

Sleepaway FAQs

- Where is Camp Menzies located? What facilities does it have?

Camp Menzies is located at an elevation of 5,500 feet, about 2 1/2 hours southeast of Sacramento in Calaveras County. The 175 acre wooded site has two waterfront areas, a canoe lake and a swimming hole (both areas mimic natural bodies of water), an archery range, a horseback riding arena, an arts and crafts center and a nature hut. The camp runs off of a generator that is turned off at night, so there is no power in the evenings (~10p-6a). There is little to no cell phone reception at camp.

- What if my camper is homesick?

We know that despite the fun, adventure, and new friends at camp, some campers do become homesick. Camp Staff and other campers are supportive when this happens. The homesickness usually passes quickly once campers become involved in the fun of camp, or they make it through the first night away. Your help before camp to set the stage to avoid homesickness is essential. Talk about the fun of camp, the chance to learn new things, try new activities, and make new friends. Let your camper know that their Camp Lead will be there for them and to talk to them about how they are feeling. Be careful not to talk too much about how you will miss your camper. Campers sometimes feel guilty about leaving people or pets behind. Send cheerful mail to camp for them. If their homesickness does not pass quickly or interferes with their camp activities, the camp will call to touch base with you and let you know what they are doing to help. Please do not suggest to your camper that they should telephone home for you to come get them if they get homesick. Sometimes talking with parents on the phone makes homesickness worse for campers. The camp director will determine if a phone call home is appropriate, however, camp procedure for handling homesickness generally does not include phone calls from camper to parent. The camp director will contact home to keep parents and caregivers informed if their camper is experiencing high levels of homesickness and discuss solutions.

- Are there laundry facilities at camp?

There are no laundry facilities available to campers. It would be a good idea to consider packing a laundry bag for your camper's dirty clothes. Campers will be able to rinse out their swimsuits and hang them to dry. Please be sure your camper has enough clean clothes, towels, and washcloths to last the length of their stay.

- What is a CIT/WIT and what do they do at camp?

The Counselor-in-Training (CIT) & Wranglers-in-Training (WIT) programs have been designed for campers entering grades 10-12 who are interested in improving their leadership skills and working with younger individuals in the camp setting. There are three levels to the CIT/WIT program: CIT/WIT I, CIT/WIT II, and Junior Counselor/Wrangler. CIT I campers will explore all aspects of camp operations including kitchen, archery, horseback riding, etc. CIT II campers will narrow down their interests and will focus their time at camp on just a few areas they want to learn more about. Junior Counselors are welcome at camp during any sleepaway session and get a more in depth experience learning about camp operations. WIT I campers will get to explore all areas of camp operations with a primary focus on the horse area. WIT II campers will take a deep dive into the horse program and learn more about what it takes to lead trail rides, safety talks, arena rides, etc. Junior Wranglers are also welcome to attend any session of

sleepaway camp and will work directly with the Equestrian Manager to set goals for themselves and set their role.

- What is the policy for alcohol and tobacco at camp?

We have a strict no smoking/alcohol policy at our camp program sites. No exceptions will be made.

- Is there a store at Camp Menzies?

Camp Menzies has a trading post that is open during troop and family camps. Sleepaway camp participants are encouraged to purchase souvenirs at the Sacramento or Modesto Girl Scout Shop on bus days.

- Will there be animals at camp?

No pets are allowed at camp. Our herd of horses lives at camp during the summer. We also have an occasional critter that wanders into camp from the neighboring wilderness. Procedures are in place to minimize critter visitation as much as possible. (i.e. proper food storage, trash management, gate closures, etc.)

- Will my camper be able to ride a horse?

All sleepaway campers will get one horseback ride during their stay. As outlined in the Safety Activity Checkpoints, Daisies and Brownies will participate in an arena lesson. Juniors and older will have the opportunity to go on a trail ride.

- How do I send my camper a letter?

