



Summer 2016

Dear Sierra Backpacker and Family,

We are thrilled to have you join us for our Sierra Backpacking Trip, a very exciting and rewarding backpacking program at Hidden Villa.

On the first day of camp at Hidden Villa, **we will meet at the Wolken Education Center** (look for the signs) **at 10:30 am**. Parents and campers, plan to spend 20-30 minutes for the check-in process which includes meeting your fellow campers and counselors as well as a health check with our nurse.

Beginning February 15<sup>th</sup>, you can log in to our online registration system to complete all required forms. These forms **must be completed and signed by May 1<sup>st</sup>**. These forms are **required** in order to attend camp. Sierra Backpackers must have a **physician's signature on the Health Form**.

In the Sierra Backpacking program, you will have the opportunity to enhance lots of skills - orienteering (map and compass), "Leave No Trace" wilderness practices, backpacking methods, ecology, knots, first aid, and wilderness survival. Previous Bay to Sea experience is recommended; backpacking experience is required. The better physical shape you are in, the better you will feel. **We recommend doing weight-bearing exercise, taking walks and hikes or riding your bike daily for several weeks prior to the trip**. On any one day of the trip, backpackers will hike no further than 14 miles or gain no more than 3,000 feet of elevation.

Hidden Villa staff will have experience leading lengthy backpacking trips and have Wilderness First Responder certification. To support safety and minimize risk, our staff have been trained to prevent hazards, although there is a risk of exposure to weather, wildlife and travel. In the case of a severe emergency, additional assistance is never more than 45 minutes away through Yosemite Emergency Services. Staff carry on them an emergency satellite phone at all times and will remain in regular phone contact with the Camp Director.

For the first two days of the trip, you will explore the local watershed and sleep at Hidden Villa. Given park and permitting conditions, we'll be transported to Hetch Hetchy, the start of our backpacking adventure, then on through the Grand Canyon of the Tuolumne River. We'll hike Mt. Lyell and end up in Yosemite Valley.

On the final Thursday of the trip, you will return at 1:00 pm to Hidden Villa by chartered bus, meeting campers in other programs, cleaning and packing up equipment, swimming, and joining in the activities. You will have the opportunity reflect on the epic experience and enjoy Hidden Villa one last time before heading home.

**Pick-up on the final day of camp is at 9:45 am at The Hostel**. Please plan 20-30 minutes for check-out. There is a map in this packet to help you find your way.

As a reminder, **do not bring cigarettes, alcohol, or drugs of any kind**. We do not tolerate the use of these substances. In addition, failure to follow any safety rule or engaging in unsupervised risky behavior may result in your being asked to leave the trip immediately. Arrangements will be made by the director to transport any camper from the trail in the event of behavior problems or illness.

All in all, it should be a tremendous summer. We are looking forward to spending time with you and are sure that your backpacking trip with Hidden Villa will be an unforgettable experience.

We look forward to seeing you soon!  
The Hidden Villa Camp Staff



# SIERRA BACKPACKER'S CHECKLIST

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## REQUIRED FORMS

All forms can be found in our online registration system and **MUST** be completed by May 31<sup>st</sup>.

### Forms for Parents to Complete:

- Health Form
- Immunization Records
- Parent Consent Form
- Behavior Expectations Contact – Parent
- Parent/ Guardian Information Form
- Physician's Consent Form (requires physician's signature)

### Forms for Camper to Complete:

- Behavior Expectations Contact – Camper
- Camper Information Form

### If Your Camper is Bringing Medication (Prescription or Over the Counter):

- Fill out the Medication Form
- Pack all medication in their *original packaging*
- Place Medication Form and medication in clear ziplock bag
- Write camper's name on the bag
- Give directly to Program Head/Nurse during camp check-in

## PACKING LIST

Traveling light is important! We will provide communal equipment (such as stoves, tarps, first aid, etc.) and all food (even sweets, desserts, fruit, everything!). The list below is what you need as personal gear for the trip.

### PLEASE BRING ONLY WHAT IS ON THIS LIST!

**You will need room in your pack to carry community equipment.**

**Do not bring** iPod/CD players of any kind, electronic games, cell phones, candy, gum, other food, money, valuables, make-up, jewelry or watches. ***Bringing cigarettes, drugs, alcohol, knives (other than a pocket knife) or fireworks is prohibited and warrants being sent home immediately with no warning (and no refund will be given).***

Check in your closets/attics for equipment or check with relatives and friends to see what they can lend you. If you wish to purchase equipment, try thrift shops or army surplus first. We do have a limited amount of equipment to loan. Please contact the office for more info. For nearest REI Rental: 800-426-4840; for Marmot Mountain Works 510-849-0735.

