



# Deschutes River

Trip Guide  
3 Day Trips



## Oregon River Experiences

office: 503-563-1500

toll-free: 800-827-1358

fax: 888-544-4165

email: [info@oregonriver.com](mailto:info@oregonriver.com)

web site: [www.oregonriver.com](http://www.oregonriver.com)

## The Deschutes River

Do outstanding whitewater, blue skies, and easy accessibility whet your appetite for fun? Then a Deschutes River whitewater rafting trip is for you.

This is not the river on which to seek solitude — the Deschutes is too popular for that. And with good reason. The river is located near the population centers of western Oregon and Washington, and features both sunny weather and enjoyable rapids along with excellent desert scenery.

In the eyes of many people the best thing about the Deschutes may be the weather. The section we run is located in the rain-shadow of the Cascade Mountains, which results in an enjoyably dry and sunny climate. Yes, it does rain here, as it does almost everywhere else on the planet. But on those Spring days when the Willamette Valley to the west is cloudy, Deschutes rafters often find themselves basking in the sun.

Whatever the weather, the Deschutes numerous thrilling rapids. Some of the bigger drops Whitehorse, Buckskin Mary, the 4 Chutes, Wapinitia, and Oak Springs. But for many the greatest enjoyment comes from lazy time in camp, swimming in the brisk water and taking in the inspiring desert canyon scenery.

### Itinerary

3 day trips meet at 7:30 AM, we ask you to arrive a few minutes early please. We meet in front of the Maupin City Park, on the east side of the river, in the town of Maupin. There is a public parking area outside the park.

(Please have your breakfast before our meeting time, and arrive in your river clothes.) Look for vehicle sporting the O.R.E. logo. We'll show you how to pack your things into our river bags, and you'll park your vehicle here.

We will then drive a little over 1 hr to our launching area, at Warm Springs. Our guides will then conduct a safety and orientation briefing, which will include instruction on paddle and rowing techniques as needed. Afterwards we'll board the boats and begin our journey downstream.

### DAYS ON THE RIVER

Each day begin with freshly brewed coffee by 7 AM, and breakfast by 8 AM. After breakfast we'll pack our bags, load the boats and make our way downstream.

We're on the river an average of three to five hours per day. Along the way we stop for a riverside picnic lunch. We may also stop to scout rapids, or to take a short hike up scenic side streams. We usually arrive in camp by mid to late afternoon, and while the guides prepare hors d'oeuvres and dinner, you'll have time to hike, fish, read, or nap.

## LAST DAY

We typically arrive at Sandy Beach, our take-out point, between 2:30 and 3:30 P.M. Once we've unpacked, you'll board a van or bus for the short ride back to Maupin. (On small trips, we will completely de-rig the boats, and our guides will accompany you back to Maupin. On larger trips, you will say good-bye to the guides when you leave the take-out, as they will stay behind to finish de-rigging.) We arrive back in Maupin between 3:30 and 4:30 PM.

\* 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.

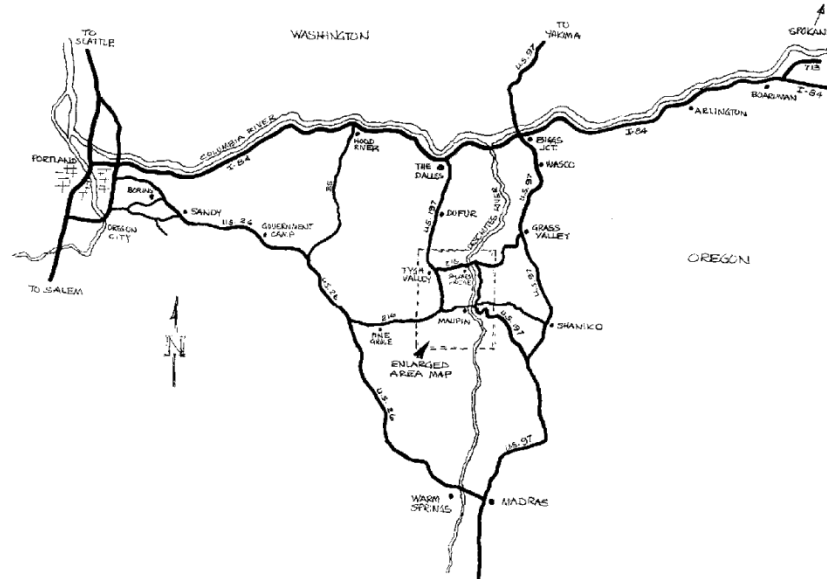
\*\* Many factors influence our timetable, including water levels, winds, and the needs and preferences of our guests. Please consider these times approximate.

