

Big Sky Adventures & Tours

Explore Yellowstone and Beyond!

GUIDE HANDBOOK AND OTHER HELPFUL TIDBITS

**Big Sky Adventures & Tours operates with CUA permits for
Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks**

MISSION: Our Mission is to create the best Yellowstone experience for explorers of all ages.

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SPRING 2022 ADDENDUMS

2022 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

- Guides AND guests have fun!
 - BSAT has a 90% annual retention rate for staff
 - 99% of online reviews are 5-stars
- Guests gain a deeper understanding of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem and the complexities of the natural world, while having a safe and fun experience
 - 100% positive safety record
 - 100% of published guest reviews recall a specific positive experience, or guide quality, from their tour
 - 95% of guests share a specific experience that they enjoyed at the end of the tour
- Guests are given the opportunity to have active adventures
 - 90% of guests have adventures beyond the boardwalks
 - 100% of guests have an opportunity for “hands-on” science on the boardwalks or beyond the boardwalks
- Our guides share relevant and appropriate information with guests about the geology, flora and fauna, climate, current issues, and human history of Yellowstone and Grand Teton National Parks
 - 100% of the guides participate in Resource Management Training and BSAT Guide Training
 - 100% of the guides have at least one theme for each Yellowstone-related topic
- Our guides exceed guest expectations with knowledge, enthusiasm, and personal connections.
 - 20% of guests leave an online review (I think right now we are at 10-15%)
- Provide transparency to all employees
 - 100% of BSAT’s Policies and Procedures are available to all staff
- BSAT minimizes our footprint by using recyclable products, fuel efficient vehicles, no single-use plastic bottles
 - 0 single-use water bottles are used
 - All picnics are served in food-safe and reusable containers
 - Vehicles meet or exceed highest safety standards and emission standards, and do not idle (less than 1 minute in the summer or 3 minutes in the winter)
- Fiscal responsibility for BSAT, with fair prices for tours and fair wages for guides
 - BSAT is #1 for best guide wage in the Big Sky guide company community
 - BSAT sells 400+ trips annually
 - BSAT increases revenues and profitability by 5-10% annually
- BSAT donates proceeds and time to conservation, local human services, and outdoor education non-profit organizations
 - 2021: Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Gallatin Invasive Species Alliance, Women In Action, One Valley Community Foundation, Big Sky Community Organization, Wild Wind Foundation

UNIFORMS

Guests expect that BSAT Guides are not only experienced in working with and teaching people of all ages, but are also of high moral character, sensitive, kind, and present a neat, clean-cut, healthy, and professional image. As Guides, you are expected to mirror an image, dress, and acceptable hygiene that will reflect the traditional values of the clientele we serve.

Guests are not looking to our guides for the latest fashion statements, but they are looking to us for guidance on how to dress so they will be comfortable. Guides should present themselves in gear that is appropriate for the weather and environmental conditions and model what the guests will be comfortable in. BSAT Guides will be outstanding role models, who present an image that is simple, clean, attractive, and functional.

Shorts should be an acceptable length so neither the underwear nor buttocks of the wearer can be seen when bending over or moving about.

Guide shirts should not show any signs of wear, and should be labeled with the Guide's name on the tag. Shirts should fit comfortably, neither too tight nor too loose, so the wearer can easily participate in activities. Shirts and sweatshirts must be long enough so that the midriff and/or belly button is not exposed at any time. Shirts must have sleeves.

Purpose of Dress Code Standards

1. To role model proper standards of dress for all BSAT Guests.
2. To be able to identify BSAT Guides immediately.
3. To instill in the mind of the public that respect for the BSAT Dress Code is a symbol of reliability and service.
4. To instill in the employee, pride and high morals when wearing the BSAT "uniform."
5. To provide employees with guidelines for wearing comfortable, attractive, and protective clothing while on-the-job.

Since the appearance of BSAT Guides is the responsibility of both the individual employee and the leadership team, both employees, and the leadership team will be evaluated in part, by the degree to which they comply with the dress standards and dress code for BSAT Adventures and Tours.

NEW BENEFITS

- **Family Leave:** You will accrue .5 hour of paid leave for every 40 hours worked.
- **Retirement Savings:** After 2 seasons of employment with BSAT, you may participate in the BSAT SIP Retirement plan. BSAT will contribute up to 3% of your wages to your account. You can choose the pretax amount you would like to contribute and it will be automatically withdrawn from your check.

