

GUIDEBOOK



## COMFORT ZONES

Don't hang up your tent poles yet. Extend the camping season with sublime scenery and some of the best animal sightings of the year. *By Serena Renner*



**GOOD-BYE, SWEATY SLEEPING BAG NIGHTS.** Farewell, merciless mosquitoes. When the heat and summer crowds subside, that's your cue to get outside and camp. Yes, the days are getting shorter, but they're also full of color. And the magic continues after dark, when bioluminescence flickers along Pacific shores, and the aurora

borealis dances around northern stars. Autumn casts its spell on wildlife too: Grizzlies fatten up with berries; elk bulls unleash their bugles; and salmon struggle up rivers to spawn. For the fish, it's a final endurance test. For the rest of us, it's the 100th great reason to unfurl a blow-up mattress.

ALEX STROHL



# FIVE WAYS TO CAMP RIGHT NOW

## GLAMP

### LEAVE THE DETAILS TO SOMEONE ELSE



NORTH BANK CAMP

For family excursions without the sleepless nights, check into **The Resort at Paws Up**. Earlier this year, the Greenough, Montana, retreat debuted its secluded North Bank Camp, a small collection of two- and three-bedroom tents for adventurous groups. On a bluff over the Blackfoot River, North Bank has all the swanky amenities—underfloor heating, furnished decks, camp chefs, private butlers—that Paws Up is known for, plus a brand-new dining pavilion and firepit, where s'mores are browned to perfection. Bonus: Some of their cabins are now getting in on the glamping game too, with 500-square-foot tents to lure kids and kids-at-heart to camp out on the grass. From \$2,783/night, including meals, for a two-bedroom for four people; pawsup.com.

## STAY

### SLEEP IN TECHNICOLOR

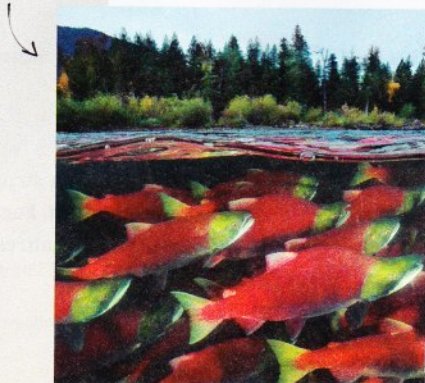
Don't be a drive-by peeper—immerse yourself in the falling leaves.

	CRESTED BUTTE CO	SEDONA AZ	LEAVENWORTH WA
SITE	<b>Lost Lake Campground</b> is a gorgeous gateway to Kebler Pass, one of the country's largest aspen groves, near Beckwith Mountains. <a href="http://www.fs.usda.gov">www.fs.usda.gov</a> .	Sites 10 through 12 at <b>Manzanita Campground</b> sit closest to the water, which lights up with yellow and red oak leaves. <a href="http://www.fs.usda.gov">www.fs.usda.gov</a> .	On the border of the Enchantment Area Wilderness, <b>Bridge Creek Campground's</b> falling leaves flash from mustard to maroon. <a href="http://www.fs.usda.gov">www.fs.usda.gov</a> .
SHELTER	Pick up the "Biggie" <b>Native Campervan</b> in Denver to stay warm and insulated with memory foam and fleece bedding. From \$185; <a href="http://nativecampervans.com">nativecampervans.com</a> .	String up your <b>Therm-a-Rest Slacker Hammock House</b> between ash and box elders to commune with songbirds. \$200; <a href="http://thermarest.com">thermarest.com</a> .	This intimate forest, 1,900 feet above sea level, is perfect for a classic tent like <b>The North Face Home-stead Roomy 2</b> . \$230; <a href="http://thenorthface.com">thenorthface.com</a> .
HIKE	The 3-mile <b>Three Lakes Loop</b> starts at the campground and passes countless aspens painting the hills yellow. <a href="http://travelcrestedbutte.com">travelcrestedbutte.com</a> .	The 6-mile out-and-back <b>West Fork Trail</b> is a portal between striped canyon walls and stream crossings. <a href="http://www.fs.usda.gov">www.fs.usda.gov</a> .	Make time for the 8-mile round-trip to <b>Colchuck Lake</b> , a turquoise glacial gem set against neon larches and craggy peaks. <a href="http://www.fs.usda.gov">www.fs.usda.gov</a> .

