



# The “Giants” Of The Majestic Mountain Loop

Words don't give them justice. Cameras can't even depict them. Videos barely showcase how immense they are. The only way to truly appreciate and understand just how BIG a Giant Sequoia is, you must see them in person. And out of the groves of Giant Sequoias on the Majestic Mountain Loop, here's some of our favorites in each National Park.

## Yosemite National Park

Within this legendary park, you'll find most of the Giant Sequoias live in three groves. Tuolumne Grove has about two dozen mature trees and requires a one-mile hike to see them and a more strenuous slog back. Merced Grove, near the Big Oak Flat Entrance, contains another two dozen and a 1.5-mile hike to see the first trees. And finally, the biggest and easiest to access is Mariposa Grove, near the south entrance.



Mariposa Grove photo by Stephen Montalto – High Mountain Images

## Mariposa Grove

Within this stand, you'll find more than 500 mature sequoias. Accessed most of the year via a FREE shuttle from the Mariposa Grove Welcome Center, the newly restored grove features a variety of trails from easy to strenuous to enjoy the Giants. The star within the Grove is the Grizzly Giant.

## Grizzly Giant

As the name alludes, this Giant Sequoia's exterior showcases the trials and tribulations that lesser trees would have never survived. The top features dead stems that most older Giants have. And on the bottom, the Grizzly showcases its fire scars and charred hollows from multiple fires hundreds of years ago. It even has a pronounced lean where it lists 5 degrees to the south and 1.5 degrees to the west. That puts roughly TWO MILLION pounds of weight off center. The only way it's survived all these years is with the help of interlacing root systems with the neighbors. While most nearby trees would yell "Get off my lawn", this neighborhood says, "stay close!"

## Sequoia National Park

As you would expect, Sequoia National Park is home to A LOT of Giant Sequoias. More than two dozen groves exist in the park. Most of them are inaccessible or challenging to visit. But luckily, the largest and the most exquisite grove on Earth can be reached via road – the Giant Forest.



Giant Forest Museum photo by Daniel Chui

## Giant Forest

For those wanting to feel the mightiness of these Giants, a visit to this grove is a must. As soon as you enter, everywhere you look you'll see a mature giant looming over or around you. It's home to the LARGEST tract of unlogged mature specimens and exceptionally large sequoias including the LARGEST living one – General Sherman.

## Kings Canyon National Park

Sharing a border with Sequoia, this park is also home to a plethora of groves including the largest on Earth with more than 15,800 specimens at a foot or more in diameter. With its immense Giant Sequoia groves, the deepest canyon in the United States, and jaw-dropping vistas it's no wonder that John Muir once called it "a rival to Yosemite."



General Grant photo by Daniel Chui

## Grant Grove

When it comes to density of mature trees over ten feet in diameter, the Grant Grove is “King” (pun intended). Like the other groves, there’s one tree that looms above all others in its 90-acre area. And that’s General Grant. Celebrated each year as the nation’s Christmas tree, this majestic tree provides one of the best opportunities for you to capture an ENTIRE tree in one photo. Some of the other attractions on your way include the Gamlin Cabin, the Fallen Monarch, and the Centennial Stump.

## Big Stump Grove

What this grove lacks in mature sequoias, it more than makes up in its impact to history and conservation. Even when Giant Sequoias were discovered in the 1850s by European settlers, most Americans didn’t believe they were real. Using words from that era, people thought it was a bunch of “malarkey.” To help fight this disbelief, in 1891 the Army cut down the Mark Twain Tree so it could be displayed to crowds in New York and London. In fact, you can still see the 16-foot diameter slab in the New York Museum of Natural History. While it’s sad that the tree lost its life, we appreciate its sacrifice in helping millions of people realize the importance of saving these giants for future generations. Due to the tannins within a Giant Sequoia, the stump still exists within this grove along with many others that were chopped down by a lumber company in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century.

You must stand amongst a forest of Giant Sequoias on the Majestic Mountain Loop to fully appreciate the words Teddy Roosevelt echoed. “A grove of giant ... sequoias should be kept just as we keep a great and beautiful cathedral.” They truly are nature’s greatest cathedrals.

For more information go to [www.MajesticMountainLoop.com](http://www.MajesticMountainLoop.com)

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Alex founded [localfreshies.com](http://localfreshies.com)® in 2014 to be the #1 website providing the “local scoop” on where to eat, drink & play in mountain towns throughout North America. When he’s not writing and executing marketing strategies for small businesses & agencies, he’s in search of the deepest snow in the winter and tackiest dirt in the summer.