

Topdeck

CALIFORNIA CALLING



TRIP CODE:

TSALL1



TOPDECKER, meet North America (TD)

Is this trip for me: PICTURESQUE. MOMENTOUS. SHORT-BUT-SWEET. 'You could travel the world, but nothing comes close to the golden coast'. And yes, Katy Perry – we'd have to agree. Roll from the sun-soaked and painfully attractive Pacific Coast, through the red expanses of the Mojave Desert, to the jaw-droppingly beautiful vistas of Yosemite and golden hues of San Fran on this epic two-week Californian adventure. There's not really a better introduction to the West than this.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



Hostel Plus



Nights



Download app



Meals

Thanks for choosing to holiday with Topdeck

Ready for the time of your LIFE?
The countdown's on...

ABOUT YOUR TRIP NOTES

These Trip Notes contain everything you need to know before your trip departs – from where to meet your Topdeck fam to what we suggest you bring.

Read them on the train, in the supermarket queue or on the loo – we don't mind, just look through them carefully so you know what to expect on your trip. We recommend you download this document so it's with you when you travel (and give a copy to your MVPs so they know what you're up to).

IMPORTANT: please refresh this doc as close to your departure as possible. This means you'll have the most up-to-date info available.

INCLUDED EXPERIENCES

- Driving tour of Los Angeles
- Driving tour of San Diego
- Entry to Grand Canyon National Park
- Driving tour of the Las Vegas Strip
- Las Vegas party bus
- Entry to Yosemite National Park
- Driving tour of San Francisco

YOUR TRIP WILL START

PICK UP:

Santa Monica
United States of America

YOUR TRIP WILL FINISH

DROP OFF:

San Francisco
United States of America

TRIP CURRENCIES

- United States of America - USD

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 | LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

La la land: a city characterised by its blissful lack of touch with reality. And the perfect place to sack off your everyday routine and catapult into a two-week California adventure. Meet us early and get your bearings around this ginormous city on a driving tour. We'll tick off the big guns: Santa Monica, Venice Beach, Beverly Hills and Hollywood. Then it's time get to know the gang a little better with an included group dinner. We may be a mixed bunch, but we're all in it together!



MEALS:

- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Driving tour of Los Angeles

DAY 2 | LOS ANGELES

Sun-kissed. Creative. Ruggedly good looking. LA is your ideal Tinder date – minus the swiping and awkward small talk. And today, the City of Angels is 100% yours for the taking. Don't just scratch the surface, delve deeper. Explore the edgy art districts filled with hipster breweries and awesome street art. Visit the grungy music venues of famous rock stars, new and old. Dive head-first into the diverse foodie scene (like, seriously good Korean food – just sayin'). And revel in the good life with a dip at Venice Beach or sunset hike through the Hollywood Hills. Rather see if America's theme parks really live up to the hype? Sign up for an optional trip to Disneyland or Universal Studios – and put them to the test.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Visit Disneyland: from \$100 USD
- Visit Universal Studios: from \$100 USD

DAY 3 | LOS ANGELES TO SAN DIEGO

Pile into the coach amigos, we're heading down the Pacific Coast to San Diego. After a drive around town, we'll park up at Mission Beach. Then: the afternoon is up to you! Ride the rollercoaster at Belmont Park. Stretch your legs along the beachfront boardwalk. Tuck into a California Burrito – they were born here. Or don your speedos and hit the beach. Later, we'll settle in for a Mexican feast in Old Town before seeing whether the Gaslamp Quarter meets expectations.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Driving tour of San Diego

DAY 4 | SAN DIEGO

This is your day to delve deeper – need some suggestions? If aircraft carriers are your thing, there's an optional trip to the USS Midway to get on board with. Or take Fleetwood's advice and go your own way – slip on the Nikes and hit the lesser-known hiking trails around Balboa Park or head to Little Italy to silence your inner fat-kid. Later, find out why they call this place 'America's Craft Beer Capital' with a micro-brewery crawl with you trip mates. Or take a picnic down to the beach and watch the sun go down. This is what you came for.