GUIDE COMPENSATION & BENEFITS

	GIT	LEVEL I GUIDE	LEVEL II GUIDE
<i>Half Day Old Faithful</i>	\$125	\$175	\$200
<i>Geysers & River Walks</i>	\$200	\$250	\$275
<i>Wildlife & Waterfalls</i>	\$200	\$250	\$275
<i>Lamar Valley Wildlife Safari</i>	\$250	\$325	\$375
<i>Custom Lower Loop</i>	\$250	\$325	\$375
<i>Full Day Hike</i>	\$175	\$225	\$250
<i>Half Day Hike</i>	\$85	\$125	\$175
<i>Custom Step-On 9+ Hours</i>	\$250	\$325	\$375
<i>8-Hour Step-On</i>	\$225	\$275	\$300
<i>4-Hour Step-On</i>	\$100	\$150	\$175
<i>Lamar Valley Winter Wildlife Safari</i>		\$375	\$425
<i>Mammoth Hot Springs Winter Wildlife Safari</i>	\$250	\$300	\$375
<i>Private Snowcoach</i>	\$250	\$325	\$375
<i>Dashing Through the Snow</i>	\$200	\$275	\$275
<i>Learn to XC Ski + Explore Yellowstone</i>	\$200	\$250	\$275
<i>Full Day XC Ski or Snowshoe</i>	\$200	\$250	\$275
<i>Half Day XC Ski or Snowshoe</i>	\$100	\$150	\$175
<i>Group Snowshoe</i>	\$100	\$150	\$175
<i>Training</i>	\$100/day	\$100/day	\$100/day
<i>Shadow Guiding</i>	50%		
<i>Adventures By Disney</i>			
<i>2 Days</i>		\$350/day	\$375/day
<i>Training</i>	\$100/day	\$100/day	\$100/day
<i>Co-Guiding</i>	50%	75%	100%
<i>Overnights</i>	75%	\$375	\$400/day

UPDATES TO TOUR PROCEDURES

STEP-ON GUIDING

Step-On Guiding means you join guests in their transportation and you provide the interpretive Yellowstone experience. There are two types of Step-On Guiding:

- **MOTOR COACH TOURS:** Companies such as Disney contract with Big Sky Adventures & Tours to provide an authorized guide to take guests into Yellowstone. The Guide must wear BSAT-logoed gear and comply with regulations imposed by the Yellowstone CUA Office. Other amenities, such as lunch, listening devices, and other extras, are on a contract-by-contract basis. The Guide will be informed ahead of time about those specifics. Typically, the Guide provides their own transportation to-and-from the meeting location.
- **PRIVATE FAMILY (OUR GUIDE-YOUR CAR):** Occasionally guests will request to have one of our guides join them in their car. The Guide must wear BSAT-logoed gear and comply with regulations imposed by the Yellowstone CUA Office. Typically, the guest provides their own entrance fee, lunch, snacks, and fuel costs. The Guide is expected to provide a spotting scope and it is recommended that you have personal binoculars. Typically, the Guide provides their own transportation to-and-from the meeting location. BSAT will reimburse guides for mileage to-and-from pick-up locations such as Canyon and Old Faithful. ***BSAT Guides are invited to OPT-IN to the OUR GUIDE-YOUR CAR guiding opportunity.***

ENTRANCE FEE RECEIPTS: We have many guests who do multiple days with us. Please be aware if your guests are doing another day into the park with us. If you are guiding the first day, write their name on the entrance receipt. The entrance receipt allows that family to enter the park for 7 days and should be used for their next tour. Put the receipt in the driver folder on top so the next guide can see the guest name. If you are the guide on the guest's second tour, look for the receipt and use it at the entrance.

LAST MINUTE TOUR CHANGES: Sometimes there are last minute changes to tours due to weather, guest numbers, and other unforeseen circumstances. Please be flexible and keep the Operations Team informed of any changes. They will try to keep you informed as much as possible. Occasionally, a guest might ask you to totally change the plan for the day when you meet them. If that happens, tell the guest you will need to call the office. If you are willing to do the possible changed itinerary, let the guest know there may be a different charge, and **call the office.**

If you are scheduled for a tour and a guest cancels within 24 hours of the tour, you will be paid 50-100% of the guide pay. If you are sick and need to cancel, let the office know in advance. You will not be paid for the day, but you may use your accrued sick pay.

Last minute changes that have happened:

- Temperatures are dangerously cold for a snowshoe tour (-15F). Guide texts guests (and office) and asks if they can do a later start time when temps warm and sun is up.