## Weather

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.
Average daytime high temp.	71	79	87	87	78
Average nighttime low temp.	37	43	46	46	39
Average monthly rainfall	0.80"	0.80"	0.40"	0.50"	0.50"

## How to get there

From Portland, take US-26 (the Mt. Hood Highway) east, to the junction with OR-216. Follow OR-216 to its junction with US-197, which will take you into Maupin.



## TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

The Deschutes makes its way North carving out a river canyon full of history and geological wonders. Being inhabited by Native Americans for over 7,900 years the area is still abundant in wildlife. With beavers, osprey, deer and a world famous fishery the Deschutes is abundant in wildlife viewing.

With a clear swift current that never really stops, the days seems to float by quite easily. With rock formations dotting the banks, the riverside campsites are plentiful and often offer some short hikes to a viewpoint. The many class II-III rapids offer a great chance to try out an inflatable kayak on your own.

With challenging rapids like Whitehorse and Buckskin Mary there is plenty of excitement for everyone in the upper section of the river. As we camp riverside in the evening we make our to the popular day trip section through Maupin, here we will all join into the paddle boats and navigate rapids like Boxcar and Oak Springs.

## BOAT OPTIONS

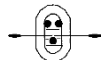
Guided oar raft



Our 14 to 18 foot-long guided oar rafts are the most stable of river boats. They're ideal for young children and anyone who wants to hang on while the guide rows the rapids, and they're a great boat to choose if relaxation and enjoying the scenery are your primary interests. (1 to 5 guests plus guide, your guide does all the rowing.)



Row-your-own cataraft



"Row-your-own" catarafts are small and lively. They're the boat to choose if you're looking for excitement, freedom and a sense of accomplishment combined with a high degree of comfort. (1 to 3 guests per cataraft. O.R.E. guides provide instruction and supervision but are not present in the boat with you.)



We outfit you and a boat partner with one of our custom designed craft, rigged with frame and oars. We provide coaching and encouragement, and while your guides lead the way you float "follow the leader" style down the

river. You trade off rowing with your boat partner and have ample time to relax, take pictures, or take in the passing scenery. Oregon River Experiences pioneered row-your-own river vacations. This is the ultimate "hands-on" rafting adventure.

Prior rafting experience is highly recommended for those considering this boat option. We also recommend either prior rowing experience or a moderately high level of physical fitness. However you do not need to be a daredevil or an athlete to pilot your own cataraft under our supervision.

### Paddle raft



Paddle rafts are fast and exciting. Each paddle crew consists of 4 to 7 guests plus a guide. Each crew member gets a canoe type paddle and works as a team under the direction of the guide. For those who want to combine excitement with group involvement, a paddle raft is the boat of choice.



### Inflatable kayak



Inflatable kayaks are small, highly maneuverable one-person craft that are sporty yet also surprisingly stable. We bring along 2 to 4 inflatable kayaks to be shared by the group.



## A few important details about boat options

- Paddle rafts are available only when a minimum of six adults want to paddle.
- Inflatable kayaks are available on a shared basis, and may be reserved for exclusive use by special arrangement only.
- You are welcome to switch between boat types, but because of the need for training and practice prior to substantial rapids, restrictions will apply.
- Paddle raft, inflatable kayak, and cataraft availability is subject to water level limitations.

## PRE-TRIP DETAILS

### Essential Eligibility Criteria for River Trips:

The following are the physical and mental eligibility criteria for all participants on any OutRecX LLC, (Oregon River Experiences) river trip.

