



The Salmon River
4 & 5 day trips



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The Salmon River is born high in the Sawtooth and Whitecloud Mountains of central Idaho. From these headwaters the river flows 425 miles to its confluence with the Snake River. With no dams along its length, the Salmon is the longest completely free flowing river in lower 48 states.

We run the lowest section of the river, where the Salmon has carved the second deepest canyon in North America. The rapids are thrilling, and many consider this to be our most exciting trip. Yet the rapids, while big, are relatively easy. The Salmon is an ideal place to join a paddle team, learn to row, or try an inflatable kayak.

Powerful rapids and large roller coaster waves aren't the Lower Salmon's only attractions. Majestic rock-walled canyons, deep blue skies and starry nights, the most beautiful white sand river beaches you'll find anywhere, and fabulous swimming in warm, crystalline water combine to make this a classic river trip.

Natural History

Over the millennia the Lower Salmon River has carved a canyon through layers of volcanic and metamorphic rock. Some of this rock is particularly hard and resistant to erosion, which has created spectacular, narrow gorges. Surrounding the river are semiarid grasslands, dotted here and there with stands of ponderosa pine and mountain mahogany.

Many species of both warm and cold water fish are found in the Salmon River, including steelhead, chinook salmon, rainbow trout, bass, and sturgeon. A wide variety of bird life fills the sky above. The Salmon boasts one of the highest concentrations of raptors in the world, including golden eagles, kestrels, and nighthawks. And many mammals may also be seen, including beaver, otter, minks, and raccoons. Cougar and bobcats, though rarely seen, live here as well.

Human History

The Lower Salmon is rich in history. The earliest inhabitants of the region were here 10,000 years ago, although permanent villages didn't begin to appear along the river some 5,000 years later. In modern times, the earliest contacts between the Nez Perce Indians and European explorers date from the early 1800's. The discovery of gold in 1860 brought a flood of miners to the Salmon canyon, and precipitated several confrontations, which erupted into the Nez Perce War.

Weather

The weather in the Salmon River canyon is usually very pleasant. This is a semiarid environment: hot and dry summers are the norm. The river water itself is cool early in July, but as river levels drop the water warms to the high 60's.

Below is climate data for the nearby town of Lewiston. The river canyon is generally a few degrees cooler.

	<i>July</i>	<i>Aug.</i>	<i>Sept.</i>
Average daytime high temp.	89	88	77
Average nighttime low temp.	59	59	51
Average monthly rainfall	0.70"	0.80"	0.80"

For More Information

For more information about the Lower Salmon River contact our office to request our natural and human history pamphlet. A map, The Lower Salmon River Boater's Guide (which includes history and natural history information as well) may be purchased from the BLM: (208-962-3245), or at the Hells Canyon Recreation Center on Hwy 129 outside Clarkston (509-758-1957). For additional, in-depth reading we recommend the following books:

- River of No Return by Carrey and Conley; Backeddy Books, 1978.
- "I Will fight No More Forever: " Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce War by Merrill Beal; University of Washington Press, 1963.
- Roadside Geology of Idaho, by Alt and Hyndman; Mountain Press, 1989.

Trip Itinerary

First day

We meet at 7:30 AM at the Red Lion Hotel in Lewiston, Idaho. (Please have your breakfast before our meeting time, and arrive in your river clothes.) Our Lead Guide will meet you in the motel lobby. If in doubt about where to find us, ask at the desk, and they will direct you. After a brief orientation you will pack your things into our river bags, and park your vehicles at the motel. We will then go by bus to our launch site. Depending upon river level, we begin our river trip at either Hammer Creek or Pine Bar. (A start at Pine Bar shortens our trip by 10 miles -- appropriate for low water trips.) Once we arrive at our launch site, you'll meet the rest of our guide crew, and they'll conduct a short safety and orientation briefing, which will include instruction on paddle and rowing techniques as needed. We're normally on our way downstream by mid-morning.

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 begin our journey downstream.

We're on the river an average of four to five hours per day. Along the way we stop for a riverside picnic lunch. We may also stop to swim, to explore historic sites, to scout rapids. 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 swim, fish, read, or nap. (There are a number of places to hike, but for the most part hiking opportunities along the lower Salmon river are limited.)

Last day

When we meet the confluence of the Snake River on our last day, we will pull over and have our final lunch together. The guides will unload all your bags and gear in preparation of your next part of the trip. At this point, a jet boat will arrive and take you on a scenic tour down the Snake river and through Hells Canyon. We typically arrive at The Army Corps of Engineers Park in Clarkston, WA, our take-out point, between 2:00 and 3:30 P.M. Once we've unpacked, you'll board a van or bus for the ride back to Lewiston (10 min).