Mail becomes very important to campers away from home. However, mail service to camp can be slow. If you send a letter in the mail to camp, we cannot guarantee it's delivery. We suggest you send letters in the camper's luggage. A mailbox will also be available at check-in for you to drop off your camper's mail. Please include your camper's name and sleeping unit on the envelope. If you do not include camper's name, your camper may not receive it. Please make a note on each envelope which day you want the letter delivered (day two, day three, etc.). Because the first day of camp schedule is different, letters will not be distributed on the first day. Positive, upbeat letters help to prevent homesickness. You can also include fun goodies like a pencil, fun stickers, coloring sheets or word puzzles in the envelope (please do not include food!). Include self-addressed, stamped envelopes and postcards in your camper's luggage so that you will receive mail too! Due to the remote location, camp unfortunately is unable to receive packages, so please do not send packages to your camper.

- How many staff members are at camp with my camper?

There are at least two staff members assigned to each group of campers, more depending on age of camper. Camp follows the ratio guidelines set by GSUSA in Safety Activity Checkpoints and American Camp Association.

- Are electronics allowed at camp?

Electronics (i.e. tablets, laptops, ipods, etc) and cellphones are not allowed at camp. We want campers to be present and engaged in order to get the full outdoor experience when they are at

camp. We understand that having no contact with a child for an extended period of time can be stressful for adults. However, the camp runs on a generator, so there is limited access to electricity for charging and our location gives us limited to zero cell phone service. If a problem comes up at camp, the camp directors will contact the adult directly to seek guidance. If your camper needs a phone to monitor health concerns (or any comparable situation) please contact the camp directors at campmenzies@girlscoutshcc.org to discuss how we can best serve your camper. GSHCC is not responsible for any lost or damaged devices at camp.

- What if I have an emergency and I need to get a hold of my camper?

Please contact us at Camp Menzies: 209-795-2081 or campmenzies@girlscoutshcc.org

- What does my camper need to bring to camp?
 - A packing list will be distributed in May to all campers. You will find packing guidelines in the parent handbook and on the GSHCC outdoor website
 - Please do not bring an expensive or favorite outfit to camp. They will get dirty!
 - Campers should only bring what is needed, as space is very limited.
 - Do not pack clothing that could be offensive to others, has imprints of illegal substances, or exposes too much.
 - Do not bring cash or credit cards
 - It is a good idea to include a laundry bag for dirty clothes.
 - Please label all personal gear, as well as luggage, to avoid loss.
 - All medications must be in their original containers.
 - Camper mail for us to deliver during their stay at camp.
 - Leave valuables, food, pets, cell phones, and all electronics at home. Electronics and cell phones discovered during camp will be turned in to the camp office and returned to campers on the last day of camp, at check-out.
 - Girl Scouts Heart of Central California is not responsible for campers' personal possessions. All unclaimed items will be donated to a charity at the end of the summer camp season. The general lost and found will be at the Sacramento Office.

- Are snacks provided throughout the day?

Yes, we have a scheduled snack time at 3 pm everyday. It usually consists of a fruit and some sort of individually wrapped treat. Some examples of snacks are pretzels, gushers, goldfish, teddy grahams, or baked Lays. Water is available all day. Our staff regularly check-in with campers to make sure they are eating and drinking enough throughout the day, and staff carry with them a daypack full of various snacks and supplies.

- What if my camper loses something at camp?

To prevent lost items, please mark all equipment with your camper's name. Lost and Found is managed through our Sacramento office. If you discover an item missing after returning home, please contact Customer Care at 916.452.9181/ 800.322.4475. Any items not claimed by October 1 of each year will be donated to charity. Please remember, Girl Scouts Heart of Central California will not be responsible for any valuables or items of clothing lost, stolen or damaged at camp.

- Who will be watching my camper when they are at camp?

All camp staff go through an interview process which includes collecting references and verifying employment. They also go through a background screening process prior to the start of the summer season. Camp staff receive extensive on-site training prior to the arrival of campers. Training includes first aid/cpr, mandated reporter, activity programming and outdoor skills, songs, games, team building, age-level characteristics, how to deal with homesickness and more. Staff who supervise high-adventure activities, like horseback riding and waterfront, are required to have additional training and qualifications.

