



Clackamas River

Trip Guide

1/2 and 1 Day Trips



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The Clackamas River

Oregon River Experiences is proud to be one of the few outfitters granted a permit by the U.S. Forest Service to offer whitewater rafting trips on the beautiful and thrilling Clackamas River.

The Clackamas is without question one of Oregon's best rafting adventures. Thrilling class III and IV whitewater is perhaps the river's primary attraction, but lush mountain scenery, solitude, and crystal clear water add to the river's charm. This is the most thrilling one-day trip we offer.

The river's beauty and exotic rapids are a world away from everyday city life. Yet the Clackamas is as close as a 45 minute drive from Portland's east side.

The Clackamas is one of Oregon's finest raft trips, and it offers the closest whitewater to Portland. That's an unbeatable combination.

Spring's high water offers thrilling rapids to those looking for maximum whitewater excitement. Early-season rapids are big, and promise a wet ride. As the water level drops with the arrival of summer the river's character changes. Summer's rapids are less likely to drench a paddle crew, but the fun of negotiating the river's rocky slalom-course provides ample challenge while leaving time to bask in the sun.

The Clackamas River was named for the Clackamas Indians, a Chinook tribe who once lived along the river. In 1988, Congress designated 47 miles of the Clackamas River as a Wild and Scenic River, in recognition of the river's outstanding scenery, fishery, and recreational values.

Itinerary

Half Day Trips

Morning half day trips meet at 9:30 AM*, and most afternoon half day trips meet at 1:00 PM*. In either case we meet just east of Estacada, Oregon.

After a brief orientation you will park your car then board an O.R.E. van for the 10 minute ride to the launch point.

Full Day Trips

We meet at 9:30 AM* on the day of your trip just east of Estacada, Oregon.

After a brief orientation you will park your car then board an O.R.E. van for the 20 minute ride to the launch point.

Once we arrive at our launch site our guides will conduct a safety orientation. We'll then all board rafts and be on our way downstream.

Day trips include a stop for a riverside lunch between noon and 1 PM. Both half and 1 day trips also typically opportunities to swim and jump into the river from the jumping rocks at Big Eddy.

We typically arrive at our take-out point around 12:30 PM (1/2 day morning trips), or around 4 PM (1/2 day afternoon trips and full day trips).** In most cases our trips end where your car has been parked. If water levels dictate a different ending spot for the raft trip then you will be transported to your car once the rafts are out of the water and loaded on our trailer (typically a 10 minute process).

* Please plan your drive carefully so as to arrive at our meeting place on time. Our guides will attempt to wait for you if you are running late, but circumstances typically do not allow them to wait more than 20 minutes. If you miss your intended trip we will most likely not be able to provide a transfer to an alternate trip, and we are unable to provide a refund for missed trips.

** Many factors influence our timetable, including water levels, winds, and the needs and preferences of our guests. Please consider these times approximate.

High water full day Clackamas River trips begin at Sandstone Bridge, and medium to low water trips begin at Whitewater Bridge. Most half day trips begin at Milepost 41.

High water trips end at Memaloose. Moderate and low water trips end at Moore Creek or milepost 37.

How to get there

From Portland, Washington, and the Northern Willamette Valley

We meet at the Moore Creek Boat Access Site, which is roughly a one hour drive from downtown Portland. To reach Moore Creek from Portland, take Highway 205 to exit 12. Head east to the 212-224 junction, then turn right to follow OR-224. Continue along OR-224 through the town of Estacada and then beyond Estacada for an additional 11 miles. Moore Creek will be on your right, one mile past the Lazy Bend Campground. Look for the Moore Creek Boat Access sign.

Do not type "Moore Creek" into your phone or car navigation system, you will get lost if you do so. Moore Creek boat access does not have a street address, and map databases will send you far, far upstream if you make this mistake. Instead use the nearest street address, which is Lazy Bend Campground, but then drive one mile past the campground. Lazy Bend's address is 45200 Highway 224, Estacada OR 97023.

From Salem, Eugene and other points south of Woodburn along I-5

Follow the directions above (for Portland and etc.). Alternatively, take highway 5 north to the highway 213 exit (Woodburn), then follow 213 to Molalla. From Molalla follow highway 211 to Estacada. Turn right onto highway 224 on the outskirts of Estacada, then follow 224 for 11 miles to the Moore Creek boat access. Moore Creek will be on your right, one mile past the Lazy Bend Campground. Look for the Moore Creek Boat Access sign.

