



## Course Overview

### Yosemite Backpacking to San Francisco Urban Service for LGBTQ

**This backpacking** course takes you on an adventurous, conscientious journey from wilderness to city.

The Sierra Nevada Range extends 400 miles from north to south. It is filled with granite domes, jagged peaks, cool alpine lakes and lush meadows. Because of the beauty reflected in both moon and sun light, conservationist John Muir referred to these areas as the “Range of Light.”

We currently use the backcountry of Yosemite National Park in areas not usually visited by most tourists to Yosemite and the adjacent Ansel Adam Wilderness outside of the park for the backpacking portion of this course. We travel in the backcountry to avoid large crowds, so we will not make a stop in Yosemite Valley.

After experiencing the wilderness while backpacking, you’ll head to the City by the Bay for urban service and cultural immersion. This course is designed for LGBTQ teens to build community and cultivate self-efficacy through service-learning, leadership development and self-discovery in both natural and urban environments.

Additionally, students will celebrate individuality as they move through San Francisco - a place rich in history and context for equity conversations, experiences, service and reflection. Over a third of San Francisco’s inhabitants were born in other countries, most significantly from Asian and Spanish-speaking countries. San Francisco is the leading cultural center of Northern California and is recognized as a center for political activism, notably in the realm of LGBTQ rights.

#### **Backpacking and Course Terrain**

Traveling through mountain terrain is exhilarating and often physically exhausting. Travel days are generally very long and require great stamina and endurance. Expect to travel primarily on high quality trails through beautiful alpine lake areas. You may ford waist deep rivers where no footbridges are present.

#### **Miles Traveled Daily**

As a general guideline, expect to travel approximately 3-7 miles a day. Crews may cover 10+ miles per day as terrain and fitness allow.

#### **Physical Fitness**

Participants must come prepared for a physically, mentally and emotionally-demanding yet equally rewarding experience. One of the best ways to enhance your experience and set yourself up for success is to arrive physically fit.

#### **Pack Weight**

Packed backpacks typically weigh between 30-40% of your body weight or 35 - 45 pounds. This varies person to person based on size, stature and physical ability.

#### **Instruction and Skills**



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Previous backpacking experience is not necessary. We will teach you the skills for wilderness travel both interpersonal and technical skills. Technical skills include: how to pack appropriately, load a backpack, set up tarps, camp craft, navigation, how to sleep warm in your sleeping bag and how to cook your group meals over backcountry stoves.

Interpersonal skills include group travel, risk management, weather and hazard assessment, communication skills and learning how to work as a team.

## **Training, Main & Final**

Fundamental in Outward Bound's educational outcomes is the concept of "Training," "Main," and "Final." Our hope is to transfer leadership and decision-making skills over to students through an intentional progression. As the course advances, instructors will take on more of a 'coaching' role. This provides a safety net for students to work through their decision-making and risk management development. Read about the culminating Final Expedition below.

## **Overview**

**Course Start** - There is a 1-2 hour drive from the airport to a campground en route to your course start location. You will spend the first day gearing up for the field and meeting the other members of your team. Group gear like food, tarps, kitchen equipment and first aid supplies will be divided up among group members. As this is not a guided trip, all group members will pitch in to do camp chores, including cooking, washing pots and setting up tarps.

**Solo** - The solo experience provides an important break from the rigors of the expedition, and a chance to reflect on your course thus far. With an adequate amount of food and sufficient equipment, you'll spend time alone at an assigned campsite to rest and reflect. Solo sites are chosen to have as much solitude as possible, within earshot of your instructors for management considerations. You will not travel during this time and your instructors will check on you periodically, but you will be mostly alone for the duration of your solo. Solo may last in duration from a few hours to a full 3-days depending on age and course length. Many students are initially nervous about solo but most are ready for a break from the group when the time for solo arrives. This activity may be abbreviated or eliminated as Instructors assess the weather, terrain, or other factors that could affect the outcomes of solo.

**Transition Day** - In between the "wilderness" section of your course and the "urban" section you will shower, change into clean clothes, and "de-issue" any clothing and equipment that you will not need while in San Francisco. As part of your service back to future students, you will clean and re-organize any Outward Bound gear that you borrowed.

**Partnership with OUT There Adventures** - OUT There Adventures (OTA) is a Seattle based non-profit committed to fostering positive identity development, individual empowerment and improved quality of life for queer young people through professionally facilitated experiential education activities.

**Service** - Service projects vary from working with parks to improve facilities and trail systems for future visitors, to helping local gardeners and other food initiatives for under-resourced populations in the city. There will be a minimum of two service projects, as every component of this expedition is designed to ignite participants' drive to be impactful members of their community. Some projects will focus on serving San Francisco's vibrant LGBTQ community. Ultimately, participants will be able to apply the leadership, compassion and skills developed on this section of the course to their everyday lives.



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**Urban** - The urban section of this course provides the opportunity to explore the varied neighborhoods and cultures of San Francisco. A new challenge will be to find your way around the city using the navigational skills you learned during the backpacking section of your course and without smart-phones! There may be opportunities for “food challenges” where you and your group members have an allotted budget to buy and prepare food for your meals. At night, camp at a diverse array of “sleep spots” - which may include an urban campground, the Chinatown YMCA, or Angel Island. All of these elements are designed to teach leadership skills and provide opportunities for self-discovery. Though you will be in an urban environment, you will not be allowed to use electronics or phones and you will immerse yourself in urban living.

**Final Expedition** - Outward Bound believes that an appropriate amount of independence is a powerful educational tool. In order to deliver that benefit, our instructors purposefully and gradually transfer certain leadership responsibilities to the students culminating in a “Final Expedition.” Since this course has two different areas, groups may have a chance to experience the final phase twice. Near the end of each phase of course, if the group has demonstrated the necessary leadership, team problem-solving and map-reading skills, you may be given the opportunity to navigate your way through San Francisco without direct assistance from your instructors (or smart phones!). Outcomes are: the group learns to work together, problem solve and accomplish a goal independently, while utilizing all the skills they have acquired.

**Personal Challenge Event** - Outward Bound courses typically end with a Personal Challenge Event - an individual final physical push. It might be a run through Golden Gate Park and a dip in the Pacific Ocean.

**Final Days** - The second-to-last afternoon will be spent de-issuing and cleaning any remaining Outward Bound clothing and gear followed by a special meal and graduation ceremony. You will have the opportunity to shower before returning home. Groups will leave for the airport in the morning.

## Sample Itinerary

The following is an example of what your itinerary may look like. Your actual course plan will vary according to permitting, weather, student skills and abilities, and instructor planning/assessment.

<b>14 Days</b>	Day 1	Course Start, Duffel shuffle, transport to campground
	Days 2-8	Backpacking expedition (Introductory lessons to backpacking, camp craft, and navigation)
	Day 9	Transition to San Francisco
	Days 10-13	Urban section (Service, food challenges, city navigation)
	Day 14	Course Graduation, Depart for airport