- What are the sleeping accommodations?

Campers are placed in sleeping units by grade level. Campers will stay either in a rustic cabin or a tent, as noted in the camp brochure and in the description at time of registration. Sleeping cabins are 16 x 20 cabins with screen doors, screen windows, bunk beds and mattresses. Sleeping cabins sleep up to twelve campers each. Campers sleeping in tent units can choose to bring their own tent from home or borrow one from the camp. All units, including tent units, have mattresses for campers to use. The type of sleeping accommodation is noted in the online camp brochure and in the online registration portal.

- Can I visit my camper?

No. For safety reasons, we do not allow visitors at camp when camp is in session.

- What happens the first day at camp?

Please be sure that your camper arrives dressed for camp. Campers should be wearing a sleeved shirt, closed-toe shoes with backs and socks. Campers spend the day getting familiarized with camp. Campers will visit the healthcare manager for a health check and will go to the dining hall to learn dining hall procedures. They will also plan what activities they would like to do during their camp session. Settling into their unit and playing get-to-know-you games are also a big part of the first day. You should plan on arriving at the camp bus stop no more than 45 minutes before the scheduled departure time. At the bus stop, when you drop your camper off, you will be asked to sign in with council staff. In order to prevent lice infestations, we are requiring visual scalp exams during check-in for all girls heading to camp. After that, camper's will place their luggage in their designated spot and will turn in any medications being sent to camp. Camp buses are chaperoned by camp staff or council staff. When your camper arrives at camp they will eat the lunch they brought from home with the rest of their unit and their Camp Leads.

- Will campers work on specific badges at camp?

All campers that attend Camp Menzies sleepaway camp will earn the Camper series badge and the Girl Scout Way series badge that is specific to the campers Girl Scout level. These badges are not included and must be purchased separately from the Girl Scout Shop.

Fun patches are included in the camp experience. Every Girl Scout member who attends camp will receive a Camp Menzies patch and/or year rocker. Your camper might also come home with a bullseye patch if they got a bullseye or a polar bear swim patch if they participated in the polar bear swim.

- If my camper is missing a patch, what do I do?

Fun patches (i.e. camp menzies patch and rocker, bullseye patch, and polar bear swim patch) are sent home with campers in their final program summary envelope. If you received the envelope from your camper upon her return, and there were not any patches, we apologize! Please let us know what patch(es) you are missing, and we will mail them promptly to the address we have on file.

- My camper will have a Birthday while at camp. How can they celebrate?

If your camper is celebrating a birthday while at camp, please let our camp staff know on check-in day so that we can help make their day special. On the last day of the session we celebrate birthdays that happened that session by enjoying a special dessert and singing to those who had a birthday.

- Will I be able to see pictures of my camper at camp?

Prior to your camper arriving at camp, you will receive a Dropbox link where you can view pictures taken at camp. Staff members will take a daily group photo and that picture will be uploaded to the dropbox during their time at camp. Staff will do their best to take pictures of campers engaging in activities, however, their first priority is the care of the campers. Any additional pictures taken by staff will be uploaded to the Dropbox after the session has ended . The best way to have pictures of your camper's session is to send them with a disposable camera or an inexpensive digital camera (no phones, please).

- What is the COVID-19 policy at camp?

The health and safety of our campers and staff is our first priority. We are closely monitoring COVID-19 trends and will finalize a policy in April with the latest recommendations from the CDC, ACA and State Agencies.

- Are vaccines required for my camper?

Vaccines are not required to attend camp. However, all camp staff are required to have a Covid-19 vaccine.

Family Camp FAQs

- Where is Camp Menzies located? What facilities does it have?

