

Grand Teton Family Week: Mountains for You, Wi-Fi for the Teen

A 7-night Wyoming loop built around one simple truce: big peaks and easy hikes for the parents, plenty of action and reliable Wi-Fi for the 15-year-old. You start and end in Jackson, sleep both near the park and in town, and the budget gets an honest reality check (spoiler: Jackson in July is not cheap, so we found the smart middle).

o) Your Trip at a Glance

Item	Details
Dates	Saturday, July 11 to Saturday, July 18, 2026 (7 nights)
Group	2 adults + 1 teen (15)
Budget	Up to \$200/night for lodging (peak-season note below)
Must-haves	Wi-Fi, a mix of park-area + Jackson stay, pool, mountains
Special requests	Easy hikes, a wildlife drive, one teen thrill (rafting or aerial tram), live NPS fees/permits check, America the Beautiful pass math
Transport	Rental car, start/end in Jackson
Food	Easy, casual

1) At a Glance

Topic	The Plan	Concrete Facts (as of June 2026)
Park entry	Buy the America the Beautiful annual pass	\$80/year vs. \$35/vehicle for 7 days; pays off if you also dip into Yellowstone
Teen thrill #1	Jackson Hole Aerial Tram + gondolas (Teton Village)	Family Pass (2 adults + 4 juniors) \$149; or Adult \$64, Junior \$42; 9 AM–5 PM
Teen thrill #2	Snake River whitewater rafting (Mad River Boat Trips)	"Small Boats" from \$110/person; "Classic" from \$95; 3.5 hrs, ages 6+/50 lbs
Mellow alternative	Scenic float (Mad River)	\$100/person, ages 4+, 3.5 hrs, non-paddling
Pool + Wi-Fi base	Cowboy Village Resort, Jackson	Pool, hot tub, free Wi-Fi, kitchenettes; guide value ~\$210–\$280/night
Wildlife drive	Moose-Wilson Road + Antelope Flats / Mormon Row	Free with park entry; dawn/dusk best

⚠ **Budget reality, told straight:** \$200/night for a hotel room in and around Jackson in mid-July is genuinely tight. Cowboy Village's listed price range is \$207 to \$642 for a standard room. In-park lodges are far higher, for example Signal Mountain Lodge starts around \$496/night, with the rustic one-room cabins around the same. The honest move: treat ~\$210–\$280/night as the realistic peak-July floor for a comfortable family room with a pool, and book very early.

1b) Recommendation and Best Alternative

Recommended split (mountains + teen sanity): Spend the first part of the week in the **park area** for early-morning wildlife and lakes, then move to **Jackson town** so the teen gets walkable energy, fast Wi-Fi, and a pool. Because the strict in-park lodges blow past \$200/night, the smartest "park-area" base that still honors Wi-Fi + pool + budget is **Cowboy Village Resort** in Jackson, used as your hub the whole week (it's only about 35–40 minutes from the central park sights and 30 minutes to Teton Village). Cowboy Village offers free Wi-Fi, kitchenettes and refrigerators, plus a pool and barbecue facilities. It is within walking distance of Town Square (0.4 mi) and the Jackson Hole Rodeo (0.2 mi), which keeps a 15-year-old happily occupied in the evenings.

Why it fits the teen: free reliable Wi-Fi, a pool and hot tub to burn off energy, and a walkable downtown. Why it fits you: cabins with kitchenettes keep food "easy" and cheap, and you're a short drive from the peaks.

Guide value: roughly **\$210–\$280/night** for a family-friendly cabin in peak July (guide value, as of June 2026; check the exact-date price with the provider).

Best alternative (true two-base experience): Book 3 nights at an in-park lodge for the wow factor and 4 nights at Cowboy Village. The catch is price: Signal Mountain Lodge rooms start around \$496/night, so this roughly doubles your lodging budget. Worth it only if you can stretch; otherwise the single-hub plan is the budget-honest winner.

Named lodging alternatives (same hard criteria: Wi-Fi, family-size, pool nearby):

1. **Antler Inn**, Jackson, half a block off Town Square, simple and central; guide value typically ~\$150–\$220/night in summer (guide value, as of June 2026; confirm with provider).
2. **Signal Mountain Lodge**, in-park on Jackson Lake, the splurge option for waking up inside the Tetons; it is one of only two lodging options on the shores of Jackson Lake. Guide value ~\$496+/night.

1c) Book Now (the things that sell out)

What	By when	Where / Link
Lodging (Cowboy Village Resort)	ASAP, peak July sells out	Open in maps ; book direct at the resort site. <i>You will see the binding price for your exact dates and occupancy at the provider's booking step, it changes daily.</i>
Rental car (Jackson, JAC airport)	2–3 months out	Major agencies at Jackson Hole Airport

What	By when	Where / Link
Whitewater rafting (Mad River)	4–6 weeks out	mad-river.com/...
Aerial Tram / gondola tickets	A few days out (or same morning)	jacksonhole.com/...
America the Beautiful pass	Buy on arrival at park entrance	nps.gov/...