1. Ability to remain seated and balanced while in a whitewater craft.



2. Wear a Type V Coast Guard-approved personal floatation device (maximum chest size of 56 inches). Wearing leg straps may be required to ensure proper fit. Where required, properly wear a helmet, required when using inflatable kayaks.
3. Ability to independently board and disembark a boat four to ten times each day. This may require stepping into the boat, and then maneuvering your body over and across tubes and fixed objects into a seated position.
4. Ability to independently navigate shoreline terrain, including safely maneuvering around and across boulders, rocks, and slippery and uneven surfaces, under low branches, and around vegetation. This includes the ability to maintain your balance near precipitous ledges or cliffs.
5. Ability to independently swim in whitewater or swift currents while wearing a personal floatation device. This includes being an active participant in your own rescue, including having the ability to (a) keep your airway passages sealed while underwater, and regain control of your breathing when being submitted to repeated submersion under waves or currents; (b) orient yourself to new “in-river” surroundings; (c) reposition yourself in the water to different swimming positions; (d) swim aggressively to a boat or to shore in whitewater; (e) receive a rescue rope, paddle, or human assistance, and possibly let go of the same; (f) get out from under an overturned boat.
6. Ability to follow both verbal and non-verbal instructions given by guides in all situations, including during stressful or dangerous situations, and to effectively communicate with guides and other guests.
7. Ability to manage all personal care independently, or with the assistance of a friend or family member. Including carrying personal drybags and gear to your campsite each day (only for multiday trips)
8. If taking prescription medications, have the ability to maintain proper dosage by medicating independently, or with the assistance of a friend or family member.
9. Ability to remain adequately fed, hydrated, and properly dressed so as to avoid environmental injuries such as hypothermia, heat related illness, and sunburn.

The above criteria, if not met, will disqualify a person from participating in a river trip with OutRecX LLC, (Oregon River Experiences). The criteria exist for your own safety and that of all trip participants. None of the criteria are meant to discriminate on the basis of any physical or mental disability, and are applied uniformly to all potential trip participants, irrespective of the presence or absence of any disability. OutRecX LLC, (Oregon River Experiences) is committed to making reasonable modifications to any trip for any persons with a disability, so long as they do not fundamentally alter the nature of the trip. OutRecX LLC Guides have absolute discretion in determining guests’ fitness for a particular trip.

## **MULTIDAY TRIPS ONLY:**

### **FURTHER INFO ABOUT EXPECTATIONS FOR TRIP PARTICIPANTS**

The following paragraphs are meant to further inform all potential participants of the expectations for all participants in order to promote a safe, enjoyable experience for everyone on a trip. There may be requirements, whether physical or mental, that are not specifically applied “essential eligibility criteria”, but that help our guests understand the reality of being on a wilderness river trip.

Our primary goal is to minimize the risks associated with adventure trips in a wilderness environment. The trip involves physical exertion and exposure to the elements, including cold water and the potential for heat, sun, wind, rain and snow. We have experience accommodating people with a wide range of physical disabilities and/or health conditions. However, individuals who are overweight, lack conditioning, or have other physical limitations or ailments that interfere with the realistic encounters on a wilderness river can endanger themselves, other guests, and the guides. Please consult your doctor if you have medical or health conditions that could impact your ability to participate in this outdoor adventure.

It is very important that each trip participant take an active role in their own safety. You will likely encounter wilderness conditions that you are unfamiliar with, and those conditions may change rapidly. It is critical to pay attention at all times, to be aware of your surroundings, and to avoid taking unnecessary risks. Even a non-life threatening injury in a wilderness setting can become a major emergency for you, and can endanger the entire group. Swimming alone or hiking alone is discouraged. Excessive alcohol consumption or illicit drug use is not tolerated. Using common sense, and following both the explicit instruction and the lead of your guides can go a long way towards keeping yourself and the group safe. Some obvious things to avoid in camp and on shore (by way of example) are: walking around without shoes in camp, approaching wild animals, not paying attention to what is above or around your tent site that could harm you, not paying attention to hazards such as poison ivy and rattlesnakes, and walking near precipitous ledges.

River trips, particularly those involving whitewater, are inherently risky. While the risk of a trip is part of what makes it an exciting adventure, you must be entirely respectful of the risk that such a trip poses. It is important that you are confident in your swimming ability, and your ability to stay calm in the event you become a non-voluntary swimmer. Your odds of becoming a non-voluntary swimmer change with the classification of a rapid, boat selection and environmental factors. A swim in whitewater is much more difficult and physically draining than swimming in flat water. Swimming in cold water can cause a gasping effect on your respiratory system. This can be overcome by focusing on your breathing and calming yourself down. Swimming in cold water will also much more quickly sap your energy and decrease muscle function than swimming in warmer water. While our guides are highly trained and will do their absolute best to rescue you, a successful rescue is greatly hampered by a swimmer who is



unprepared for a swim in whitewater, who fails to actively participate in their own rescue, and who is not able to follow directions while under stress. You will receive a detailed orientation talk at the start of your river trip.

