



# Rogue River

Trip Guide

Raft Support Hiking & Camping



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# The Rogue River Trail

## Raft-supported Hiking

### *Riverside Camping*

From its headwaters near Crater Lake in southwest Oregon, the Rogue River flows west some 200 miles before it meets the Pacific Ocean at the town of Gold Beach. Our hike through the river's lower canyon begins at Grave Creek (not far from Grants Pass), and ends 40 miles later at Foster Bar (roughly 35 miles upstream from the coast). We'll hike the entire length of the historic Rogue River trail, through a pristine wilderness well known for its scenic beauty. The Rogue River canyon is an enchanting blend of lush forests, fern grottos, beautiful sandy beaches, sparkling waterfalls, lovely side streams, cool clear swimming holes, and abundant wildlife.

### **Natural History**

Geologic forces in the Rogue River country have created a wonderland of beautifully sculpted canyons and polished rock formations. Surrounding the river are lush forests and a diverse mix of plant communities that provide homes for a wide variety of wildlife. Among the many tree and shrub species found along the river are the California bay, with its richly scented leaves, Pacific madrone, with its striking red bark, and Azalea, which sports fragrant white springtime blossoms. Osprey, bald eagles, water ouzels, heron, and a variety of songbirds are seen. Raccoons, river otters, deer, mink, black bear, and other mammals are here, too. Steelhead, chinook and coho salmon either live in the river year-round or migrate upriver to spawn, and trout are native to the larger tributaries such as Big Windy and Missouri Creeks.

### **Human History**

The Rogue River canyon is rich in history. Although several Indian tribes lived along the river for many years, few signs remain of their time here. But numerous historic sites do remain from the trapping and mining days that followed. Time permitting, we may stop at one or more cabins built by the miners, trappers, and early settlers who moved to the river canyon beginning around 1850.

### **Weather**

The weather in the Rogue River canyon is usually very pleasant. Warm or hot days are likely, especially June through September, so May and September tend to be the best months for hiking. The river water itself is cool in the Spring, and warms by early July to the mid 60's. Here's some climate data for the nearby town of Grants Pass. Temperatures in the river canyon are generally a few degrees cooler.

	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.
Average daytime high temp.	75	82	90	89	84
Average nighttime low temp.	44	50	53	53	47
Average monthly rainfall	1.37"	0.76"	0.28"	0.32"	0.75"

**For More Info:** For in-depth reading we recommend the following books: A trail guide, maps and additional information is available for download at <http://www.blm.gov/or/resources/recreation/rogue/maps-publications.php> .

*Illahe: The Story of Settlement in the Rogue River Canyon*, by Kay Atwood (1978). Local History.

*The Rogue: A River to Run*, by Arman and Wooldridge (Wildwood Press, 1982). Personal history from the Rogue's pioneer river runner.

*Hip Pocket Naturalist: A Guide to Oregon's Rogue River Basin*, by Jackman and Bernstein (Magnifica Press, 1989). Natural History.

## Trip Itinerary

**First day:** We meet at 10 AM at the Galice Resort in Galice, Oregon. (Please have breakfast before our meeting time and arrive in your hiking clothes.) After a brief orientation you will pack your things into our river bags, and park your vehicles at Galice. We will then travel by van to the trailhead (a 15 minute drive), and begin the hike to our first night's camp.

**Days 2 through 4:** Our days begin with freshly brewed coffee by 7 AM, and breakfast by 8 AM. After breakfast we'll pack our bags, load the boats and hit the trail.

This is a raft-supported hiking trip. Our rafts will carry your camping gear, as well as all food and group camping supplies. You will need to bring a day pack, but you will need to carry only those few items you'll need along the trail.

**Day 5:** We typically arrive at trail's end between 2:00 and 3:30 PM. Once we've unpacked you'll board a van for the ride back to Galice. The ride takes about two hours, on scenic Bear Camp Road through the Siskiyou National Forest. We arrive back in Galice between 4:30 and 6 PM.

### Sample day-by-day mileages

Day 1: Grave Creek trailhead to Tye camp. (5 miles.)

Day 2: Tye to Meadow Creek camp. (8.3 miles).

Day 3: Meadow Creek to Mule Creek camp. (10.7 miles)

Day 4: Mule Creek to Tacoma camp. (8.7 miles)

Day 5: Tacoma to trail's end near Illahe. (7 miles)

## Trail Conditions

The Rogue River Trail provides for a delightful, exceptionally beautiful wilderness hike. But the trail can present challenges and difficulties as well as delights.