## SEE

### LIVE-STREAM AN EPIC MIGRATION

SOCKEYE SALMON

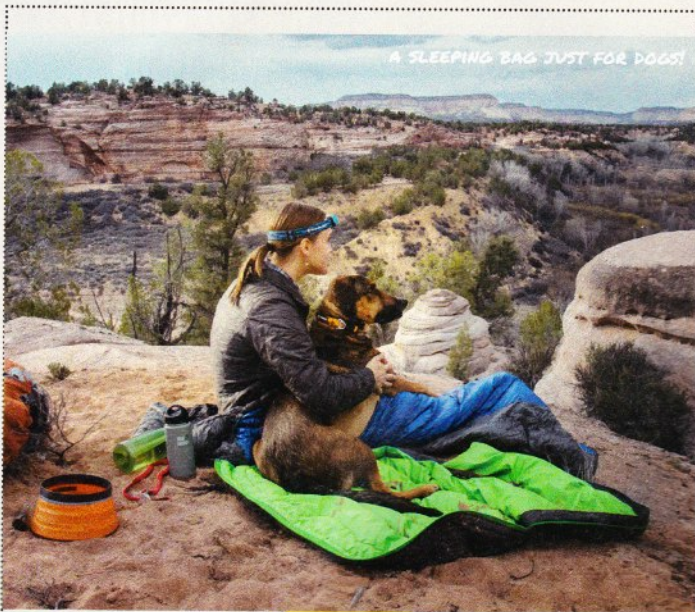


In B.C., even the water changes color in early October. At **Roderick**

**Haig-Brown Provincial Park** outside Kamloops, the Adams River gushes red during one of the biggest sockeye salmon runs in North America. About 85 miles north, at Bailey's Chute in **Wells Gray Provincial Park**, chinook leap for their lives. To watch the action, overnight at nearby **Dutch Lake Resort & RV Park** campground, which is stocked with rainbow trout and kokanee—meaning you don't have to be a grizzly to catch salmonid. [bcparks.ca](http://bcparks.ca); [dutchlake.com](http://dutchlake.com).

BOTTOM: YVA MOMATIUK & JOHN EASTCOTT/MINDEN PICTURES/GETTY IMAGES; TOP LEFT: EFRAIN PADRO/ALAMY; TOP RIGHT: INCE JOHNSON





A SLEEPING BAG JUST FOR DOGS!

HOW TO

## UNLEASH YOUR PUP

Dogs have a hard time with heat, so venturing out in the cooler months means your four-pawed friend won't spend all day panting. To keep Fido snug and happy after sundown, set up the **Ruffwear Highlands Sleeping Bag** (\$100; [ruffwear.com](http://ruffwear.com)) and **Mountain Khakis Canvas Waterproof Dog Bowl** (\$30; [mountainkhakis.com](http://mountainkhakis.com)). For a trial run, book a stay at the recently opened **Mendocino Grove** (from \$75; [mendocinogrove.com](http://mendocinogrove.com)), which allows leashed pets to roam the property's pines and curl up in an Airstream or European-style safari tent. A \$15/night dog fee includes amenities like the use of a bathing station. Use it after your dog splashes around in Big River's bioluminescence nearby.



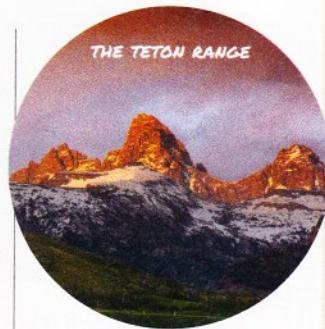
MENDOCINO GROVE

**S** DIGITAL BONUS Our comprehensive guide to planning the best camping trip ever: [sunset.com/camping](http://sunset.com/camping).

EXPLORE

## MAKE IT A WILD WEEKEND IN THE TETONS

Settle in at the closest campground to Jackson, Wyoming, for a mix of national-park discovery and cowboy recovery.



THE TETON RANGE

DAY 1

**6:30 P.M.** Once you've prepped your site at **Curtis Canyon Campground**, watch the sunset make the tops of the Tetons blush pink. Keep an eye out for pronghorns, coyotes, eagles, and—if you're lucky—wolves, on the National Elk Refuge below. [fs.usda.gov](http://fs.usda.gov).

DAY 2

**10 A.M.** After breakfast, pack some sandwiches and drive 11 miles west to the **National Museum of Wildlife Art** to get a primer on local fauna as well as a pop perspective on conservation with **Andy Warhol: Endangered Species** (through Nov 5). On the sculpture loop trail, look for the newest addition, *River Mates*; it's a bronze heron, fish, and turtle scheduled to be revealed this fall. [wildlifeart.org](http://wildlifeart.org).

**2 P.M.** It's time to venture into **Grand Teton National Park** to see some fruits of the ongoing \$19 million **Jenny Lake Renewal Project**. The interpretive plaza at South Jenny Lake features new viewpoints, and the rebuilt trails up to Hidden Falls and Inspiration Point have spectacular unobstructed vistas. [nps.gov/grte](http://nps.gov/grte).

**6:15 P.M.** On your way back to your tent, take a detour up **Signal Mountain Road** and scan the forest line for elk. October is

breeding season, meaning that travelers who encounter bulls at dawn or dusk have a good chance of hearing their piercing mating call and seeing them butt antlers with one another.

DAY 3

**9 A.M.** Set off on the Snake River with **Jackson Hole Fly Fishing School** to experience what some locals call "Rocktober"—all-star cutthroat trout fishing without the crowds. When the temperature and water levels drop, the fish swim into schools, making them easier targets. From \$495; [jhflyfishingschool.com](http://jhflyfishingschool.com).

**6 P.M.** Celebrate your ace angling skills and a weekend of roughing it at the new Anvil Hotel's **Glorietta Trattoria** in downtown Jackson. Dishes such as charred green beans with bacon, smoked sea-salt mushrooms, and a half- or whole rabbit are cooked on a wood-fired grill. [glorietta.jackson.com](http://glorietta.jackson.com).



LISTEN FOR THE ELK MATING CALL AT DAWN OR DUSK