Camp Menzies is located at an elevation of 5,500 feet, about 2 1/2 hours southeast of Sacramento in Calaveras County. The 175 acre wooded site has two waterfront areas, a canoe lake and a swimming hole (both areas mimic natural bodies of water), an archery range, a horseback riding arena, an arts and crafts center and a nature hut. The camp runs off of a generator that is turned off at night so there is no power in the evenings (~10p-6a). There is little to no cell reception at camp.

- Are there laundry facilities at camp?

There are no laundry facilities available to campers. It would be a good idea to consider packing a laundry bag for your dirty clothes. Campers will be able to rinse out their swimsuits and hang

them to dry. Please be sure you have enough clean clothes, towels, and washcloths to last the length of your stay.

- What is the policy for alcohol and tobacco at camp?

We have a strict no smoking/alcohol policy at our camp program sites. No exceptions will be made.

- Is there a store at Camp Menzies?

Camp Menzies has a trading post that is open during troop and family camps. The trading post accepts cash, cards and checks.

- Will there be animals at camp?

No pets are allowed at camp. Our herd of horses lives at camp during the summer. We also have an occasional critter that wanders into camp from the neighboring wilderness. Procedures are in place to minimize critter visitation as much as possible. (i.e. proper food storage, trash management, gate closures, etc.)

- Do we get to ride horses?

Family Camps do not include horseback riding.

- Are electronics allowed at camp?

We want campers to be present and engaged in order to get the full outdoor experience when they are at camp. However, we understand that completely unplugging from life may not be possible. Participants may bring electronics but please be aware camp runs on a generator, so there is limited access to electricity for charging and our location gives us limited to zero cell phone service. If a problem comes up at camp, participants may use phones for an emergency situation. If you need a phone to monitor health concerns (or any comparable situation) please contact the camp directors at campmenzies@girlscoutshcc.org to discuss how we can best serve you. GSHCC is not responsible for any lost or damaged devices at camp.

- What if I have an emergency and I need to get a hold of camp?

Please contact us at Camp Menzies: 209-795-2081 or campmenzies@girlscoutshcc.org

- Can male family members attend Family Camp or Two of Us?

Yes! We welcome all family members who want to spend time with their Girl Scout. Families that have male family members will be placed into an individual cabin or into cabins with other families that have male family members. Families will be notified for approval if cabins are to be shared with other families prior to camp starting. There will be separate bathroom facilities for males and females during family camp.

- What do I need to bring to camp?

- A packing list will be distributed to campers in May. The packing list can also be found on the GSHCC outdoor website.
- Please do not bring an expensive or favorite outfit to camp. They will get dirty!
- Campers should only bring what is needed, as space is very limited.

- Do not pack clothing that could be offensive to others, has imprints of illegal substances, or exposes too much.
- It is a good idea to include a laundry bag for dirty clothes.
- Please label all personal gear, as well as luggage, to avoid loss.
- All medications must be in their original containers.
- Leave valuables, food, pets, cell phones, and any non-essential electronics at home.
- Girl Scouts Heart of Central California is not responsible for campers' personal possessions. All unclaimed items will be donated to a charity at the end of the summer camp season. The general lost and found will be at the Sacramento Office.

- Are snacks provided throughout the day?

Yes, we have a scheduled snack time at 3 pm everyday. It usually consists of a fruit and some sort of individually wrapped treat. Some examples of snacks are pretzels, gushers, goldfish, teddy grahams, or baked Lays. Water is available all day. If you would like to bring a snack for your family, please ensure it is nut free and we will be happy to store it in the kitchen for you.

- What if I lose something at camp?

To prevent lost items, please mark all equipment with your/your camper's name. Lost and Found is managed through our Sacramento office. If you discover an item missing after returning home, please contact Customer Care at 916.452.9181/ 800.322.4475. Any items not claimed by October 1 of each year will be donated to charity. Please remember, Girl Scouts Heart of Central California will not be responsible for any valuables or items of clothing lost, stolen or damaged at camp.

- What are the sleeping accommodations?