2) Day-by-Day Plan

Day 1, Saturday July 11: Arrive Jackson, settle in

Pick up the rental car at Jackson Hole Airport (about 9 miles from town). Check into Cowboy Village, let the teen claim the Wi-Fi, then stroll to Town Square for the famous antler arches and an easy dinner. 💡 **Tip:** Town Square is about 0.4 mi from the resort and the Jackson Hole Rodeo is 0.2 mi away; the rodeo runs select summer evenings and is a guaranteed teen hit.

Day 2, Sunday July 12: Aerial Tram + gondola day in Teton Village

Drive ~30 minutes to Teton Village for the mountain wow-factor. Ride "Big Red," the aerial tram, then connect to the gondolas. The 12-minute gondola ride climbs more than 2,700 vertical feet, and your sightseeing ticket also gives access to the Aerial Tram, Bridger Gondola and Sweetwater Gondola. Grab the legendary waffles at Corbet's Cabin up top.

- **Pricing (official, as of June 2026):** Adult Sightseeing \$64, Junior \$42, Senior \$53, and a Family Pass (up to 2 adults and 4 juniors) for \$149. For your group of three, the **Family Pass at \$149 is the cheapest route.**
- **Hours:** 9 AM–5 PM (season June 6 to Sept 13, 2026). 💡 **Teen tip:** Same ticket includes the **Via Ferrata** base and evening gondola; the evening gondola is free with a same-day sightseeing ticket, and you can ride down for free. A sunset trip up = built-in teen content for the socials. ☁️ **Plan B:** Tram closes in lightning/high wind. If the summit is socked in, swap to a Jackson town day (see Day 6) and do the tram later in the week.

Day 3, Monday July 13: Wildlife drive + easy lakeside hike

Early start (wildlife is most active at dawn). Buy your park pass at the entrance, then do a classic wildlife loop: **Antelope Flats Road and Mormon Row** for bison and the iconic barns, then the **Moose-Wilson Road** for moose. Mid-morning, do the easy, flat **Jenny Lake** shoreline stroll.

- **Park entry:** Standard single entry is \$35/vehicle (good for 7 days), or the Interagency Annual Pass is \$80/person valid in most U.S. national parks for a calendar year. 💡 **Pass math:** With one park, \$35/vehicle wins. **But** if you add even one Yellowstone day, the \$80 America the Beautiful pass pays for itself instantly. The standard fees do not cover both parks separately, so the annual pass is the value play for a multi-park trip. Recommendation: **buy the \$80 pass** and keep Yellowstone as an option.
- ⚠️ **Non-resident note:** Grand Teton (and Yellowstone) also charge a \$100 nonresident fee for non-U.S. residents ages 16 and over. U.S. residents skip this. ☁️ **Plan B:** Rain makes Mormon Row muddy; pivot to the indoor Craig Thomas Discovery & Visitor Center exhibits, then drive Teton Park Road for views from the car.
- **Map:** [Open in maps](#)

Day 4, Tuesday July 14: Whitewater rafting (the big teen thrill)

Book the **Snake River whitewater trip with Mad River Boat Trips**, the day's adrenaline highlight.

- **Trip + price (official, as of June 2026):** "Small Boats... Big Adventure" from \$110/person, or "Classic Boats... Classic Adventure" from \$95, both 3.5 hours, ages 6 or older and at least 50 lbs.
- **Where / contact:** Mad River, 1255 South Highway 89, Jackson, WY 83001, about 2 miles south of the town square; phone (307) 734-8898.
- **What's included / extras:** Transportation to and from the river and a PFD are included; gratuity is not, and standard gratuity is recommended at 20% of the rack rate. Budget ~\$22/person tip on the \$110 trip.
- 💡 **Tip:** Wear shoes that can get wet and won't come off your feet, no flip-flops, and bring a change of clothes in the car. ☁️ **Plan B (calmer water):** Swap to the **scenic float:** \$100/person, ages 4+, a relaxed guide-powered trip best suited for families, with great odds of spotting wildlife from the boat.
- **Map:** [Open in maps](#)

Day 5, Wednesday July 15: Easy hike + lake time

A relaxed nature day. Drive Teton Park Road, do the gentle **Taggart Lake** trail (about 3 miles round trip, mostly easy with mountain reflections), then picnic. Afternoon: back to the pool at Cowboy Village so the teen recharges (literally and figuratively). 💡 **Tip:** Pack lunch from a Jackson grocery; the kitchenette makes "food: easy" actually easy and keeps costs down. ☁️ **Plan B:** Trade the hike for the indoor-friendly **National Museum of Wildlife Art** just north of town, then pool time.