**IMPORTANT:** Label everything you bring! Hidden Villa is not responsible for items lost at camp. Clothing left behind will be held until the Sunday after the final session ends before being donated to charity.

### Personal Equipment: (Remember to label ALL equipment!)

- 1 backpack: We suggest simple packs that fit well. Suitable packs are made with both external framed and internal frame support systems with 65 L or higher. Both REI and Kelty make reasonably priced, well-made backpacks.
- 1 sleeping bag: synthetic or down-filled, nylon-covered, rated to 20 degrees or lower
- 1 foam sleeping pad: thin, synthetic pad necessary for insulating against the cold ground
- 2-3 hefty garbage bag

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### Essential Clothing (you can bring more but may leave it at main camp):

**IMPORTANT NOTE: Nylon is far warmer and safer than cotton in the backcountry.**

- 1 pair hiking pants - should be comfortable pants (nylon quick dry or light fleece pants - **NOT JEANS**)
- 1 warm sweater or jacket- non-cotton material; ie: puffy (synthetic or down) or fleece
- 1 long sleeve light shirt (cotton is fine) for protection from sun and bugs
- 1 waterproof (NOT “water-resistant”) durable shell, pants and jacket (plastic or nylon)
- 1 each long underwear top and bottom (polypropylene or nylon, thicker is better)
- 1 change of clothes (socks, pants, underwear, shirt, etc.) to wear at Hidden Villa
- 3 tshirts - 2 for hiking and one for in camp (cotton is OK)
- 1 warm wool hat (covers ears)
- 1 pair nylon shorts or quick dry shorts
- 1 swimsuit (for use at Hidden Villa only)
- 1 sun hat or ball cap
- 3 pairs of underwear
- 1 pair Sun gloves/warm gloves

### Footgear:

You won't have a good time unless your feet do! So, wear shoes that are broken in and comfortable.

- 1 pair Medium-light hiking boots are better than heavier ones for this kind of trip.  
**Ankle support is preferred.**
- 2 pairs light socks and 3-4 pair heavy socks (wool is preferred)
- 1 pair tennis shoes while at Hidden Villa
- 1 pair sandals for base camp

### Essential Miscellaneous:

**Please note: Group gear will include toothpaste, sunscreen, soap and insect repellent. Due to bears, all other toiletries will be left at Hidden Villa.**

- 1 large Tupperware bowl with lid (3-cup is PERFECT - it is a bowl, a plate and can carry food too!)
- 2 water bottles: 1 quart/liter each  
 (Canada Dry/New York Seltzer bottles wrapped in duct tape are indestructible)
- 1 day pack or extra stuff sack. (something to put stuff in, no internal frame)
- 1 SMALL headlamp & extra batteries
- 35 SPF or better chapstick
- 1-2 bandanas and/or a handkerchiefs
- 1 mosquito net for head
- Feminine Hygiene Kit: pads/tampons, 3-4 ziplock bags, travel pack of cleansing wipes, medication for yeast infections (if prone)
- 1 tooth brush
- 1 large spoon
- 1 roll athletic tape

### Optional/Miscellaneous:

- 1 SMALL towel (hand towel size)
- Shower supplies for Hidden Villa
- Book (no e-readers)
- Stamps
- Sock Liners
- Camera
- Notebook and pen



# INFORMATION AND POLICIES

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All Hidden Villa Summer Programs emphasize environmental and multicultural understanding as well as group living skills. We encourage campers to make decisions for themselves and to understand the consequences of their decisions and actions. We believe that everyone is valuable to the larger group and believe that working together on chores and projects is a source of satisfaction. We believe in creative and non-aggressive problem solving and encourage all campers to learn more about themselves and each other.

## **BEFORE CAMP BEGINS**

**PAYMENTS/FORMS:** All forms that require a signature are DUE BY May 1st. Final payment is DUE BY June 6th. Payments can be made online or by mailed check. If you need to cancel your registration, you may cancel through our online registration system until May 31st at 11:59pm. After that time, you must notify us by email to cancel your camp reservation. Once registered, session or program changes are possible only as space allows. There is a \$50 administrative fee for each change.