Unit placement is dependent on several factors including family size, age of campers and availability. Campers will stay in either a rustic cabin or a tent, dependent on the selection you made at the time of registration. Sleeping cabins are 16 x 20 cabins with screen doors, windows, bunk beds and mattresses. Sleeping cabins sleep up to twelve campers each. Smaller families may be asked to share with other smaller families in one cabin. Campers sleeping in tent units can choose to bring their own tent from home or borrow one from the camp. All units, including tent units, have mattresses for campers to use. The type of sleeping accommodation is noted in the online camp brochure and in the online registration portal.

- Will campers work on specific badges at camp?

Campers will participate in a lot of activities that count toward Girl Scout Badges at camp. Campers should keep track of what activities they participate in or have an idea of what badges they want to earn prior to camp, so they can determine what badges they earn. Camp staff can assist campers in deciding or understanding what activities count for what badges if needed. Badges are not included in the camp experience and must be purchased separately from the Girl Scout Shop.

Fun patches are included in the camp experience. Every Girl Scout member who attends camp will receive a Camp Menzies patch and/or year rocker. Your camper might also come home with

a bullseye patch if they got a bullseye or a polar bear swim patch if they participated in the polar bear swim.

- If my camper is missing a patch, what do I do?

Fun patches are distributed at the end of camp. If you get home and realize patches are missing, please contact customer care and we will mail them promptly, to the address we have on file.

- What is the COVID-19 policy at camp?

The health and safety of our campers and staff is our first priority. We are closely monitoring COVID-19 trends and will finalize a policy in April with the latest recommendations from the CDC and State Agencies.

- Are vaccines required for my camper?

Vaccines are not required to attend camp. However, all camp staff are required to have a Covid-19 vaccine.

Troop Camp FAQs

- Where is Camp Menzies located? What facilities does it have?

Camp Menzies is located at an elevation of 5,500 feet, about 2 1/2 hours southeast of Sacramento in Calaveras County. The 175 acre wooded site has two waterfront areas, a canoe lake and a swimming hole (both areas mimic natural bodies of water), an archery range, a horseback riding arena, an arts and crafts center and a nature hut. The camp runs off of a generator that is turned off at night so there is no power in the evenings. There is little to no cell reception at camp.

- Are there laundry facilities at camp?

There are no laundry facilities available to campers. It would be a good idea to consider packing a laundry bag for your dirty clothes. Campers will be able to rinse out their swimsuits and hang them to dry. Please be sure you have enough clean clothes, towels, and washcloths to last the length of your stay.

- What is the policy for alcohol and tobacco at camp?

We have a strict no smoking/alcohol policy at our camp program sites. No exceptions will be made.

- Is there a store at Camp Menzies?

Camp Menzies has a trading post that is open during troop and family camps. The trading post accepts cash, cards and checks.

- Will there be animals at camp?

No pets are allowed at camp. Our herd of horses lives at camp during the summer. We also have an occasional critter that wanders into camp from the neighboring wilderness. Procedures are in place to minimize critter visitation as much as possible. (i.e. proper food storage, trash management, gate closures, etc.)

- Do we get to ride horses?

Horseback riding is included for Troop Camp but is not available for the Show Your Love to Camp Menzies weekends or the Journey in a Weekends. As outlined in the Safety Activity Checkpoints, Daisies and Brownies will participate in an arena ride, Juniors and above will have the opportunity to participate in a trail ride. Campers younger than 5 will not be able to ride horses.

- Are electronics allowed at camp?

We want campers to be present and engaged in order to get the full outdoor experience when they are at camp. However, we understand that completely unplugging from life may not be possible. Participants may bring electronics but please be aware camp runs on a generator, so there is limited access to electricity for charging and our location gives us limited to zero cell phone service. If a problem comes up at camp, participants may use the camp landline for an emergency situation. If you need a phone to monitor health concerns (or any comparable situation) please contact the camp directors at campmenzies@girlscoutshcc.org to discuss how we can best serve you. GSHCC is not responsible for any lost or damaged devices at camp.

- What if I have an emergency and I need to get a hold of camp?

