

The Beginner's Guide to Camp PBC

Why We're Going Again

Last year, our family decided to go to Camp PBC. A week long camping trip with our 5 year old twins was intimidating. But in the end we had a blast and we decided to not only go back to camp again this year, but also to try and convince more families with young children to go, too.

One of the primary reasons we're going back is because Camp PBC was an incredible opportunity to build community with people we see around church, but didn't know well. We felt so much more connected to the church community after a week of camp. Also, nowadays, it's incredibly rare to have this type of outdoor opportunity with a community.

It was great to spend time with the church and see God's work in action.

Plus it is now our kids favorite trip, even beating out Disneyland and the beach.

Camping

Most people bring their own tents and camping gear to camp at Camp PBC. If you've never even pitched a tent, but want to try camping, Camp PBC is an easy way to start. The college-age Summer Leadership Institute students (SLI'rs) will not only help you bring your gear from the car to the site you pick, but also will set your tent up for you. There are a lot of people around who are willing to lend a hand or help out.

But if you're not outdoor minded, there are homes nearby you can rent for the week. Probably less than 10% of people stay in a house. If you split the cost with another family it can be pretty reasonable. Last year, we shared a home with two families, but slept in our tent for the first night to give our kids the camping experience. We're soft, so this year we're staying in a house the whole time. You can find homes here: <http://mtshastavacationrentals.com/vacation-rentals/>

Trailers, cabins and other accommodations are also available at <http://www.lakesiskiyouresort.com/>.

Cost

If you camp, the cost is very reasonable. You'll pay the campsite directly when checking in. The price is set at a fixed cost per person per day. It's usually under \$10 per person per day. Additional activities (like renting a boat, playing in the "Splashzone", etc) cost more money.

The Distance

It's a 5 hour drive to Camp PBC. For our family, audiobooks, especially the Little House on the Prairie series, has made the drive a lot easier.

There are easy, clean, interesting pit stops/bathroom breaks on the way: Olive Pit @ Corning, Sonic Drive In (Tracy), Red Bluff (easy off/on, several fast food restaurants, gas), and In-N-Out Burger (Redding).

The Dust

For us, the dust may be the worst thing about Camp PBC. There's a lot of dust around. There's not much you can do about it, except to stay away from running kids and bring things you don't mind getting dirty. Some families actually put aside old clothing just to bring to Camp PBC.

Unexpected Things to Bring

- Camping chairs. Definitely bring a camp chair for each person in your group. You'll use this for sitting around the nightly campfire. (No chairs at campsite provided.)
- Water shoes. The "beach" around the lake is very rocky. If you're planning to play in the water, water shoes will help protect your feet.
- Spray bottle with water + liquid soap. This helps bypass lines in the bathroom for a quick hand/feet wash! A camping (thin) towel is an added plus.
- Easy water toys like water guns/squirters are always a plus for beach play and patio boat "wars."
- Quarters/coins for the public washing machines!
- If camping, a clothesline (or just rope/string) to hang on trees means easy towel/clothes drying from beach and lake time.
- Baby wipes are not just for babies! It's a must-have for easy cleaning of feet, hands, body at your convenience.
- Small cooler to pack drinks/snacks for beach and patio boat time.

Food

Most people join a meal group which often consist of 3-5 families. These groups usually split cooking duties, so one day one or two families will cook meals for the entire group. You'll see that some of the most experienced groups have well thought out kitchen setups.

If you know people going, you can ask to join their meal group. Otherwise, if you don't know anyone, but want to join a group, the organizers can help you get connected with a group.

Bring extra food so you can invite an SLI'r to join you for dinner or give samples to curious neighbors. Some people will pre-cook meals, freeze them, and heat them up at camp. There are also grocery stores in Shasta, about 15 minutes away.

There is (usually) one camp-wide potluck PBC-hosted dinner, and one PBC-hosted pancake breakfast during the week.

Talent Show

- If you like skits or have a strange talent, like Paul Taylor's pancake catching, show it off at the talent show. Kids love putting together skits for the talent show.

SLI'rs

The SLI'rs really help out a lot. They plan the nightly campfires and even host a game time in the late afternoon most days for kids. This gives parents a chance to rest or make dinner while the kids bond over play.

Things to Not Miss

- Sign up for the patio boats when you register for the camp. Most of the camp goes out one day on the lake. After a scavenger hunt or treasure hunt, the boats meet up for lunch. A lot of people end up in the water and it's a universally good time.
- McCloud Falls. Hike up the falls and jump into the water from the top!