MEALS:

- Breakfast



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Visit the USS Midway: from \$16 USD

DAY 5 | SAN DIEGO TO PRESCOTT, ARIZONA

Have one last swim in the Pacific Ocean before we roll onto Prescott today. Arizona – this state is made for road trips. Stretches of endless sky. Expanses of red desert. Centuries-old history. And some pretty famous rock formations. Spot the mutant cacti as we cross the Mojave Desert. After dinner, soak up some lingering history and live music along Whiskey Row.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner

DAY 6 | PRESCOTT TO GRAND CANYON REGION

Disclaimer: this is a bit of a drive day. So, stock up on snacks and share around the AUX cord – we're going to blast some banging tunes all the way to Flagstaff (the gateway to the Grand Canyon). Get syced about tomorrow – you've seen the pictures, but nothing can prepare you for the humility you'll feel standing on the edge of something so mighty.



MEALS:

- Breakfast

DAY 7 | GRAND CANYON REGION TO LAS VEGAS, NEVADA

This is it folks, the moment you've been waiting for. The grandest of canyons awaits! One word to describe this place: mesmerising. And the only way to see one of the world's most incredible natural wonders in its entirety, is from the sky. DW we've organised an optional heli-tour for you. After you've filled your SD card, we'll make tracks to Sin City. Seriously, this place is so neon it hurts to look at. But we'll do just that on a driving tour – before donning our sequin bowties and stilettos for a night on the town (featuring our very own party bus). Syced?



MEALS:

- Breakfast



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Entry to Grand Canyon National Park
- Driving tour of the Las Vegas Strip
- Las Vegas party bus



OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Heli-tour over the Grand Canyon: from \$290 USD

DAY 8 | LAS VEGAS

From big-budget stage shows, Michelin star restaurants and Eiffel Tower rip-offs – Vegas is the definition of OTT. But you can't help love it anyway. Anything goes here and you've got a full day to make the most of it. Our suggestions? Take an optional heli-tour over The Strip. Or catch a ride on the High Roller Observation Wheel. You can even check out a shooting range, if that's your thing. There's plenty of time to flash some plastic at the mall or hit up a Vegas-style pool party. Just save some energy for round two with the gang later tonight.

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES:

- Heli-tour over the Las Vegas Strip: from \$130 USD
- Ride the High Roller Observation Wheel in Las Vegas: \$40 USD
- Visit a Las Vegas shooting range: from \$100 USD

DAY 9 | LAS VEGAS TO YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK REGION, CALIFORNIA

Shake the confetti from your hair – we're outta here. Next stop? The Sierra Nevada Mountains. This place is Disneyland for outdoor enthusiasts. Where sheer-faced granite walls reign supreme, giant sequoia trees loom over dense forest floors and the sound of thundering waterfalls fill the air. Over dinner, make a plan of attack for your free day tomorrow – your expert Trip Leader has plenty of suggestions.

MEALS:

- Dinner

DAY 10 | YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

There aren't enough adjectives to describe this place – so we're not going to try. You've got a full day to experience the magic of Yosemite (yo-sem-it-ee) for yourself. Don't waste a second. Start with the Mist Trail for incredible views that compensate for the burning calves. Follow the trail to the top of Vernal Falls and be rewarded with a refreshing dip in Emerald Pool. Want more of a challenge? Follow 'nature's staircase' to the top of Nevada Falls. DW if walking isn't your thing – there's a free shuttle to get around. Keep your eyes peeled for deer, bears and golden eagles. David Attenborough wannabes eat your heart out. Worked up an appetite? Dinner tonight is on us

MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Lunch
- Dinner

INCLUDED TODAY:

- Entry to Yosemite National Park

DAY 11 | YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK REGION TO SAN FRANCISCO

The trip might be winding down – but the adventure sure as hell isn't over yet! We've got our eye on San Fran next. Home of Alcatraz Prison and one famous red bridge that's pretending to be golden (we see you). Learn the who's who of 'The City' on a driving tour including Pier 39, the Fisherman's Wharf and The Painted Ladies. Then: we'll get the gang together for one last dinner together. Want to kick on? With so many options, you can't really go wrong – but the Duboce Triangle is a good place to start.



