



**Busch Gardens Sleepover  
Confirmation Packet**

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# Welcome to Busch Gardens!

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Thank you for making a reservation for a Busch Gardens' sleepover program! For more than two decades Busch Gardens has been committed to delivering high quality, standards-based programs. We look forward to helping you meet your educational goals, while introducing your students to wildlife and wild places.

Please read through the following confirmation materials **thoroughly** to familiarize yourself with our program policies and procedures. These materials contain all of the information you will need to ensure you are prepared for your upcoming sleepover.

*It is the responsibility of the Group Leader to share this confirmation packet with every member of their group, including every adult chaperone planning to participate.*

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

- Program Overview.....Page 3
- Sleepover Arrival.....Page 4
- Sleepover Conclusion.....Page 5
- Sleeping Venues.....Page 6
- Sleeping Gear.....Page 7–8
- Dining & Dietary Restrictions.....Page 9
- Sleepover Program Policies.....Page 10
- Payment & Registration.....Pages 11–12
- Add-Ons.....Page 13
- Frequently Asked Questions.....14

# Overview

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Students participating in Busch Gardens' Sleepovers will engage in a variety of activities and our schedules are fluid to accommodate the unique nature of a zoological theme park. Students will spend their evening (and following morning) experiencing immersive animal habitats that showcase animals from around the world. They will join in interactive activities that reinforce key learning objectives and meet with an Animal Care Specialist to learn more about how we care for our animals.

Our sleepover activities and schedules are subject to change due to weather, animal needs, park operational impacts, or various other unforeseen circumstances without notice. For this reason, we do not provide a written schedule to hand out. Our team will host a "Chaperone Chat" at the beginning of the program to review the evening's schedule and general expectations for Chaperones.

## GENERAL SLEEPOVER EXPERIENCE:

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### Evening

- Arrival/Check-In/Chaperone Chat
- Pizza Party Dinner
- Habitat Exploration & Interactive Activities
- Bedtime (Can be up to an hour after park close)

### Following Morning

- Wake Up and Pack (can be as early as 6:00 AM)
- Breakfast
- Animal Care Specialist Talk
- Program Concludes/Load Sleepover Gear

# Sleepover Arrival

## ARRIVAL

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Plan to arrive at your designated sleepover location between 5:30 PM - 6:00 PM. Your sleepover program will start promptly at 6:00 PM. Late arrivals may miss portions of the program, which cannot be made up. Early arrivals cannot be accommodated.

## PARKING

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Busch Gardens provides parking in designated areas. A vehicle pass will be issued to the Group Leader, once final payment has been received. **It is the responsibility of the Group Leader to share this vehicle pass with every member of their group driving a personal vehicle.**

Buses are encouraged as parking is limited.

Busch Gardens **does not provide** complimentary parking for personal vehicles (cars, vans, trucks) of participants staying in the park the following day. Parking fees will be assessed for all personal vehicles and are nonrefundable.

Non- participants (i.e. parents, siblings) will not be permitted to enter the venue during check-in or check-out. For families arriving by vehicle it's important to note that:

- NO PETS are allowed on property—leave pets at home.
- There are no public restrooms.

## SECURITY SEARCH

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For the safety of all guests and Ambassadors, all personal belongings (suitcases, purses, bags, sleeping bags, etc.) must go through a security search during our check-in process. If you prefer an item not to be searched, it must remain in a personal vehicle and will not be permitted on property. Please review our [Packing List](#) and [Prohibited Items List](#) on page 9 for more details.

## CHAPERONE CHAT

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During check-in, our team will host a “Chaperone Chat” at the beginning of the program. At this time, we will speak with all adult participants to review the evening’s schedule and expectations for Chaperones. Chaperones should be prepared to:

- Stay with the group for the entire program and plan to supervise students throughout the night.
- Manage their students’ behavior, especially when requested by Busch Gardens’ staff.
- Ensure students are adhering to all safety guidelines.
- Refrain from the use of tobacco products, electronic cigarettes, and alcohol consumption for the entire duration of the sleepover program.

# Sleepover Conclusion

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## CONCLUSION

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Your sleepover will conclude at **9:00 AM** the following morning. At that time, your group will be escorted to the sleepover venue to retrieve their sleepover gear and return everything to their personal vehicles or buses.

Pick-up vehicles or buses should plan to return to the sleepover arrival location by **8:30 AM** the following morning to collect the group's sleepover belongings.