- Guests feel sick and need to change the day of the tour.
- Guide picks up guests at 8am for a half day snowshoe tour. The guests want to go to Mammoth instead.
- Guide picks up guests at 9am for a half day snowshoe tour. The guest thought they were doing a snowcoach trip.
- Guide is hiking with guests and planning on a full day hike. One mile into the hike, guests say they want to see Old Faithful.
- Guide meets guests at 9am, they haven't had breakfast yet and want to eat a meal.
- Guest signs up for a Wildlife & Waterfalls Day and insists on seeing Grand Prismatic.
- More....

OPERATIONS TEAM ROLE & ETIQUETTE

The BSAT Operations Team is the plasma that holds our universe together. They are responsible for overseeing the inventory, Reservations, Guest Communications, lunch liaisons, and scheduling and assigning guides to trips.

- **MAINTENANCE & GEAR NEEDS:** If there is an issue with a vehicle, binoculars/spotting scopes, or any of the supplies you rely on, please communicate directly with the Operations Team, so that the issue can be addressed in a timely manner. Since they are generally not on the tour with you, if you don't let someone know about an issue, they don't know that something needs attention.

The guest experience begins with the Operations Team. They strive to ensure that all special requests, food allergies and dietary considerations, pick-up and drop-off information is collected, and they help the guests select the appropriate adventure.

- **COMMUNICATING WITH GUESTS:** Once you receive the text connecting the Guide & Guest, if you would like additional information from the group, the Guide is responsible for connecting with the Guest, using the text communication thread. **PLEASE NOTE:** For large groups, there is often a representative making decisions for the whole group and s/he may not have all of the specifics.
- **CONSIDER TIPPING YOUR SUPPORT TEAM:** Our Operations Team excels at setting you and the guest up for memorable adventures, which suit their group. Please consider the role they play, when you have an amazing day and you are tipped generously.

GARMIN INREACH PROCEDURES

Pairing your phone to the Garmin inReach mini:

1. From the app store on your phone, install and open the Earthmate app.
2. Turn on the inReach device and make sure it is within 10 feet of your phone.
3. From the menu on the inReach, select Setup > Bluetooth > Pair Device.
4. Follow the instructions on the Earthmate app to complete the pairing and setup process.
5. Once the device is paired to your phone, it will connect automatically when the device is turned on and within range!

Things we will do together at training:

When first pairing your device, it will ask you to download maps for your region, and you can adjust the region whose maps you would like to download. It will also ask you if you want to sync the contacts from your phone, you should say yes so it is easier to address a message. Additionally you should set your preferences so that your location is always sent accompanying your message. We can help with all of this!

Using the Garmin inReach mini:

First, it's important to understand that these devices operate on the Iridium satellite system. There are about 75 of these satellites floating in space, but one will only pass overhead at any given place about once every 20 minutes or so. There will most likely be a delay in the delivery of messages on both ends.

To send a message, first make sure the device has a clear view of the sky and will be able to stay in that spot. Altitude doesn't matter so much as being in a clear and open area. You can send it to multiple recipients at once, just like how you would regularly text. But remember, **ONLY** send messages through the app, **NOT** how you would regularly send a text on your phone.

Click "Messages," located at the bottom of the screen. In the upper right hand corner, there is a little pencil & paper button that is the "create message" button. You can either type whatever you want to say right into the text box (keep it short – 160 characters, or approximately a Tweet.) You can also use one of the pre-set messages we have created, whichever is easiest or makes the most sense to you. To send a pre-set message, click the little lightning symbol next to the text box, and the options will come up (ex "Vehicle is stuck"). Click send. A response from whoever you sent it to might not show up in the app but does show up on the device itself. Be patient - my test messages sent well within cell service took ~10 minutes to get received by the other end.

FIRST AID KITS: Each guide should carry a first aid kit at all times with the following list of items and know how to use it. There should also be a basic first aid kit in each vehicle per DOT requirements.

FIRST AID KIT CONTENTS:

Garmin inReach mini
Antibiotic Ointment (Neosporin) 3
Aspirin-3
Ibuprofen-3
Benadryl-both pill and liquid-3
Neosporin/Aspirin/Advil/benadryl
Cleansing wipes-6
Hand sanitizer
Gloves 3 pairs
pads
2" tape
Assorted Band Aids
Butterfly closures-5
2x2 sterile gauze-6
4x4 sterile gauze-6
4x9 sterile pads-2
4" sterile gauze wrap-2
Sam Splint/foam pad
Triangular Bandages-3
Tweezers
Small notebook/pen
Pocket Mask or CPR micro shield
Trauma shears
tourniquet
Large garbage bags/biohazard bag

EASILY ACCESSIBLE:

Comfort Kit

Band-aids and blister kit
Moleskin, second skin, scissors
Matches, lighter, fire starter
Gloves, hand sanitizer
Whistle, flashlight

TP kit: Baggies with tp; tampons,

BINOCULARS & SPOTTING SCOPES: Quality binoculars and spotting scopes are resources for you and guests to use at any time on your adventure. Often guests viewing an animal in the distance through a spotting scope can truly elevate their day from great to awesome! Especially true when looking for bears and wolves in the distance. BSAT has invested thousands of dollars in equipping each vehicle with quality optics.