**REFUND POLICY:** The \$60 deposit is non-refundable after your child has been registered. Camp fees (minus deposit) are refundable only until May 31. You must notify us before this date if you need to cancel your registration and wish to receive a refund. While Hidden Villa retains the right to keep the entirety of tuition after May 31 in all cases, the following exception may be considered. If a cancellation is made at least 7 days prior to the start of a session and a replacement can be easily found, a partial refund (tuition minus a 25% cancellation fee) may be issued.

See 'Pick Up' and 'Behavior Expectations Contract' below for additional information on refunds.

Should the Camp Director decide to send my child home for ill health, or any other reason, I am obliged to pick my child up immediately with no refund given. Should the Camp Directors and Staff feel it necessary to send my child home for adjustment or behavior difficulties, I am obliged to pick the child up immediately with no refund given.

**MEDICAL FORMS:** The health form must be filled out completely and accurately by a parent/guardian. Bay to Sea participants and Sierra Backpackers must have both a parent/guardian signature and a physician's signature on the form. The doctor's signature can be based on any physical that has taken place within the past 12 months. Food allergies, physical restrictions and medications (all prescription and over the counter drugs) - including asthma medications - must be listed on the medical form.

**NO MONEY AT CAMP:** Campers should not bring any money with them to camp. Hidden Villa t-shirts are included in the registration fees for camp.

**NO TIP POLICY:** In accord with American Camping Association guidelines, staff may not accept tips. Donations to the Hidden Villa Summer Camp Scholarship fund are gratefully accepted.

## **DROP OFF & PICK UP**

**DROP OFF:** I will check-in my child on the first day of camp at the time designated on the Welcome Letter, OR if I send my child to camp with another adult, I understand that this individual will be verifying/editing contact information and the names of those authorized to pick-up my child.

**PICK UP:** I will pick up my child on the final day of camp at the time specified on the Welcome Letter. Should the Camp Director decide to send my child home for ill health, or any other reason, I am obliged to pick my child up immediately with no refund given. If I live outside of the Bay Area, or am otherwise unavailable to pick my child up at any point during the camp session, another legal guardian or approved local emergency contact will be available with a reliable mode of transportation to retrieve my child immediately. I understand that myself, the emergency contact and other authorized adults I listed during registration are the only authorized individuals who may pick-up my child. If I need to add additional adults to my child's pick-up list, I will submit a request in the online camp registration system or in writing to the camp office.

**NO PETS:** Due to the high traffic and busy atmosphere at camp, we ask that you leave your dogs at home or in the car when dropping off or picking up your camper. This is for both the safety of all campers and your pets!



# INFORMATION AND POLICIES

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## WHILE CAMP IS IN SESSION

**MEDICATIONS:** We have a resident health care professional on duty. Our camp doctor is: Dr. Debra Babcock, 763 Altos Oaks Drive, Los Altos, CA 94022.

- All medications should be given to the Staff during check-in. No medication of any sort should be packed with the camper's belongings.
- Prescription and non-prescription medications or drugs of any kind - *including asthma medication* - that my child is bringing are listed in the online registration system or on the Medical Form.
- Hidden Villa cannot administer medication that is not in its original container, labeled by the pharmacy with the child's name, address, dosage and frequency. This includes any 'over-the-counter' drugs - anti-histamines, vitamins, etc. At the end of a session, parents/guardians must pick up any medications from the Staff - medications WILL NOT be returned to campers.
- **Contacts/Eye Glasses:** If your child wears contacts or glasses, please bring a second pair to camp.
- **Asthma Medication:** If your child has asthma - even if s/he only rarely has attacks - please bring an inhaler or other asthma medicine to camp. If Hidden Villa has to purchase an asthma inhaler or other asthma medicine for your child, you will be billed.

**SICKNESS/EMERGENCIES:** We contact parents in the event of sickness or an emergency involving their camper. We will call and ask that s/he be picked up if s/he acquires a fever while at camp. If the camper recovers at home quickly, s/he can then return to camp upon the Director's approval. No refunds will be given if a camper leaves due to illness.

**WAIVER AND RELEASE LIABILITY:** Hidden Villa carries health and accident insurance to cover accidents occurring during camp. As parent or guardian of my child, I agree that I will not hold the Trust for Hidden Villa or its staff liable for any personal injury, property damage, loss or insurance. I agree to release and hold harmless the Trust for Hidden Villa and its staff from all liability incurred as a result of my child's participation in summer camp and that these terms serve as a release for myself and members of my family.

