



CENTRAL OREGON

ADVENTURE CALLS

ADVENTURE KIDS

FOR RELEASE AT WILL

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CENTRAL OREGON RAISES THE BAR FOR FAMILY ADVENTURE

(BEND, Ore.) — Central Oregon’s culture is without a doubt a product of the active lifestyles of its residents. Just ask local professional runner Max King, who was part of the team that created the world’s first natural form, multi-terrain baby stroller, [Kid Runner](#), to make it easier to take kids on the trails of Central Oregon and beyond.

In Central Oregon, adventure is the tie that binds, and it extends across the entire family. From exploring lava caves to interesting museums, families are invited to go on their own adventures — adventures the whole family will love, no matter their age.

Sure, there are many destinations that make a similar family-friendly claim. But it does not take long for a visitor to learn just how truly welcoming Central Oregon can be for families. Even most of Central Oregon’s breweries are family-friendly, and a few also make their own root beer.

Getting outdoors is a key to most any worthwhile Central Oregon adventure, though, regardless of age. Of course, in a region that has so many incredible hikes for beginners and families, the hard part is narrowing down a list to just a few.

The key is to find those hikes that aren’t too difficult and not too long, but with big, scenic payoffs. A few hikes for the family include:

- **Tumalo Falls:** Tumalo Falls — approximately 12 miles from Bend — is a favorite for its beauty and its close proximity to town. The short quarter-mile hike from the trailhead to the top of the spectacular 97-foot waterfall is a must. For an added adventure continue on to Double Falls, which is less than 1 mile from the top of Tumalo Falls.
- **The Deschutes River Trail:** The relatively flat, well-maintained 3-mile loop of the Deschutes River Trail in Bend begins near Farewell Bend Park, near the Old Mill

District. Popular for joggers, hikers, strollers, and everyone in between, the trail is entirely along the river and at times can feel as if you're in the wilderness, even though you're really in town.

- **Sparks Lake:** About 25 miles up the Cascade Lakes Scenic Byway, the Ray Atkeson Loop Trail at Sparks Lake offers unparalleled views. The hike starts off as a paved pathway but quickly turns into a trek through the forest. Even if you have small children or are simply not up for the full hike, the half-mile paved pathway extends for an incredible view of South Sister (elev. 10,358') and Broken Top (elev. 9,177').
- **Todd Lake:** Not far from Sparks Lake, one needs only to take a short walk from the parking area to get to the pristine mountain lake and incredible views of Broken Top. The trail around the lake measures an easy 1.8 miles, with ample opportunities to stop for a picnic, chase frogs and tadpoles, or relax by the lake for the day.

Of course, any great adventure for kids should always include an opportunity to learn. Central Oregon has a unique and interactive collection of museums and observatories that tell the story of the region, its native species, and its people.

- **High Desert Museum:** Opened in 1982, the [High Desert Museum](#) explores the nature and history of the West's High Desert region, with 100,000 square feet of exhibit space. Part zoo, the museum gives an up-close look at native species, such as otters, snakes, and birds of prey. The museum also includes artful and historical exhibits. Visit an authentic homestead and sawmill from 1904, and get insight on what life was like for settlers by talking with historic characters who share the tales of early Oregon explorers and settlers.
- **Sunriver Nature Center and Oregon Observatory:** The [Sunriver Nature Center's Oregon Observatory](#) is the largest astronomical viewing facility in the U.S., providing a hands-on experience that includes solar stargazing right in Sunriver. The Sunriver Nature Center offers interpretive exhibits, live birds-of-prey, amphibians and snakes, meteorite exhibit, educational programs, botanical garden, and a nature trail.
- **More stargazing:** Only open to visitors on Friday and Saturday nights through the summer months, The University of Oregon's [Pine Mountain Observatory](#) is a place for a unique exploration. Set 34 miles southeast of Bend, the observatory is perched at 6,300 feet of elevation to take full advantage of the High Desert's clear, dark skies. For those looking for a closer in stargazing experience, there is [Worthy Brewing's Hopservatory](#). Set at its main brewery and restaurant on Bend's eastside, the Worthy observatory offers a rare chance to take advantage of two of the region's greatest attributes: clear skies and local craft beer.
- **Erickson Aircraft Collection:** Started in 1983, the [Erickson Aircraft Collection](#) features more than 20 rare and vintage aircraft, most of which are still in flying condition. The planes in the collection include: P-38 Lightning, P-51 Mustang, Ki43 Hayabusa, F4U Corsair, SBD Dauntless, Grumman Duck, and a B-17 Flying Fortress.
- **Museum at Warm Springs:** Visitors to [The Museum at Warm Springs](#) will experience firsthand the sounds of ancient songs and languages, the mastery of traditional

craftsmen and the sights of rich and colorful cultures that make up the Confederated Tribes of The Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon.

ABOUT CENTRAL OREGON:

Located on the eastern slopes of the Cascade Range, where vast forests give way to the arid high desert, Central Oregon is characterized by year-round adventure, authenticity, inspiration, and environment. From the towering peaks of the Cascades to the pristine waters of the Wild & Scenic Deschutes River, and from the more urban experiences of Bend and Redmond, to the rural charms of Sisters, La Pine, Prineville, Madras, Warm Springs, and Maupin, Central Oregon offers a perfect mix of recreation and sophistication. Barely three hours from Portland, and with daily direct flights from eight major markets, getting to Central Oregon is a breeze. For more information visit www.visitcentraloregon.com or call 800-800-8334.

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