene: Little comforts are nice while you are roughing it. Bring a toothbrush and some toothpaste and we will show you how to brush your teeth in the backcountry. Baby wipes are nice for "freshening up" after a long day of hiking. Ladies, bring feminine products just in case! Our female guides can help you with any questions you have while you are out there.



DO NOT BRING



Please do not pack these items for your Wilderness Trek Program:

- Knives or other weapons
- Explosives/fireworks
- Electronics (laptops, game consoles, etc.)
- Tobacco products
- Vapor smoking devices
- Alcohol/drugs
- Firearms

In Regards to Cellphones: Wilderness Trek cannot keep you from bringing your cellphones, but we highly encourage group leaders to take them up until the program is over and assign an adult to take photos for everyone. We want your time here to be devoid of distractions.

The Packing List

FOR TRAIL:

- T-Shirts** - NON-COTTON -Light colored t-shirts are preferred as they retain less heat. For trail use a minimum of two is suggested.
- Shorts** - Bring at least one or two pairs that are longer for wearing while in a climbing harnesses
- Underwear** - One for each day or less, preferably non-cotton
- Socks** - Wool/non-cotton! (3 pairs is sufficient for a week on trail)
- Rain Gear** - A rain jacket is necessary and rain pants are nice to have. Water proof, not water resistant
- Hiking Boots** - The area is rock, so broken in high top boots are preferred. Durable running shoes are okay. A thick sole will keep your feet more comfortable. Waterproof footwear is preferred. Do not bring "slick soled" shoes such as Vans or Converse to hike in.
- Camp Shoes** - Sandals, Crocs or other lightweight shoes can be worn around the campsite, but not for hiking
- Lightweight Jacket or Long-sleeved Shirt** - A fleece is nice for cold nights/mornings
- Warmer Jacket/Puffy**
- Stocking Cap/Beanie** - Helps with cold nights and mornings
- Long Pants** - One pair is enough. Don't bring jeans or heavy cotton. Lightweight synthetic fabrics are best
- Base Layer** - Synthetic long underwear
- Water Storage** - at least 2 Liters of water storage. (1 nalgene=1 liter) Camelbak's are also a good option
- Flashlight or Headlamp** - Bring extra batteries
- Sunglasses**
- Sunscreen, Chapstick, Bug Repellant**
- Bible, Notebook, & Writing Utensil**
- Medications** - NOTE: All doctor prescribed medications must come in the prescription bottle with directions. We do not take up or give out meds.
- Daypack** - For excursions without our heavy packs (must be small enough to pack away) in your large backpack
- Extra snacks** - Wilderness Trek provides all of the meals, but you are welcome to bring snacks if desired. TOTAL WEIGHT OF SNACK FOOD MUST REMAIN UNDER 2 POUNDS
- Backcountry Restroom Items** - Toilet Paper, 5-6 sandwich sized ziplock bags, 1 (1 gal) ziplock bag / ladies bring feminine products
- Gallon Ziploc Bags (Multiple)** - good for packing your clothes in your backpack
- Heavy Duty Trash Bag** - for a backup rain cover for your backpack
- Personal Plate, Bowl, Cup, and Eating Utensils** - something not too heavy or fragile

FOR BASECAMP (Not on the trail)

- Toiletries** :
- Towel**
- Twin Size Bedding & Blankets or Personal Sleeping Bag** (a sleeping bag will be provided if you do not have these)
- Pillow (optional)** - Wilderness Trek doesn't provide pillows
- Casual Clothes & Shoes**

FOR PACK 'N PADDLE'S:

From our friends at **New Mexico River Adventures:**

One of the most common questions we receive at New Mexico River Adventures is, "What should I wear?" The best bet for staying comfortable in the cooler times on the river is to wear as much synthetic clothing as possible. During spring time and high runoff, we recommend that our guests wear a bathing suit under the provided wetsuit and splash gear. If you prefer to skip the wetsuit, capilene or polypropylene long underwear on top and bottom is the best bet along with fleece on the colder days. In the height of summer, swim trunks and a t-shirt or rash guard work really well. We do wear helmets on most of our trips and some people find that a baseball caps offer further sun protection underneath. One of the most important aspects of what to wear rafting is footwear. All of our guests are informed that flip flops are a no-no and we prefer if you wear aqua socks, any sandal with a heel strap or an old pair of tennis shoes.

We do offer hats, shirts, water, sunscreen and water shoes for sale if you have left any of these items at home. We look forward to seeing you! Most of our guests love to bring a waterproof camera along on the trip. Many brands come equipped with an elastic strap that can hook onto the top latch on your lifejacket, making it easy to access throughout the trip. We do not recommend bring non-waterproof cameras or phones on the river with you. New Mexico River Adventures has a private photographer that will snap your hilarious expressions as you come through the last rapid and are available for purchase once you are back at our headquarters.

WHAT TO BRING

- Sunscreen
- Water bottle
- Sturdy shoes such as sandals with a heel strap, tennis shoes or aqua socks/water shoes **NO FLIP-FLOPS**
- Hat-We do wear helmets on most of our trips, but a baseball style works under the helmet
- Most people wear a t-shirt and shorts
- Change of clothes for after the trip
- If you get cold easily or your trip is in the spring, it is a good idea to bring long underwear and/or a fleece
- Any medication you may need
- **A gratuity for your guide if you see fit (Typical is \$5/person) *This is encouraged.**
- A GREAT ATTITUDE AND BE READY TO HAVE SOME FUN!!

Please note that if you are participating in a Pack & Paddle you will have anywhere from a 1 to 2.5 hour drive from the trailhead of the area you are hiking to the NMRA headquarters located in Rinconada, NM. Once the trip is over you will then have a 1.5 hour drive back to Wilderness Trek's basecamp.

If you are also backpacking with us at Wilderness Trek, bring these clothing articles in addition to what is required for backpacking, as these will get wet!