If Stay-and-Play tickets were purchased, buses and personal vehicles must move to General Parking. Participants driving personal vehicles will be required to purchase parking.

**Just a reminder: Busch Gardens typically opens at 10:00 AM, please be sure to check our website for up-to-date park hours.**

# Sleeping Venues

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## VENUES

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Each venue is unique. Restroom facilities are available within a short walking distance of all sleeping venues. Shower facilities are not available at any venue.

Your sleepover staff will remain with your group for the entire duration of the program. As a reminder, Busch Gardens employs both male and female Education Staff to facilitate sleepovers but please ensure you have male and female chaperones, if needed for your group.

While unlikely, Busch Gardens does **reserve the right to change your groups sleeping venue** due to severe weather conditions, operational impacts with the venue, scheduling conflicts, or to ensure proper staffing for the duration of the sleepover.

*Please be aware that the visibility of animals at any venue can vary depending on animal behavior, season, and animal husbandry requirements. Animal visibility is not guaranteed.*

# Sleepover Gear

Busch Gardens will provide each participant with a sleeping mat. When packing, please note that there are **no shower facilities** available. Our sleepover program is predominantly outdoors, so we highly recommend checking the weather prior to arrival to ensure you have the necessary accessories (jackets or umbrellas) to ensure your comfort. We also recommend reducing the number of electronics to just a camera or cell phone as Busch Gardens is not responsible for any lost, damaged, or stolen items.

## HOW TO PACK

Each participant is permitted to bring the following items:

- Pillow
- Sleeping bag
- Up to **two** carry-on size suitcases/duffle bags/trash bags that are able to close and keep all items secure and contained

**All suitcases/bags  
cannot exceed the  
standard carry-on size  
of  
22 x 14 x 9 inches  
(56 x 36 x 23 centimeters)**



For the safety of our guests and staff, any items larger than a standard carry-on size are **not permitted into the park.**

All items must be clearly labeled with the participants name and group. Carry-on size suitcases with wheels and collapsible handles are recommended.

# Sleepover Gear

## PACKING LIST

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- Sleeping bag and pillow
- Toiletries (toothbrush, toothpaste, deodorant, washcloth)
- Any needed medication
- Pajamas (all participants are required to wear full body clothing) Note: The weather can be unpredictable and temperatures in the sleeping venues can vary so layers are recommended.
- A complete change of clothes for the next day.
- Comfortable, close-toed shoes or sandals with a heel strap (there is a great deal of walking). Flip-flops are not permitted.
- Weather appropriate clothing/gear
- Busch Gardens provides sleeping mats at all sleepover venues.

## SLEEPOVER GEAR STORAGE

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Groups are responsible for storing their belongings in their personal vehicles or bus at the conclusion of the program. Busch Gardens does not provide storage while groups are experiencing the park after their sleepover.

## PROHIBITED ITEMS

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Participants are encouraged to leave all expensive personal belongings at home. The following items are **not permitted on site** and must be left in a personal vehicle:

- Suitcases/bags larger than the permitted sizes of 22 x 14 x 9 inches (see "How to Pack")
- Wagons/carts used to tote sleepover gear
- Weapons of any kind. Weapons are defined as guns of any kind (including toy guns), slingshots, penknives, switchblades, box cutters, pepper spray or any other item prohibited by the FAA. The final decision rests with Busch Gardens staff on whether an item is permitted or not.
- Alcohol, tobacco products (cigarettes, cigars, snuff, chewing tobacco), and electronic cigarettes.
- Any illegal narcotics will be immediately confiscated and will result in immediate dismissal from the program.
- Glass bottles, plastic straws, and drink lids.
- Large hard-sided coolers.

*Busch Gardens is not responsible for any items/money that are lost, stolen, or damaged.*



# Dinning & Dietary Restrictions

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## DINNER MENU

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- Pizza (cheese or pepperoni)
- Carrot Sticks & Celery with ranch
- Assorted Fruit Platter
- Assorted snacks
- Assorted Beverages- Sprite/Orange Fanta/Coke/ Diet Coke

## BREAKFAST MENU

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- Assorted Hot Breakfast items (eggs, bacon, biscuits, etc...)
- Milk/Juice/Coffee/Water

## PIZZA ALTERNATIVE FOR DIETARY RESTRICTIONS

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Busch Gardens is happy to provide an alternative to pizza. For those with any dietary allergens, please contact us at [education@buschgardens.com](mailto:education@buschgardens.com) to discuss alternatives. Members of your group with dietary restrictions are permitted to bring their own food and snacks if they prefer something other than our alternative.