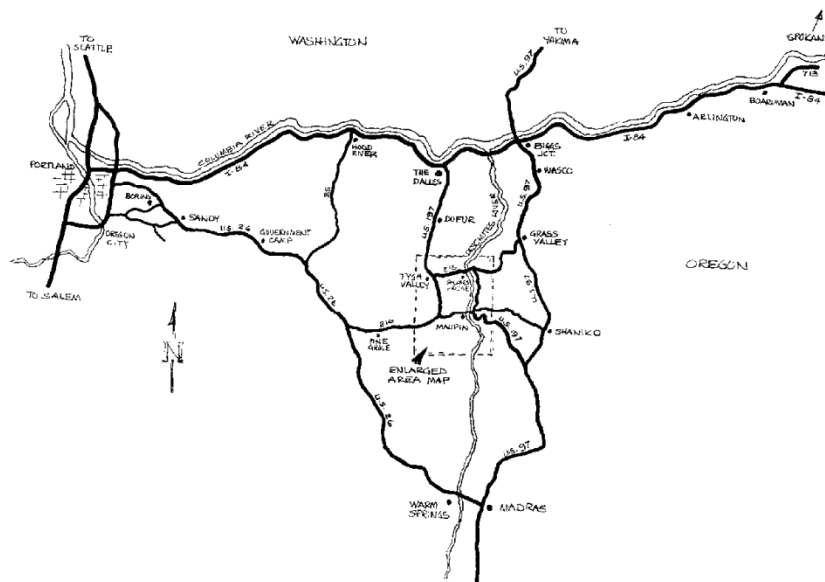
Due to the physical nature of this trip, we highly recommend that you engage in regular exercise for at least three months prior to departure to ensure preparedness. No gym membership required! Simple exercises like push-ups, sit-ups and squats go a long way to improving core fitness. Start with these exercises and do three sets of ten repetitions each, three to four times per week. Aerobic training is also easy to accomplish without expensive equipment. Take 30 – 40 minutes two to three times a week and go for a brisk walk, easy jog or bike ride around town. If you have access to a pool, lake or the ocean, swimming is obviously an ideal choice for aerobic exercise. It provides a full-body workout and is training that is useful in the event of an involuntary swim in a whitewater rapid. It is important to push yourself in the months leading up to your trip by increasing your strength training repetitions and the pace of your aerobic training. Check with your doctor prior to beginning any exercise program to be sure you are medically safe to participate. Starting an exercise program that is more strenuous than you are ready for may result in injury or risk exacerbating existing health conditions. Getting in shape will certainly add to your enjoyment of the trip.

### **Where and When to Meet**

We will meet at 7:30 AM on the day your trip begins, at the parking area just outside of Maupin City Park. In Maupin, Oregon. Maupin is approximately 2 hours east of Portland.

### **How to get there**

From Portland, take US-26 (the Mt. Hood Highway) east, to the junction with OR-216. Follow OR-216 to its junction with US-197, which will take you into Maupin.





## Trip Shuttles

Your trip fare includes transportation from our meeting point to our launch spot and from our take out back to your car in Maupin.

## Accommodations (before and after your trip)

Lodging is available in Maupin at Imperial Lodge. Accommodations are limited, so advance reservations are advisable. Call 1-800-395-3903.

There are many motels available in Madras (50 miles from Maupin) and in The Dalles (40 miles from Maupin). In Madras try the Leisure Inn (541-475-6141). In The Dalles consider the Day's Inn (541-296-1191) or the Best Western (541-296-9107).

Camping is available at the Maupin City Park and at numerous BLM sites along the river near Maupin.

## What to Bring

Most of the time the weather in the Deschutes River canyon is hot and dry. But cool, wet weather can occur on any trip, particularly early in the spring. It can be quite chilly when it's overcast, breezy or rainy, especially when you're in a raft. Please pay close attention to selecting your clothes and gear for your river adventure. Hopefully, you'll never need most of the cool-weather gear we recommend that you bring. But it is vital that you do bring it, just in case!

## What to Wear

On cool or rainy days: Appropriate clothing for these conditions is clothing that dries quickly, and keeps you warm even when the garment is wet. Modern high-tech synthetic fabrics such as polypropylene and polyester fleece do both. (Wool provides warmth when wet, but does not dry quickly and is less comfortable. Wool is often less expensive, however, especially when purchased from Thrift or Military Surplus stores, and wool/synthetic blends can be a good choice.)