MEALS:

- Breakfast
- Dinner



INCLUDED TODAY:

- Driving tour of San Francisco

DAY 12 | SAN FRANCISCO

This is our last full day. So, don't hang about! Fuel up with a stack of pancakes that'll put your elastic waistbands to the test. Then, hire a set of wheels and ride across the Golden Gate Bridge into Sausalito. History buffs will want to tour Alcatraz (get your tix in advance!). Or wander the waterfront and get a pic with the locals at Pier 39. Union Square is the place to flash some plastic before you head home. Then: take a box of Pepple's Donuts to Marshall's Beach to watch the sunset. After dinner, gather your trip mates and give this epic adventure the send-off it deserves!



MEALS:

- Breakfast

DAY 13 | SAN FRANCISCO

You tried the food. Met the locals. Stood on the edge. Said yes to the new and exotic. And all in under two weeks! Time to say our goodbyes. Swap those Insta handles – start planning that reunion trip.

OTHER INFORMATION

TOPDECK APP

Feeling appy? Download the Topdeck app and get PUMPED for the adventure ahead. Best bit is: from 45 days before departure you'll be able to chat with your soon-to-be tripmates.

Plus, get your itinerary at your fingertips – so you know where you'll be going and what you'll be doing on each day of your trip. Nice!

Links:

Apple <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/topdeck/id994727866>

Android <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.FlexiTechSolutions.TopDeck&hl=en>



YOUR SAFETY

NIGHTS OUT

We love a good night out – experiencing the nightlife and entertainment places have to offer is a big part of travelling. But alongside the fun it's important to be aware of your surroundings and personal safety.

When you're out late, remember to avoid walking alone – particularly through deserted areas like beaches and back streets. Always stick together, take a registered taxi where possible, and keep a note of your accommodation so you can find your way back to your fellow Topdeckers if you become separated. Make sure you have your trip mates' mobile numbers in case you need to get hold of them while out and about.

In some countries, alcoholic measures can be considerably larger than what you may be used to. Try to keep track of what you're drinking – and if you see one of your trip mates looking a little worse for wear, take them back to your accommodation. Never leave your drink unattended.

It's also important to be aware that what you might consider harmless flirting may be interpreted differently in some countries. Be yourself and have fun, but stay savvy – you don't want to find yourself in an uncomfortable situation.

DRUG USE

Topdeck has a strict zero-tolerance drug policy. Customers should not bring any illegal substances onto the Topdeck coach or into any of the accommodation we stay in on our trips. This includes marijuana – even if it is legal in some of the states your trip passes through. If you are found in possession of drugs, you will be removed from the trip immediately. All instances of drug possession will be reported to Topdeck Head Office, who may consider alerting the relevant authorities.

REMEMBER: if you are found in possession of drugs, not only do you risk getting in trouble with the local police, but our Driver will also be held responsible if they are found on the Topdeck coach. Trust us, you don't want that to happen to any of our Drivers – they're awesome.

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

Culture shock, homesickness, random periods of feeling down – these things happen and are totally normal. You can rest assured that if you're feeling low, your Topdeck crew will do their utmost to cheer you up.

Measures you can take to look after your mental health and wellbeing while on the road with us are:

- Call home. Sometimes it's nice to hear a familiar voice and have a good old-fashioned catch up with your loved ones
- Eat well. Never underestimate the power of a good, wholesome meal. Nobody feels at their best when they're hungry!

- Drink responsibly. Not only will you swerve the dreaded hangover, but by keeping an eye on what you drink you could also avoid getting into any potentially uncomfortable situations
- Talk to your Trip Leader. Don't forget, they're probably far from home too – so they're sure to know some tried- and- tested ways to beat the blues
- Integrate with your fellow Topdeckers. This one is key! The more fun you're having on your trip, the less likely you are to feel homesick (fact!)