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From Mount Hood

Follow highway 26 west to the town of Sandy. Turn left onto highway 211, follow 211 for 6 miles to highway 224, then turn left onto 224. Follow 224 through the town of Estacada and then beyond Estacada for an additional 11 miles. Moore Creek will be on your right, one mile past the Lazy Bend Campground. Look for the Moore Creek Boat Access sign.

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What to bring and what to wear

Please come to the river prepared for all possible weather conditions. The weather in the river canyons of the Northwest is often different from that in surrounding areas, so you won't really know how it will be until you get there. At that time, you may decide that some of the items listed here are not needed; but you need to have them along just in case! In addition, Clackamas River water is usually quite cool, even on a hot day. So please pay close attention to the following information and checklists, and help to insure your enjoyment of the day by bringing along the proper clothing.

Spring (and cool summer) trips: For both safety and comfort it is essential that guests on April and May trips wear a wetsuit while on the river. We recommend that guests on early June trips consider wearing a wetsuit as well. Wetsuits may be rented directly from O.R.E. or you can bring your own instead or rent one elsewhere.

Summer trips: Wetsuits are typically not needed. But be sure to bring along a sweater or jacket just in case the weather is cooler than expected.

O.R.E. rents wetsuit/splash jacket sets (\$5 per day) in sizes to accommodate persons from 4'3" and 85 pounds to 6'6" and 250+ pounds. Also included are wetsuit shoes (men's sizes 2 to 14). Our wetsuits are a 1/8" thick, one-piece "Farmer John" style which fully cover the legs and torso but which leave the arms free. The splash jacket helps to protect your arms and torso from the cold water, and may be worn with a sweater or jacket underneath if needed for extra warmth.

Advance reservations are required for wetsuits sets. To place a reservation for a wetsuit please call our office at least 24 hours prior to your trip. (503-563-1500 or 800-827-1358)

Clothing tips: The best clothing is that which retains your body heat while wet, or one that dries quickly. Modern high-tech synthetic fabrics like polypropylene and polyester fleece do both, and are readily available at stores like REI and L.L. Bean. But if you don't want to spend a lot on a rafting wardrobe look for wool clothes, which provide some warmth even when wet. Thrift stores and military surplus stores are good places to find inexpensive wool clothes. During the spring you should avoid wearing cotton clothing while on the river. When wet, cotton sucks warmth from your body at an amazing rate.

Gear checklist for Spring Trips (and cool summer days)

To wear *(clothing should be of synthetic or wool fabric – no cotton)*

- ✓ Swimsuit or shorts
- ✓ T-shirt
- ✓ Sunglasses with a strap
- ✓ Baseball cap or wide brim hat
- ✓ Sweater or jacket
- ✓ Wetsuit and wetsuit shoes (both can be rented from O.R.E.) *or* long underwear tops and bottoms plus rain jacket and rain pants, plus shoes or sport sandals (no flip-flops)

Splash jackets are provided by O.R.E. (as are lifejackets and helmets)

To bring with you on the river:

- ✓ Water bottle or canteen
- ✓ Sunscreen

To leave in your car:

- ✓ Towel
- ✓ Complete change of clothing

Gear checklist for Summer* trips *(*Typcially mid-June through August)*

To wear

- ✓ Swimsuit or shorts
- ✓ T-shirt
- ✓ Sunglasses with a strap
- ✓ Baseball cap or wide brim hat
- ✓ Athletic shoes or sport sandals (no flip-flops)

Splash jackets are provided by O.R.E. should conditions warrant extra protection from cool water

To bring with you on the river:

- ✓ Water bottle or canteen *
- ✓ Sunscreen

To leave in your car:

- ✓ Towel
- ✓ Complete change of clothing

Additional information

Your trip includes the following

- ✓ The services of our professional guides and staff.
- ✓ Shuttle service to and from our meeting place.
- ✓ Digital photographs are taken of your raft.
- ✓ A hearty, freshly prepared picnic lunch at the riverside on 1 day trips. (Special dietary needs can be accommodated with advance notice.)
- ✓ Use of professional quality self-bailing rafts and top-notch river running equipment, including U.S. Coast Guard Approved lifejackets.
- ✓ Waterproof river bags for your personal gear.

Gratuities

Guests sometimes ask whether it is appropriate to tip their guide. Tipping is optional, but if your guide did a great job then feel free to thank him or her with a gratuity. The amount is up to you, but tips between 8% and 20% of trip cost are customary.

Nearby attractions

Regional attractions are too numerous to mention, but include all that the city of Portland has to offer, as well as the trails and sights of Mount Hood and the Columbia River Gorge. For Portland information contact the Portland Visitor's Bureau at 503-222-2223. For more about Mount Hood and the Gorge contact Mt. Hood National Forest headquarters at 503-667-0511.