Your responsibility as a guide is to ensure that the optics are clean, functional and are properly cared for each day. The binoculars should be passed out to guests when appropriate, and at the end of the day, **you** need to clean and put them back in the individual case. The binoculars should then be stored in the box and stowed in the vehicle.

Spotting scopes should be covered and returned to parallel position to tripod legs, and tripods should be collapsed and secured when driving. Do not leave tripods extended, or scopes perpendicular to the tripod. This causes the tripods to get stripped and then can be very difficult to focus. Do not store binocular bins or spotting scopes where they can get damaged either from water or weight.

LUNCH

Guides will pick up their lunches in the BSAT fridge at Uncle Dan's Bakery, before the trip. Lunches will be in blue BSAT bags, labeled with the Guide's name, the Guest's name, and how many bags there are (1 of 3, 2 of 4, etc). Guides will pack lunches into BSAT coolers, with fresh ice packs. Follow the procedure posted on the fridge.

PICNIC KIT: You are responsible for restocking and maintaining your personal picnic kit. You may either take your picnic kit home, or store it in your guide cubby. **DO NOT** leave them scattered about.

- **Table Cloths:** BSAT will issue 1 tablecloth for each guide. The expectation is for you to use it for lunches/picnics and to keep it clean. Please let Denise or Andrea know any concerns or questions.
- **Other Picnic Kit Items:** Napkins (roll of paper towels), hand sanitizer, extra trash bags

SNACKS & DRINKS

- **SNACKS:** Guides will put together their snack bag, based on the number of guests and dietary considerations. Follow the Snack Guidelines posted on the fridge.
- **DRINKS:** Guides will put together their drinks cooler, based on the number of guests. Assemble a selection of Honest Kids fruit juice boxes and flavored sparkling water. Fill a water jug with cold water from the utility sink. Restock the fridge with juice boxes and sparkling water. Cold drinks will help keep the lunches cool.

LEFTOVERS

Guides are welcome to take any leftovers home. PLEASE USE YOUR OWN CONTAINERS! Guides are responsible for emptying all food containers, scraping them out as much as possible, and throwing the leftovers away. IF YOU DON'T WANT THE LEFTOVERS, THROW THEM OUT!

DIRTY DISHES

Scrape any leftover food out of the containers. Place containers in the Rubbermaid bins.

PARKING VEHICLES: Two BSAT vans will park easily in the shop. We will mark the parking locations for each. The Yukon and third van will be parked outside. Outside vehicles should be locked and keys stored in the key box in the shop. When construction is complete, we will have a couple of spots on the west side of the building to park vehicles. When you are using a van that is parked inside, you may park your vehicle in its place. Pull all the way forward and leave your keys in the car so it can be moved if needed. We may be able to fit 2 personal cars in one van slot. If there is no space inside, park on the street.

WASHING VEHICLES: Each vehicle needs to be cleaned inside-and-out at the end of the day, ready for guests and the next guide to use the following day. Leave the vehicle how you expect it to be left for you. That means the following:

- Clean all windows inside and out
- Empty/recycle all garbage, food
- Wipe all seats, door handles, with sanitizing solution-make sure to check the back of each seat
- Sweep and mop the floor. When muddy, you may need to change the water several times
- For the outside: Fill a bucket with soapy water; use the sponge mop to clean. Use the hose to spray off and sponge mop gently, as needed.
- If weather conditions prevent outside cleaning, clean the exterior of the vehicle inside the Shop: Do not use the hose; use two buckets, one with clean water, one rinse water. Gently mop the sides of the vehicle.

BATHROOM: Having a bathroom in the new BSAT shop is awesome and we are counting on you to do your part to keep the bathroom clean. Clean up after yourself, and empty trash when needed. If supplies are needed, write needs on the white board.

PERSONAL GEAR: You are welcome to use your Guide Cubby for storing your picnic kit and other personal items.

GARBAGE & RECYCLING: There are recycle bins for cardboard, aluminum, and plastic bottles only, and garbage at the shop. Please use it appropriately. If the garbage can is full, please take the garbage to the warehouse dumpster, located in the corner of the parking lot, below the dirt hillside.