## BRINGING YOUR OWN FOOD

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Anyone bringing their own food should do so in lunchbox-size soft cooler or disposable containers. Large hard-sided coolers are not permitted in the park. Refrigeration and microwaves may not available. Please note that food and beverages (other than water) may not be consumed inside the sleeping venues.

*For the safety of our guests and animals, glass bottles, straws, and drink lids are not permitted in the park.*

# Sleepover Program Policies

## CODE OF CONDUCT

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We ask that all participants (adult and child) conduct themselves in a responsible and courteous manner. Use of profanity, aggression or bullying towards another participant or a Busch Gardens staff member, destruction of property, stealing, consumption or possession of alcohol, use or possession of tobacco products or illegal narcotics, and/or possession of a weapon will result in **immediate dismissal** from the sleepover program.

All participants (adults and children) are expected to comply with instructions and safety guidelines given by the Education team members who are leading the sleepover. Failure to do so can result in dismissal from the program.

## STAYING WITH THE GROUP

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Participants (adult and child) must always be escorted by Busch Gardens staff and are not permitted to leave the group for any reason. Should a member of your group need to leave the program early, they must be escorted by a Busch Gardens staff to the exit.

## WEATHER EMERGENCIES

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Education management and staff balance the components of the program with the current weather conditions. The enjoyment of the sleepover components is contingent upon the proximity and nature of weather factors such as lightning or high winds. Approaching inclement weather will impact scheduled activities. In the event of lightning or tornado warnings in the immediate vicinity, all participants will be moved to the closest indoor location until the threat has passed. Indoor activities are planned if thunderstorms prevail.

## ALCOHOL, TOBACCO, & DRUG POLICY

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Busch Gardens' Education Department is committed to being an alcohol, tobacco, and drug free environment. The use of alcohol, tobacco, or drugs of any kind is not permitted during our sleepover program. Persons under the influence of controlled substances, consuming alcohol, or using tobacco products (including electronic cigarettes) or in possession of the same, are prohibited from participation in the sleepover and will be asked to leave the premises.

## INCLUSIVITY STATEMENT

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Busch Gardens' Education Department strives to create an inclusive environment that is free from discrimination and harassment. We value the differences of our participants and staff. Specifically, Busch Gardens prohibits discrimination or harassment based on age, race, color, religion, sex, national origin, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, and disabilities.

# Payments & Registration

## PRICE & ELIGIBILITY

The price is \$89.00 per participant.

Groups must have a minimum of 20 paid participants to reserve this program, with an adult:child ratio that does not exceed 1:2. You will receive one free adult for every 10 paid children once the 20 paid participant limit is met. Any additional adults are permitted at the standard rate (not to exceed a 1:2 adult:child ratio).

The minimum age to participate in a sleepover is 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade (8-9 years of age). To ensure the highest quality program, younger siblings are not permitted to join as a participant.

Free chaperone numbers are determined by the number of students attending the Program. If your attendance changes on the day of your program, your chaperone ratios will also change.

## DEPOSIT & PAYMENT

Upon making a reservation, the Group Leader will receive an invoice. **A \$100 nonrefundable deposit** is due per group booked within three weeks of making your reservation.

Group leaders can anticipate being contacted by a member of our Education Team within 5 business days of making your initial reservation. At that time, we will confirm registration details and payment due dates. If a Group leader would like to make any changes to their reservation prior to our initial contact, please email us at [education@buschgardens.com](mailto:education@buschgardens.com).

**The full payment for your group is required three weeks prior to your program date. Groups not paid in full three weeks prior may forfeit their reservation.**

We accept one check or credit card for the entire group payment (no cash/purchase orders).

## PAYMENT OPTIONS

When paying in advance, please pay with one check, money order, or credit card.  
**NO CASH PLEASE.**

**By Credit Card:** Credit Card payments can be taken over the phone, please email us at [education@buschgardens.com](mailto:education@buschgardens.com) to set up a time for a representative to contact you to process payment.

**By Check:** Checks (school checks preferred) or money orders should be made payable to Busch Gardens Tampa. Payment must still be received three weeks prior to your field trip date. If sending payment by mail, we recommend mailing payment out at least six weeks prior.

Annual Passes, discounts, or other offers CANNOT be applied toward the program fee.

