

July 27 & 28th : Grand Teton National Park - 1 .25 hrs & give or take)

Significance: National Park just outside Yellowstone. Town of Jackson Wyoming is just outside it.

Drive there: Arrived on the 26th night and based ourselves in Jackson for 3 nights at the 49er's Inn.

Brief History: **Grand Teton National Park** is an American national park in northwestern Wyoming. At approximately 310,000 acres (480 sq mi; 130,000 ha; 1,300 km²), the park includes the major peaks of the 40-mile-long (64 km) Teton Range as well as most of the northern sections of the valley known as Jackson Hole. Grand Teton National Park is only 10 miles (16 km) south of Yellowstone National Park, to which it is connected by the National Park Service-managed John D. Rockefeller, Jr. Memorial Parkway. Along with surrounding national forests, these three protected areas constitute the almost 18,000,000-acre (7,300,000 ha) Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, one of the world's largest intact mid-latitude temperate ecosystems. Grand Teton National Park is named for Grand Teton, the tallest mountain in the Teton Range. The naming of the mountains is attributed to early 19th-century French-speaking trappers—les trois tétons (the three teats) was later anglicized and shortened to Tetons. At 13,775 feet (4,199 m), Grand Teton abruptly rises more than 7,000 feet (2,100 m) above Jackson Hole, almost 850 feet (260 m) higher than Mount Owen, the second-highest summit in the range. The park has numerous lakes, including 15-mile-long (24 km) Jackson Lake as well as streams of varying length and the upper main stem of the Snake River. Though in a state of recession, a dozen small glaciers persist at the higher elevations near the highest peaks in the range. Some of the rocks in the park are the oldest found in any American national park and have been dated at nearly 2.7 billion years.

What we did:

Day 1: Took the ski gondola to the top of one of the Teton Mountains (not the famous three). We spent almost an hour there. Got back in the late afternoon and after a short rest went out and had dinner at a bowling alley. Good food.

Day 2: Drove to Jenny Lake (the largest of the many lakes). We took the boat across. Shree could not hike because of the rough terrain and therefore stayed near the boat jetty with Joanna and enjoyed the scenery. John & Helen did a brief hike and returned. The lake is a huge expanse of azure blue (thanks to a clear day). Went to the visitor's center and found that there were lodges outside for those who wanted to stay more than a day. Drove back and after a short rest went to a restaurant called Bin 22. Great place – there is a wonderful selection of wines stacked just as in a store. We choose the wines and then choose from a tapas type menu cooked by a top chef. Stayed for more than 3 hours and consumed 3 bottles!

Impressions: A beautiful experience. Wished that we had more time because we could have based ourselves here and explored Yellowstone. The Tetons and the valley below are a fantastic setting. 49er's Inn in Jackson is like an average motel but far more expensive. Jackson is expensive – Christies & Sothebys real estate and some real fancy boutiques... testimony to the spending of residents & tourists here.