Think in terms of layers of clothing for changeable and cool weather. As conditions change you can add or subtract layers as needed. The first layer in cool weather should be long underwear made of synthetic materials such as polypropylene, which provide warmth and wick moisture away from your skin. The middle layer(s) should consist of polyester fleece (or wool), and will provide further warmth. The outer layer consists of a rain jacket and rain pants. Rain gear made of modern water- proof, breathable fabrics such as Goretex are best. But for a less expensive option coated nylon will work, too.

Wetsuits are generally not needed. However, they do make inflatable kayaking more comfortable, given the river's cool water. For this reason O.R.E. provides wetsuits on a shared basis for kayakers. If you'd like to bring your own suit, look for an 1/8" thick "farmer john" style (which can be worn in conjunction with a sweater and raincoat). Thicker, full-body scuba style suits are warm but they're less comfortable, and their bulk makes paddling more difficult.

On warm or hot days: Synthetic fabric shorts and bathing suits are worn, as well as a hat to keep the sun out of your eyes. Cotton shirts may be worn to keep cool and to ward off sunburn. But cotton clothing is recommended for hot weather only. Wet cotton will lower your body temperature. This is great for keeping cool during a heat wave, but cotton provides no warmth when wet the fabric gets wet.

On your feet: The preferred footwear of clients and O.R.E. guides is from **Astral Shoes**, due to high quality grip, durability and they look good off the river as well. *Check the attached sheet for a special offer from Astral.*

For footwear while on the river we recommend nylon, canvas running or tennis shoes, hard soled wetsuit boots, or sports sandals such as Tevas.

For extra comfort you may want to wear nylon, polypropylene socks or neoprene wetsuit socks. They work well as a first layer when it is cooler.

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 others. If you don't want to spend a lot on a rafting wardrobe look for wool clothes, which provide some warmth even when wet. In camp: You may want a change of shoes as well as comfortable clothing for lounging about or hiking. Cotton clothing may be worn on shore in dry weather. But in order to be prepared for rainy weather we recommend that you have camp clothing available made of synthetic or wool fabrics.

### **Where to find it**

Check with local sporting goods stores. If they cater to outdoor sports (hiking, backpacking, etc.) rather than team sports, they should have most of the items you need. Gear is also available through mail order and online, for instance by contacting REI (800-426-4840, or [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com)) or L.L. Bean (800-341-4341, or [www.llbean.com](http://www.llbean.com)).

### **How to pack it**

Pack your gear in a manner appropriate for your journey to Minam. When we meet we will supply you with a watertight river bag into which you will pack your clothing. This bag is roughly 14" in diameter and 24" tall. We'll also provide you with a second, larger river bag (roughly 16" in diameter and 33" tall), which you will share with one other person. Into this second bag will go your tent, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, and other bulky items. These bags will be transported from camp to camp by raft but generally will not be accessible during the day. For items that you want to keep handy during the day bring a small daypack or dry-bag. Items that you want to keep handy during the day but which absolutely must stay dry (camera, binoculars, a book, etc.) go best in a 50 caliber military surplus ammo box. O.R.E. provides these boxes on a shared basis. If you would like your own, they are available at most surplus and some outdoor stores. (Note: boxes cannot be carried in paddle rafts or inflatable kayaks.)

The river bags and boxes we provide are watertight under most conditions, even when submerged. But for extra security we recommend that you wrap your sleeping bag and clothing in heavy-duty plastic garbage bags for extra protection. We also recommend that you pack your camera, binoculars, reading material and similar items in large zip-lock bags.

## Rental Equipment

O.R.E. offers camping equipment for rent to those who do not own this gear (or do not wish to transport it from home). High quality, 3 person dome style tents are available for \$24 per trip. Sleep kits (synthetic-fill sleeping bag, cotton liner, self-inflating sleep pad, and ground cloth) are also available for \$24 per person per trip. Reservations and advance payment are required. To place a reservation for a tent or sleep kit please call our office at 1-800-827-1358.

## Equipment Checklist

### ✓ River Gear

- \_\_\_\_\_ swimsuit or shorts and T-shirt (avoid cotton shorts)
- \_\_\_\_\_ tennis shoes or sport sandals, or hard-soled wetsuit boots
- \_\_\_\_\_ wool or synthetic "ski" hat — for cool/rainy days
- \_\_\_\_\_ wide-brimmed hat (preferably with chin-strap), or baseball cap — for sunny days
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 pair socks (wool or synthetic)
- \_\_\_\_\_ waterproof rain jacket and rain pants
- \_\_\_\_\_ Polypropylene or similar long underwear tops and bottoms
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 warm sweater or jacket, polyester fleece or wool
- \_\_\_\_\_ water bottle or canteen
- \_\_\_\_\_ waterproof sunscreen and lip balm
- \_\_\_\_\_ sunglasses, with strap