Please contact us at Camp Menzies: 209-795-2081 or campmenzies@girlscoutshcc.org

- Can male troop leaders or helpers attend Troop Camp?

Yes! In accordance with the Safety Activity Checkpoints male troop leaders or troop helpers can attend troop camp. Troops must have one female leader or troop helper attend.

- What do I need to bring to camp?

- A packing list will be distributed to campers in May. You can also find the packing list on the GSHCC outdoor website.
- Please do not bring an expensive or favorite outfit to camp. They will get dirty!
- Campers should only bring what is needed, as space is very limited.
- Do not pack clothing that could be offensive to others, has imprints of illegal substances, or exposes too much.
- It is a good idea to include a laundry bag for dirty clothes.
- Please label all personal gear, as well as luggage, to avoid loss.
- All medications must be in their original containers.
- Leave valuables, food, pets, cell phones, and any non-essential electronics at home.
- Girl Scouts Heart of Central California is not responsible for campers' personal possessions. All unclaimed items will be donated to a charity at the end of the summer camp season. The general lost and found will be at the Sacramento Office.

- Are snacks provided throughout the day?

Yes, we have a scheduled snack time at 3 pm everyday. It usually consists of a fruit and some sort of individually wrapped treat. Some examples of snacks are pretzels, Gushers, Goldfish,

Teddy Grahams, or Baked Lays. Water is available all day. If you would like to bring a snack for your troop, please ensure it is nut free and we will be happy to store it in the kitchen for you.

- What if I lose something at camp?

To prevent lost items, please mark all equipment with your/your camper's name. Lost and Found is managed through our Sacramento office. If you discover an item missing after returning home, please contact Customer Care at 916.452.9181/ 800.322.4475. Any items not claimed by October 1 of each year will be donated to charity. Please remember, Girl Scouts Heart of Central California will not be responsible for any valuables or items of clothing lost, stolen or damaged at camp.

- What are the sleeping accommodations?

Unit placement is dependent on several factors including Troop size, age of campers and availability. Campers will stay in either a rustic cabin or a tent, depending on the selection made at time of registration. Sleeping cabins are 16 x 20 cabins with screen doors, windows, bunk beds and mattresses. Sleeping cabins sleep up to twelve campers each. Smaller troops may be asked to share with other smaller troops in one cabin. Campers sleeping in tent units can choose to bring their own tent from home or borrow one from the camp. All units, including tent units, have mattresses for campers to use. The type of sleeping accommodation is noted in the online camp brochure and in the online registration portal.

- Will campers work on specific badges at camp?

All campers that attend Camp Menzies will earn the Camper series badge and the Girl Scout Way series badge that is specific to the campers Girl Scout level. If a troop attends a Journey in a Weekend, the troop will complete the Discover and Connect portions of the Citizen Scientist Journey, they will need to complete the Take Action Project on their own. If a troop attends a Show Your Love to Camp Menzies Weekend, the troop will earn their Community Service to Girl Scouting Bar. Badges are not included and must be purchased separately from the Girl Scout Shop.

Fun patches are included in the camp experience. Every Girl Scout member who attends camp will receive a Camp Menzies patch and/or year rocker. Your camper might also come home with a bullseye patch if they got a bullseye or a polar bear swim patch if they participated in the polar bear swim.

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- What is the COVID-19 policy at camp?

The health and safety of our campers and staff is our first priority. We are closely monitoring COVID-19 trends and will finalize a policy in April with the latest recommendations from the CDC and State Agencies.

- Are vaccines required for my camper?

Vaccines are not required to attend camp. However, all camp staff are required to have a Covid-19 vaccine.

- Does camp participate in SWAPS?

SWAPS (some whatchamacallit affectionately pinned somewhere) is a Girl Scout Tradition originating in the 60s where troops bring small trinkets or crafts on safety pins to trade with sister Girl Scouts. If you have swaps, bring them! Many troops choose to bring swaps, but it is not a requirement. We have a dedicated swap time after the closing ceremony. Camp Staff also participate if you would like to trade with them.