\*\*\*In general the elevations encountered are low (starting with 689 feet at the trailhead), but the trail climbs and drops multiple times, and sections of the trail are rocky. Total elevation gains and drops on the trail's more challenging days are in the 1,000 foot range.

\*\*\*The trail is of moderate difficulty overall, but participants may find certain sections of the trail more challenging. Hikers should be prepared for conditions such as including loose gravel, washouts, and down trees.

\*\*\*While some sections of the trail are relatively level and tucked into the forest, other sections, while reasonably safe, are narrow and 50 to several hundred feet or more above the river. Hikers who are particularly afraid of heights may find these sections of trail to be difficult.

\*\*\*Poison oak grows in places along the trail, and ticks may be present. For protection from both we recommend you consider hiking in long pants and a long-sleeved shirt.

## **Physical Conditioning**

We strongly recommend that you prepare yourself physically for the hike. In particular we suggest that you take daily walks over uneven terrain where possible. (To be ready for this hike you should be capable of hiking 10 miles in a day at a moderate pace.)



# 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 10 AM on the day your trip begins, at the Galice Resort Cafe. The Resort is situated along the banks of the river not far from the town of Grants Pass. Galice is roughly 400 miles north of San Francisco, California, and 250 miles south of Portland, Oregon.

### **Getting To and From the River**

#### ✓ If you Drive

To get to Galice, take Interstate 5 to the Merlin exit (exit # 61), five miles north of Grants Pass, then follow the signs to Merlin. This will put you on the main road, which passes through Merlin and continues to Galice, about 15 miles west of I-5. The Galice Resort is on the right-hand side, between the road and the river. There's no "Galice Resort" sign – look for the café. The address is 11744 Galice Rd, Merlin, OR 97532. Galice is roughly a 40 minute drive from Grants Pass.

#### ✓ If you Fly

The closest commercial airport is Medford, Oregon. It is served by Alaska, United, Delta, and Allegiant airlines. Plan your flight to arrive the day before your hike begins.

Car rentals are available at Medford. Also, the Galice Resort offers shuttle service from the airport to Grants Pass or to the resort (which is our meeting place). Shuttles are \$525 round trip, per van, so your ultimate cost depends on the number of people (1 to 14) who share the ride. For more information or reservations contact the Galice Resort at 541-476-3818.

### **Trip Shuttles**

Your trip fare includes transportation from Galice to the trailhead, and from trail's end back to Galice at the end of our journey. However, if you're planning to drive up or down the Coast after your river trip you may wish to leave directly from trail's end. When we meet in Galice our guides can assist you in arranging to have your car shuttled. Galice Resort conducts these shuttles. They charge \$115.00 (higher if the main road is not open and an alternate route is required).

### **Accommodations** (before and after your trip)

Rustic cabins and a lodge are available at the Galice Resort. Phone 541-476-3818. Also nearby is Morrison's Lodge (800-826-1963).

Camping is available nearby at Indian Mary Park, and at Almeda Bar Recreation Area, both within 5 miles of Galice. Reservations for both can be made through at [www.reserveamerica.com](http://www.reserveamerica.com).

## **What to Bring**

Most of the time the weather in the Rogue River canyon is warm and pleasant. But cool wet weather is a possibility, too. So please pay close attention to selecting your clothes and gear for your hike. Hopefully, you'll never need most of the cool-weather gear we recommend that you bring. But please 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 modern 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 should consist of polyester fleece (or wool), and will provide further warmth. The outer layer consists of a rain jacket and rain pants, or (as a second choice) a poncho. Rain gear made of modern waterproof, breathable fabrics such as Gore-Tex are best. But for a less expensive option coated nylon will work, too.

A surprisingly large percentage of heat loss occurs from our heads. For this reason a wool or synthetic hat will go a long way towards keeping you warm.

#### On warm or hot days

Shorts and a T-shirt may be worn, as well as a hat to keep the sun out of your eyes. But you may wish to wear a long-sleeved cotton shirt and cotton slacks, in order to ward off sunburn and brushes with poison oak.

#### On your feet

Different hikers require different degrees of support from their footgear. For most people we recommend light to mid weight hiking boots. Waterproof or water resistant boots are a plus on the Rogue trail. Whatever boots you wear, make sure that they're well broken in!

