



Itinerary Overview

Colorado Rockies Intro to Backpacking for Elementary School



Course Overview

Welcome, you're in for an experience of a lifetime! Imagine exploring forests, splashing in streams, and gazing at millions of stars. Imagine making great friends and snuggling into your sleeping bag at night after having cooked your own dinner on a camp stove. Each day you will be getting to know your newfound community better, learning about the area and yourself, laughing with your teammates, and exploring North America's most famous mountain range. You don't need to have previous camping experience to fully embrace this extraordinary course, which combines beautiful environments and exciting activities with an emphasis on individual growth and community. In the mountains, you will learn the basics and finer points of living in the backcountry, as well as working in a team to achieve your goals. You will explore nature and learn the basics of camping and surviving outdoors —how to pack appropriately, cook in the backcountry, set up tarps, tie knots, and navigate using a map and compass. Throughout the

course, you will sleep under a tarp, cook your own food, and take responsibility for the well-being of yourself and your crewmates.

Your Instructors are highly qualified outdoorspeople and dedicated educators. They will serve as teachers and mentors as you learn the skills required for having fun while outdoors.

Through daily discussions, they will also help you and your group to discover the larger meaning in these activities. You will discover new things about yourself: how you deal with uncertainty, how to work in a team; and how to be a leader.



Photo Credit: Afton Putney



Course Area

Welcome to the **Leadville Mountain Center (LMC)**, Colorado Outward Bound's 600-acre property at the base of Mount Massive. Our base camp encompasses mountain streams, wild plants, fields and forests. Lake Fork Creek (that runs into the headwaters of the Arkansas River) runs near the east of our property and the Colorado Trail borders us to the west. If the timing is right, colorful wildflowers will brighten the trails through the LMC. You might share camp with elk, deer, chipmunks and myriad other wildlife.



Photo Credit:Hannah Mader

Sawatch Range – The Sawatch sub-range of the Colorado Rockies is home to Colorado's two highest peaks: Mt Elbert (14,439') and Mount Massive (14,429'). The range is known for expansive, rolling alpine terrain and multiple high peaks, and encompasses the headwaters of the Arkansas River. The source of the name is somewhat disputed: some sources cite the Ute word "sawup," which means "sand dunes." Great Sand Dunes National Park sits at the southern toe of the Sawatch range. Others source it to Ute words meaning "green place" or "blue water."



Course Activities

Hiking

This course includes lessons in basic travel and camping techniques. Students will carry small backpacks from campsite to campsite as their heavier equipment is shuttled by our staff. This allows students to learn fundamental backpacking skills while keeping the level of physical challenge appropriate. Along the way, students learn Leave No Trace techniques, map and compass navigation and camp craft as they get a feel for the human and natural history of the area. The simplicity of hiking gives students the opportunity to be active and to focus both internally on their own thoughts and self-reliance, as well as externally to connect deeply with others as they talk, sing, play games and spend time together without distraction.

Service

Service is an integral part of every Outward Bound course. Elementary school courses introduce the idea of service to others through a chore rotation. Students will also do an age appropriate service project with a community partner. This might include picking up trash at a picnic area or helping to feed trout at a fish hatchery.

Solo

Solo is an opportunity for rest and reflection. Outward Bound believes that reflection is necessary in order for learning to occur. Solo is closely supervised, lasts roughly 90 minutes, and includes journaling, drawing, or a craft project. Students will have snacks, water, and enough shelter to keep them out of the elements. Solo is a great opportunity to practice being present in nature.

Outcomes

Students will learn the basics of backcountry living, including building shelters, sleeping, cooking, and travel. Students will build an appreciation for the environment through lessons in navigation and ecology, and build social skills like communication and teamwork through a variety of group challenges.

Reflection and Celebration

At the end of your course, after you've explored, grown close as a group, and grown comfortable sleeping outside, you'll celebrate all you've done. You'll also reflect on returning home. How have you grown? What new strength will you bring with you? What challenges await you back home? We're excited for you to find out!



Sample Itinerary

The following is an example of what your itinerary may look like.



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DAY 1

Opening ceremony, getting to know your group, camping and shelter building, backcountry sleeping

DAY 2

Explore flora and fauna along nature trails, backcountry cooking, low ropes course, Wilderness First Aid, backcountry navigation

DAY 3

Visit the fish hatchery to learn about water ecology, hiking, fishing and raft building activity

DAY 4

Day hike to an alpine lake.

DAY 5

Group challenge, backcountry cooking for a larger group, host families during closing ceremony