

SEE: GLACIER POINT

# NATURE'S MASTER- PIECE: GLACIER POINT

WORDS: ANNA SMITH

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Throughout the world, there are viewpoints that simply have to be seen to be believed. Glacier Point, in Yosemite National Park, is one such place.

Location: Glacier Point,  
Yosemite National Park, California, USA



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**W**hen the sun hits the northwest face of Yosemite National Park's Half Dome, it is set alight. The pale granite burns orange, and the streaks of lichen that cling to the rock make it look like a waterfall of lava. The trees are blackened against it, and, for a brief moment, it is as though you are looking into the past.

Approximately 65 million years ago, this rock face was magma stuck in a reservoir below the Earth's crust. It solidified over time and was forced 2,694m upwards in an impressive display of Mother Nature's power. As the sun sets, this glimpse into the past fade and leaves behind the strange, dark monolith that stands guard over Yosemite Valley. The rock returns to a dusty grey, and the lichen streaks no longer appear to be flowing. Instead, they stain the granite like tears.

'Ti-se'-yak', or 'The Face of a Young Woman Stained with Tears', is what the indigenous Ahwahnechee people of the valley named Half Dome. It's a somewhat melancholy name for the cover girl of one of the most beautiful locations on Earth, but it reminds us of the mountain's storied history.

Thousands of years of erosion smoothed the dome of this iconic peak, and a thousand more revealed its dramatic vertical face. At its bottom, Half Dome gives way to lush green meadows and sprawling forests, while an ocean of mountain tops stretches out as far as the eye can see.

### A view to die for

This is the view from Glacier Point. Standing more than 2,000m above the valley floor, this popular lookout puts the magnitude of Yosemite into perspective, but it has to be seen to be believed. To experience this otherworldly landscape you'll have to conquer the 'Four Mile Trail' (which is really 4.8 miles), or a 10.5-mile cross-country ski in the winter. As you reach the winding Glacier Point Road, the earth will fall away at your feet, and you'll be greeted with the valley in all its glory.

Although Yosemite is not typically known for nature spotting, the hike up to Glacier Point, as well as through the meadows below, offer the chance to see mule deer grazing in the morning sun, or peregrine falcons (the world's fastest bird) nesting on the cliffs in Spring. Also hidden throughout the valley are herds of bighorn sheep, black bears and 262 species of birds, but you'll need a lot of patience and a little help to spot them...

### See the unseen

Luckily, Swarovski Optik's whole mission is to help you see the unseen. Gazing over Glacier Point, it's impossible to miss the spectacle of the landscape that surrounds you, but only with a trusted pair of binoculars, like the Swarovski CL Companion, can you uncover the secrets that this age-old valley has to offer. The view from Glacier Point is known for its spectacular panorama, but if you look a little closer, there is a hidden world that has been waiting for centuries to be discovered. 



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