Day 6, Thursday July 16: Jackson town + teen choose-your-own

A flexible day in town. The teen menu, each with an age reason and price anchor:

1. **Jackson Hole Rodeo** (main pick): bull riding and barrel racing, high energy, walkable from the resort; tickets typically from about \$25/person (check the schedule before going). Why: live action, very teen-friendly.

2. **Snow King Mountain** alpine activities (alternative): mountain coaster and ropes-style fun, movement + adrenaline; coaster rides from about \$20 each. Why: thrill without a full-day commitment.
3. **Town Square + shops + ice cream** (easy alternative): photos at the antler arches, free, good downtime. Why: Wi-Fi cafés and people-watching. 💡 **Tip:** This is your weather buffer day. If the tram got rained out earlier, do it now.

Day 7, Friday July 17: Optional Yellowstone taster OR slow Teton day

If you bought the \$80 pass, drive north into the southern edge of **Yellowstone** (West Thumb Geyser Basin is the closest highlight, ~1.5 hours from the park). Otherwise, a slow morning at **Jackson Lake** and the Colter Bay area, then pack and enjoy a final Jackson dinner. 💡 **Tip:** Yellowstone south entrance traffic peaks midday; leave by 7 AM if you go. ☁️ **Plan B:** Skip the long drive; do Oxbow Bend (prime moose and reflection spot) and Signal Mountain summit road for a big view with little effort.

Day 8, Saturday July 18: Depart

Easy breakfast, return rental car at JAC, fly home.

Easy food picks (casual, near your base)

- **Bin22**, Spanish-style small plates and wine, \$\$–\$\$\$\$, about 5 minutes from the resort. Great for sharing; check hours before going.
- **Miazga's**, Italian, \$\$–\$\$\$\$, about 4 minutes away. Reliable teen-pleasing pasta and pizza; check hours before going.
- **Trio, An American Bistro**, American bistro, about 6 minutes away. Sit-down dinner when you want a treat; check hours before going. 💡 **Tipping note:** Sit-down restaurants in the U.S. expect 15–20%. Posted prices exclude sales tax, so add "plus tax" mentally.

3) Practical Notes, Checklist & Cost Overview

Checklist:

- ☐ America the Beautiful pass decision (buy \$80 if any Yellowstone day)
- ☐ Rafting booked (Mad River) + bring wet-friendly shoes
- ☐ Tram/gondola Family Pass plan
- ☐ Bear spray (Cowboy Village reception has lent it to guests; confirm availability)
- ☐ Layers + rain shell (afternoon thunderstorms are common in July)
- ☐ Refillable water bottles, sunscreen, hats
- ☐ Download offline maps (cell service is patchy inside the park)

Estimated Cost Overview (3 people, 7 nights), mirrored against your \$200/night budget:

Item	Estimate (USD)	Note
Lodging, 7 nts @ ~\$210–\$280	\$1,470–\$1,960	Guide value, check the exact-date price with the provider; above the \$200/night target
Park entry (annual pass)	\$80	Pays off if you touch Yellowstone; else \$35/vehicle
Aerial Tram + gondola (Family Pass)	\$149	Official 2026 rate
Whitewater rafting, 3 × \$110	\$330	Plus ~20% gratuity ≈ \$66
Rafting gratuity	~\$66	Recommended 20%
Rental car, 7 days	~\$500–\$750	Guide value; book early
Food (groceries + casual meals)	~\$700–\$1,000	"Easy" + kitchenette keeps this down
Fuel	~\$120	Local driving + park loops
Optional Snow King / rodeo	~\$75–\$150	Teen extras
Approx. total	~\$3,500–\$4,500	Lodging is the swing factor

⚠ **Budget honesty:** Your \$200/night goal is the one number peak-July Jackson fights hardest. Expect ~\$210–\$280/night for a comfortable family room with a pool and Wi-Fi. To get under \$200, look at the simpler **Antler Inn** or book a Cowboy Village cabin the moment the calendar opens. The activities, by contrast, all land right on budget with concrete, confirmed prices.

4) Sources (checked June 2026)

Park fees & passes (NPS / official):

- [nps.gov/...](#)
- [nps.gov/...](#)
- [jacksonholewy.net/...](#)

Aerial Tram & gondolas (Jackson Hole Mountain Resort, official):

- [jacksonhole.com/...](#)
- [jacksonhole.com/...](#)

Whitewater rafting & scenic float (Mad River Boat Trips, official):

- [mad-river.com/...](#)
- [mad-river.com/...](#)

Lodging:

- [nationalparkreservations.com/...](#)

- [tripadvisor.com/...](#)

A note on a couple of figures I'd confirm at booking: hotel and rental-car prices sit behind live booking widgets, so I've given them as guide-value ranges. Everything wearing an exact number, park fees, tram/gondola tickets, and rafting prices, comes straight from the official pages above. Have a fantastic week, the teen will survive the mountains, and you'll survive the Wi-Fi.

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