

Bikes, Babes, Beauty & much MORE...
West Yellowstone, Montana

Spring in Yellowstone is probably its best kept secret. Fall is famous for bugling elk, winter for its wintry wonderland and over-the-snow travel by snowmobile and snowcoaches, and summer is best known for visitors from all over the world. Spring, on the other hand, is probably the quietest season for visitors yet the most dynamic time to enjoy.

The mountain bluebirds and sand hill cranes return while Yellowstone's most famous "babes", buffalo calves, make their appearance. Resembling the color of red desert mud, they can be spotted along side their mothers. In early May, bison "nurseries" are in full swing in the Lower Geyser Basin areas, Gibbon Meadows, Hayden and Lamar Valleys.

Early evening is a great time to sit and watch as the calves shake off their late afternoon naps and almost frantically begin to run and jump. As June approaches, the spindly-legged elk "babes" begin to pop up in the green meadows of Yellowstone.

With beautiful weather and relatively un-crowded roads, Yellowstone Park is a delight to visit during May and early June. Warm afternoons blend into cool nights with dusk lingering later each day.

Receding snows, warmer temperatures and light traffic create the perfect combination for cycling into the Park. You can ride right from West Yellowstone into Yellowstone along the Madison River and if energy allows, on to the geyser basins along the way to Old Faithful or north to Norris.

This year there's even more reason to be in Yellowstone, and specifically West Yellowstone in early June—it's time for a Century birthday party! On June 11, 1908, the first Union Pacific passenger train arrived at the West Entrance of Yellowstone National Park. This sets the stage for West Yellowstone's 100 years of service to national park visitors.

This year, from June 11 through June 14, the Town of West Yellowstone will celebrate its Centennial, marking the arrival of this first train and the founding of this gateway community. The celebration will kick off at the Yellowstone Historic Center Museum in the Union Pacific Depot with a slate of speakers. A film festival highlighting railroad history will be hosted throughout the town. Music and unique dining opportunities will also be available.

The coming of the railroad signaled the beginning of West Yellowstone. While railroad history plays an important part, this celebration will also focus on the stagecoach and freight wagon's impact Yellowstone's development, the use of White Touring Buses within the Park, and the interrelation of various modes of travel with the evolution of National Parks as a whole will be celebrated.

The National Stagecoach and Freight Association will host an exhibit of historic stagecoaches and freight wagons at the Holiday Inn Sunspree Resort during the four day celebration. The yellow touring buses built by White Motor Company of Cleveland, Ohio, also transported thousands of visitors through the park. Some of these buses will be used to provide complementary rides for Centennial attendees.

Parallel to the Centennial Festival the West Yellowstone “Buffalo Roam” event is also taking place. The “roundup” of the painted cows will be held on June 7th when they will be corralled on the lawn of the Yellowstone Historic Center Museum. There they will remain until the newly painted calves arrive to be unveiled to the oow’s and ahh’s of the crowd on June 14th.

In conjunction with the Painted Buffalo, an Art Show featuring northwest regional art and artists will be hosted in the Union Pacific Dining Lodge ,June 13-15. Live music in the City Park on both Friday and Saturday evening round-out this year’s “Roam.”

Regardless of whether you are coming to bike, view Yellowstone’s Spring beauty and babes, or enjoy the Centennial celebration and the Painted Buffalo, be prepared for spring weather. Daytime temperatures range from the 30s to the 60s (0 to 20C) with overnight lows in the teens to single digits (-5 to -20C). Weather can also change quickly. A brief snow shower is not uncommon in the spring. Come prepared with a wide range of clothing options.

Long, springtime evenings in West Yellowstone provide the perfect opportunity to stroll downtown shops or visit the Yellowstone IMAX Theatre with its six story screen and surround sound. Take time to tour the historic Union Pacific Depot that now houses an excellent museum. Then, too, there’s the Grizzly & Wolf Discovery Center with live bears and wolves and staff presentations of birds of prey making a wonderful learning experience.

For more information, including local bike rentals, contact the West Yellowstone Chamber of Commerce at 406-646-7701 or visit www.destinationyellowstone.com. For further details on the Centennial and Buffalo Roam check www.wyed.org.