TRAVEL SINCE COVID-19

Travel looks a bit different since COVID-19. That's why we've put some new procedures in place to help keep you safe on the road.

What remains the same? Your Topdeck trip will be run hygienically, responsibly, and with your safety at the forefront of everything we do. End of.

Here's the info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/travel-safely>

RESPECT ON THE ROAD

RESPECTING FELLOW TRAVELLERS

Our trips are for everyone. We're a family – and we want every Topdecker to have an incredible time.

What we're not about is excluding people or making them feel like they don't belong. That's why we always encourage Topdeckers to be kind and courteous to their fellow tripmates . The golden rules? Respect each other's space, be mindful of causing excessive noise in shared accommodation, and treat others how you'd wish to be treated. Easy!

HOW TO BE A RESPONSIBLE TRAVELLER

Responsible travel isn't difficult to achieve. With a little conscious thought and preparation, you can have an awesome adventure AND a positive impact on the places you visit. Sweet!

Here are five things you can do to ensure you're travelling responsibly:

- Conserve water. You know the drill – reuse your room towels, take short showers and remember to turn off the tap when you're brushing your teeth
- Reduce your waste. Ditch the plastic bag, refuse unnecessary packaging, dispose of your waste responsibly and recycle as much as possible
- Go local. Hunt down locally owned and operated restaurants and bars, shop in local markets, and book tours and activities run by local guides
- Consider the wildlife. Avoid any attractions that involve closely engaging with wild animals
- Respect local people and culture. Obeying local laws is a given – but also remember to dress and behave in a manner appropriate to the community. Be polite and keep an open mind!

INSURANCE

Before your trip departs, it's compulsory for all passengers to take out comprehensive travel insurance covering cancellation, medical expenses (including repatriation), loss or damage to baggage and personal belongings, money and personal liability.

Head to our FAQ for more info: <https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/faqs-0>

Got more Qs? Chat with our Customer Service team: <https://www.topdeck.travel/about-us/contact>

PASSPORTS AND VISAS

Please make sure your passport is valid for at least six months after the last day of your trip. Some countries will refuse entry if you do not have at least six months validity remaining on your passport after your departure date. Depending on your nationality, you may require a visa to enter certain countries.

It is your responsibility to obtain visas prior to your trip's departure. To determine which visas you'll need, you can consult either your own government's website or the government websites of the countries in which you will be travelling. Check out our handy interactive map showing global visa requirements:

<https://www.topdeck.travel/resources/latest-border-restrictions>

PLEASE NOTE: some visas can take up to six weeks to acquire, so don't leave it until the last minute. Also, bear in mind that the validity of a visa often runs from its date of issue rather than the date of entry into the country. Please check with the appropriate embassy/embassies prior to departure, as requirements do change periodically.

TIPPING

Basically: it's not necessary.

Your Trip Leader and Driver don't expect tips, and they won't ask for any either. Meaning? More dollar to spend on optional activities (and a souvenir for your nan).

WHAT TO BRING

Based on our experience, these items are key. Everyone's different though – so if you want to bring more or less, go for it (as long as you don't exceed your 20kg allowance, that is!).

Off to Japan? Your luggage must be no bigger than 160cm in total (height x width x length). So maybe leave the hairdryer at home.

Psst: this is a packing list for Topdeck trips in general. Obv you'd look silly splashing around the Greek islands in a snowsuit.

- 1 pair of comfortable walking shoes + 1 pair of smart casual shoes
- 1 pair of thongs/jandals/flip-flops
- 2 pairs of jeans/trousers
- 2 pairs of shorts/skirts
- 4 shirts/T-shirts
- 2 sweaters/jumpers
- Smart casual evening wear
- 1 warm jacket + 1 rainproof jacket

- Underwear and socks + swimwear
- Towel
- Toiletries
- Hat and sunscreen
- Basic medical kit (including plasters, aspirin etc)
- Adaptor plug
- Reusable water bottle
- Snow gear



THAT'S IT!