Busch Gardens  
Education Reservations  
P.O. Box 9157  
Tampa, FL 33674

## PARTICIPANT NUMBER CHANGES & REFUNDS

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Education Staff will also be available to process any refunds for participants who were unable to attend the sleepover if the following criteria are met:

- Groups must still meet the 20 paid participant minimum. If your participant numbers drop below 20, you will still be required to pay the minimum of 20 paid participants.
- Groups' number of chaperones to student ratio does not exceed the 1:2

Groups who cancel more than four weeks prior to their sleepover date are eligible for a full refund (minus the nonrefundable deposit). Groups who cancel within four weeks of their program date may not be eligible for a refund. Late arrivals may miss portions of the program, which cannot be made up. Groups that do not arrive may forfeit their reservation altogether.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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If you have any questions about your sleepover or about any of the information included in this packet, please call our Education Department at **813-987-5808** or email us at [education@buschgardens.com](mailto:education@buschgardens.com).

## REGISTRATION FORMS

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Please be advised that we will no longer require groups to fill out any pre-registration forms. It is the responsibility of the sponsor of the event and Group Leaders to collect and/or maintain health information of individual participants to the extent the sponsor and Group Leaders deem appropriate and necessary. With regard to proof of COVID vaccinations or negative tests, the general park rules apply. No such proof is required.

At Busch Gardens, the safety and quality of our education programs is something we take very seriously. There will be qualified medical personnel onsite during the entire sleepover to respond to any first aid needs your child or your group might have. In the unlikely event of a medical emergency (minor or major) involving a child, Group Leaders should be prepared to approve or decline consent on behalf of the child for any medical personnel to assist.

## BUSCH GARDENS GROUP LEADER FINAL CHECKLIST

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Once a reservation is made, the Group Leader will be sent an electronic form to fill out called the Busch Gardens Sleepover Group Leader Final Checklist. This will help us ensure we have all necessary information for your group. This Final Checklist will also provide reminders of important information Group Leaders should share with their groups to ensure everyone understands the policies and procedures of our sleepover program.

We ask that this electronic form be filled out **three weeks** prior to your program date.

# Add-Ons

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## STAY & PLAY ADMISSION TICKETS

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Stay & Play Admission can be added onto your educational program for an additional fee. These tickets will allow you to enjoy all park attractions and shows after dismissal from your educational program. Please note that Stay & Play admission is purchased separately from your educational program through the group sales department. For questions, or to obtain the form to purchase Stay & Play admission, please call (813) 987-5808 to speak to a member of our education team or send an email to [Education@buschgardens.com](mailto:Education@buschgardens.com).

***Please Note: Groups must purchase a minimum of 15 youth tickets to be eligible for the Stay & Play rate. Groups will receive one free adult ticket for every 10 paid student tickets, once the 15 minimum student tickets have been met.***

## SCHOOL ON THE SERENGETI

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Add a 30-minute safari to truck across the Serengeti plain and hand-feed giraffes.

- Price per student: \$29.99
  - Price per chaperone: \$29.99
  - Children must be 5 years of age or older to participate
- No discounts apply.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## **Can we arrive late?**

Program components may be altered, abbreviated, or omitted due to any late arrivals. If you anticipate a delay, please contact the Education Staff at **813-579-8223** and notify the staff of your estimated arrival time.

## **Does this program go behind-the-scenes?**

This program does not go behind-the-scenes of any of our animal habitats.

## **Will we have an animal encounter during the program?**

YES, each group will receive a scheduled time period for an animal encounter. Due to the varying needs of our animal collection, we will not be able to determine which animals your groups will meet until the evening of the program, nor will all groups meet the same animals.

## **Are rides and the shows included on this program?**

Sleepovers are a fully guided program that focuses on our animal exhibits. The park attractions, such as the roller coasters, midway games, Safari of Fun, etc. are not included with this program. If your group wants an opportunity to experience park attractions you can purchase Stay & Play Park Admission tickets and stay to experience all park attractions after the program. We invite groups to visit us online at [www.buschgardens.com](http://www.buschgardens.com) for more details.

## **Can I reschedule my group's trip?**

Rescheduling is subject to availability. Please call us at **813-987-5808** or email us [education@buschgardens.com](mailto:education@buschgardens.com).

## **Can a School on the Serengeti be added to our reservation?**

YES, School on the Serengeti can be added on to this program for an additional fee. Please call us at **813-987-5808** or visit us at [www.buschgardens.com](http://www.buschgardens.com) for more details.