**ABILITY TO ENGAGE IN CAMP ACTIVITIES AND ASSUMPTION OF THE RISK:** Camp activities, including but not limited to swimming, hiking, and farm chores, can be physically strenuous and involve some risk to participants. The Trust for Hidden Villa takes all possible precautions to reduce risk and provide safe, healthy, and enjoyable experiences. I warrant that my child is fully capable of participation and able to follow directions in any and all activities offered at camp. I acknowledge that risks from participation in camp activities exist and that I have allowed my child to attend camp knowing of these risks and their possible consequences including personal injury.

**BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS CONTRACT:** Should the Camp Directors and Staff feel it necessary to send my child home for adjustment or behavior difficulties, I am obliged to pick the child up immediately with no refund given. (We encourage you to discuss the Behavior Expectation Contract with your child.)

**PROHIBITED:** We believe in caring for ourselves and our environment. **The use of drugs, alcohol and cigarettes is strictly prohibited and the use of these substances warrants sending anyone possessing them home immediately without warning.**

**PHOTOGRAPHS:** During program, your youth's picture may be taken for use in a variety of publications. Images will not be posted to the general public or used in publications while your youth is in session. By signing the application below you are giving full consent, without limitations or reservations to Hidden Villa to publish any photos, video or audio recording in which your youth appears while enrolled in any Hidden Villa programs. If you do not wish to consent to a photographic release, please attach a written statement requesting an exemption from this release.

**COMMUNICATION WITH CAMPERS:** For overnight campers, we encourage you to write letters often or send an email using our one-way camper email service. For letters, be sure to include the name of the camp your child is attending (Tipi Camp - Attn: Jane Smith).

Outside of an emergency or pre-arranged special circumstance, we do not permit visits during camp. Please note that campers may not use Hidden Villa telephones or bring personal cell phones to camp. If you send a package, do not send food or candy for two reasons: 1) we eat plenty of delicious food and 2) no food is allowed in the bunks or wilderness sleeping areas because it attracts animals.

**FRIENDS AT CAMP:** Camp is a fantastic place to make new friends! Hidden Villa Summer Camp brings youth together from different backgrounds to learn and have fun together! In keeping with our mission and to help create an inclusive atmosphere for all, **we do not take requests to place a camper in the same group as a buddy – this includes relatives.**



## Behavior Expectations

*Hidden Villa's rules and agreements are founded on RESPECT. They are laid out here in much the same manner that we discuss them at camp. To help your children to have the best possible time at Hidden Villa we encourage parents / guardians and campers to discuss these behavior agreements in advance of camp.*

**Respect For Ourselves:** Take good care of yourself. Stay safe. Do your best at whatever you choose to do. If you need help, feel bad, or are sick, please tell a staff person. If you have an idea, please share it. Remember that you are a valuable part of making camp work for everyone.

**Respect For Each Other:** Treat people as you wish to be treated. Every camper may not be your best friend, but we ask you to treat each person well. Listen to each other and to your counselors. No fighting, name calling, or verbal abuse is allowed.

**Respect For Our Cultures:** At Hidden Villa you have the opportunity to make friends with staff and campers from many backgrounds. We do not tolerate insults or poor treatment based on race, social class, language, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability or any other difference.

**Respect For Our Environment:** Take good care of the gardens, animals, trails and property that make up Hidden Villa. Do not catch or injure lizards or other wild animals. Try to leave Hidden Villa and its inhabitants in better condition than when you found them. At Hidden Villa we try to maintain a wilderness experience free from the disruptions of mass media and technology- do not bring CD/MP3 players, iPods or cell phones with you to camp.

Most youth thrive within Hidden Villa's environment of respect, choice and positive communication. Our discipline program is based in respectful communication. When behavior is inappropriate or unsafe the steps we take are as follows:

1. Discuss the situation, make a **verbal agreement** defining the desired behavior, and establish any natural consequences as applicable (e.g. sitting out from some pool time for running at the pool).
2. If the problem continues, camper and staff create a **written contract**. This will be followed by a call home.
3. If the behavior is still unresolved, the parent/guardian will be contacted and the camper will be **sent home**.

It is important to note that should the Camp Director and Staff feel it is necessary to send a child home for any reason, their parent, guardian, or emergency contact person is obliged to pick the child up immediately, at their own expense and with no refund given. We reserve the right to send a camper home without completing steps 1 and 2, as deemed necessary by the director.