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 Texas.

#### In camp

You may want a change of shoes, and comfortable clothing for lounging about. 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 Galice. 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. Generally they will not be

accessible during the day. For gear that you wish to have with you on the trail, please bring along a daypack.

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, two-person backpacking style tents are available for \$40 per trip. Sleep kits (synthetic-fill sleeping bag, cotton liner, self-inflating sleep pad, and ground cloth) are also available for \$40 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**

### ✓ Clothing

- \_\_\_\_\_ hiking boots (make sure they're well broken in!)
- \_\_\_\_\_ shoes for camp
- \_\_\_\_\_ wool or synthetic "ski" hat — for cold/rainy days
- \_\_\_\_\_ wide-brimmed hat or baseball cap — for sunny days
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2-3 pair hiking socks (wool or synthetic recommended)
- \_\_\_\_\_ waterproof rain jacket and rain pants
- \_\_\_\_\_ Polypropylene or similar long underwear tops and bottoms (light or mid-weight suggested)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 warm sweater or jacket, polyester fleece or wool
- \_\_\_\_\_ swimsuit
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1 pair long pants
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 pair shorts
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 long-sleeved shirts
- \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 short-sleeved shirts
- \_\_\_\_\_ socks and underwear

### ✓ Camp Gear and Other Equipment

- \_\_\_\_\_ daypack
- \_\_\_\_\_ water bottle, canteen or camelback (2 quart total capacity recommended)
- \_\_\_\_\_ waterproof sunscreen, lip balm
- \_\_\_\_\_ sunglasses
- \_\_\_\_\_ 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, dry-skin lotion, prescription medicines
- \_\_\_\_\_ small flashlight or headlamp, with extra batteries

✓ Optional Items

- \_\_\_\_\_ trekking poles or walking staff
- \_\_\_\_\_ binoculars
- \_\_\_\_\_ camera
- \_\_\_\_\_ reading material
- \_\_\_\_\_ pen and journal or notebook
- \_\_\_\_\_ compact fishing gear
- \_\_\_\_\_ spare glasses, sunglasses
- \_\_\_\_\_ insect repellent
- \_\_\_\_\_ second warm jacket, especially for early spring hikes
- \_\_\_\_\_ 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). By the way, consumption of alcohol is prohibited during the day, but is okay once we arrive at camp.

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

## **Additional Information**

### **Your trip fare includes the following**

- The services of our professional trail and river guide staff.
- Transportation to the trailhead from Galice, and from trail's end back to Galice.
- 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. Coffee, tea, and cocoa are available at dinner and breakfast, and complementary wine is served with some dinners. Special dietary needs may be accommodated with advance notice.
- Waterproof river bags and boxes for your personal gear.
- Cups, plates, eating utensils, and camp chairs.
- Please note -
  - *Trip prices assume double occupancy. Extra fee for singles.*
  - Guides will be on the river and will meet you at lunch and at camp or lodge. A guide can be assigned to accompany you on the trail if you wish, however this service is not included in our standard trip prices and must be arranged in advance.

## **Fishing**

Fishing on the Rogue is generally only fair during spring and summer, but conditions improve in the fall. If you would like to fish you'll need an Oregon fishing license, which may be purchased at Oregon sporting goods stores, or at the Galice Resort.

## **Camping**

We select beautiful beaches, 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. Some camps are equipped with outhouses, while at other camps O.R.E. will set up a portable toilets. O.R.E. practices minimum impact camping, and the crew will instruct you on the simple steps we follow to protect the river.

## **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 between 8% and 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**

While in the area you may want to visit Crater Lake National Park, Oregon Caves National Monument, or the southern Oregon coast. You may also want to visit the nearby towns of Jacksonville and Ashland. Jacksonville, a National Historic Landmark, hosts the Britt Music Festival on weekends in July and August. The Britt Festival features classical, jazz, and bluegrass music under the stars. For information contact the Festival at 800-882-7488. Ashland is site of the renowned Oregon Shakespeare Festival. Because Shakespeare Festival performances often sell out, we recommend that you call well in advance for tickets and information (541-482-4331).

## **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 strongly recommend that you consider the purchase of travel insurance, which will 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 trail. In case of emergency they should contact the local Bureau of Land Management office (Grants Pass) at 541-618-2200 or the Forest Service office (Gold Beach) at 541-247-3600. They should also call the O.R.E. office at 800-827-1358.