### ✓ Extra River Clothing, Camp Clothing

- \_\_\_\_\_ camp shoes (or lightweight hiking boots)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 pair long pants
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 pair shorts
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 long-sleeved shirts
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 short-sleeved shirts
- \_\_\_\_\_ socks and underwear

### ✓ Camp Gear

- \_\_\_\_\_ compact, lightweight tent (freestanding is preferred)
- \_\_\_\_\_ compact, medium-weight sleeping bag
- \_\_\_\_\_ compact foam sleeping pad or air mattress
- \_\_\_\_\_ small tarp (to place beneath your tent, or as a ground-cloth for sleeping under the stars)
- \_\_\_\_\_ personal toiletries, including small towel, biodegradable soap, lotion, prescription medicines
- \_\_\_\_\_ small flashlight or headlamp, with extra batteries

### ✓ Optional Items

- \_\_\_\_\_ gloves (especially if you'll be rowing)
- \_\_\_\_\_ binoculars
- \_\_\_\_\_ camera
- \_\_\_\_\_ reading material
- \_\_\_\_\_ pen and journal or notebook

\_\_\_\_\_ compact fishing gear  
\_\_\_\_\_ spare glasses, sunglasses  
\_\_\_\_\_ small daypack, ammo box, or small dry bag  
\_\_\_\_\_ beer or soft drinks (up to 2 six-packs per person), wine or liquor—in unbreakable containers. (We provide coffee, tea, and juice; also wine with some dinners).

**Consumption of alcohol is prohibited during the day but okay once we arrive in camp.**

**Please do not bring pets, guns, or valuable jewelry**

### **Additional Information**

Your trip fare includes the following:

- The services of our professional river guides.
- Local transport from meeting spot to launch area and end of trip transport back to your car in Maupin.
- All meals, from lunch on the first day through lunch on the last. Our menu is delicious, varied, and hearty. Meals are freshly prepared by our guides from the highest quality ingredients. Juice and water are available at each meal. Complementary wine is served with some dinners. Special dietary needs can be accommodated with advance notice\*.
- Durable, professional quality rafts and river running equipment, including U.S. Coast Guard Approved lifejackets.
- Waterproof river bags and boxes for your personal gear.
- Cups, plates, and eating utensils.
- Camp chairs.

### **Fishing**

Fishing on the Deschutes is often good for steelhead in the spring and fall, while trout in the summer. If you would like to fish you'll need an Oregon fishing license, which may be purchased at Oregon sporting goods stores. There are many restrictions and regulations on the Deschutes river, you need to be familiar with them yourself. Fishing is not permitted while floating.

### **Camping**

We select beautiful meadows and forest glens for our camp sites. Our guides establish a central kitchen and social area, and trip members select spots in the surrounding area to pitch a tent or roll out a sleeping bag. O.R.E. will set up a portable toilet at each camp, which will be located with privacy and convenience in mind. O.R.E. practices minimum impact camping, and the crew will instruct you on the simple steps we follow to protect the river environment.

### **Gratuities**

Our guests sometimes ask whether it is appropriate to tip the guides. Tipping is optional, but if your guides did a great job then feel free to thank them with a gratuity. The amount is up to you, but tips in the range of 8% to 20% of trip cost are typical. Gratuities are customarily presented to the Lead Guide, and will be shared equally among all guides on your trip.

Nearby attractions

### **Cancellations and Travel Insurance**

The size of our trips is strictly regulated by law, and your reservation means we cannot sell the spaces to others. So we strictly adhere to the cancellation and refund policies we explain in our reservation materials. For this reason we recommend that you consider the purchase of travel insurance, which will (amongst other benefits) reimburse you if you must cancel your trip due to illness.

### **Emergencies**

It may be difficult for family and friends to reach you while you are on the river. In case of emergency they should contact the local BLM office (Prineville, OR) at 541-416-6700. They should also call the O.R.E. office at 800-827-1358.

### **Nearby Attractions**

If you're coming from out of town a Deschutes River trip can be included in a visit to nearby Portland. For Portland information contact the Portland Visitor's Bureau at 503-222-2223.

Rafting the Deschutes can also be combined with hiking on Mount Hood or a tour of the Columbia River Gorge. For more about both Mount Hood and the Gorge contact Mt. Hood National Forest headquarters at 503-667-0511.