Trip highlights

The Lower Salmon offers clear water, hot sunny weather, fun roller coaster style waves, and huge sandy beaches that are perfect for camping and swimming.

During the course of our 72 mile journey we'll wind our way through open canyons, and float through four scenic wilderness gorges. These are Green Canyon (at mile 7), Cougar Canyon (mile 19), Snow Hole Canyon (mile 24), and Blue Canyon (mile 47). Each has a distinct character, but all are spectacular.

Our first day on the river begins with mild rapids which are ideal for a warm up, especially for those behind the oars or paddling an inflatable kayak. Over the course of the next several days we'll encounter numerous exciting rapids. The Lower Salmon is a large volume river. This means the rapids are large, at most water levels, too: big, rolling rapids with towering waves. Demons Drop, Half and Half, Lorna's Lulu, Snow Hole, and China are a few of the more exciting drops, but there are others, as well. At midsummer flows most of the rapids are class III, with one or two class IV drops. Early in July during a high water year, many of the rapids become class IV thrillers. (Rapids are rated I through VI. Class I indicates the smallest possible rapid, while VI indicates steep, turbulent, highly dangerous rapids and waterfalls.)

After four days on the Salmon we meet the Snake River at the edge of Hell's Canyon, the deepest gorge in North America. We'll encounter a few rapids on the Snake, but for the most part this section of river is placid. This segment of our journey presents us with a great opportunities to unwind, socialize, watch for golden eagles and bighorn sheep, and gaze up at the canyon walls.

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 per oar raft; 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.



Stand-up paddle board

Stand-up Paddle Boards (SUPs) are great fun to paddle. You don't need much whitewater to have a great time with a SUP. For safety we allow their use in flat water and selected small rapids only, but trust us, they're plenty exciting even in when the river is mild!



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, SUP 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 meet at 7:30 AM on the day your trip begins, in the lobby of the Red Lion Hotel, 621 21st St., Lewiston, Idaho. Lewiston is roughly 325 miles east of Portland, Oregon, and about 95 miles south of Spokane, Washington.

Getting To and From the River

✓ If you Drive

Lewiston is at the crossroads of highways 12, 95, and 195, in western Idaho, not far from the corner where Washington, Oregon, and Idaho meet. From Portland take I-84 past Boardman to US-730. Take US-730 into Washington, and turn right onto US-12. Follow US-12 through Walla Walla to Lewiston. Once in Lewiston, US-12 becomes Main Street. Continue east then turn right on 21st Street. The Red Lion is 1/10th of a mile further along on your left.

✓ If you Fly

There's a regional airport in Lewiston. Service is provided by Alaska, Horizon, and Delta Airlines. Plan your flight to arrive the day before your river trip begins.

The Red Lion provides free airport shuttle service to guests staying at the hotel. Their shuttle bus meets all flights. Car rentals are also available in Lewiston.

Trip Shuttles

Your trip fare includes transportation to and from the river. A chartered bus will transport us from Lewiston to our put-in near Whitebird, Idaho, a 1.5 to 2 hour trip. At trip's end we will be transported from our take-out back to Lewiston, a one hour ride.

Accommodations (before and after your trip)

We recommend the Red Lion Hotel in Lewiston, which is our meeting place for the trip. For reservations phone 800-232-6730. They offer a discount to our customers, so be sure to tell them you're taking a river trip with O.R.E.

What to Bring

Weather in the Salmon River canyon is typically very warm to hot, and little rain falls. Still, cool wet weather can occur on any trip. And it can be quite chilly when it's overcast, breezy or rainy, especially when you're in a raft. So please pay close attention to selecting your clothes and gear for your river adventure. Hopefully, you will never need most of the cool-weather gear we recommend that you bring. But please do bring it, just in case!

All of your personal camping gear is provided for your trip. Our standard trip fare includes use of 3-person tent (for 2 people), sleeping bag, sleeping bag liner and "paco" river style sleeping pad. (Deluxe kits available, includes cot & bigger tent).

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 Gore-tex are best. But for a less expensive option coated nylon will work, too. Wetsuits are generally not needed.

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. If you are particularly sensitive to the sun you may want to bring lightweight cotton clothes (such as a surgeon's outfit) for sun protection.

On your feet:

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

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.

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.

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.

How to pack it

Pack your gear in a manner appropriate for your journey to Lewiston. 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

Deluxe sleep kits (includes cot) & deluxe tents (larger tent holds 2 cots) available.

Equipment Checklist

✓ River Gear

_____ swimsuit or shorts and T-shirt (avoid cotton shorts)

_____ tennis shoes or sport sandals

_____ wool or synthetic "ski" hat — for cool/rainy days

_____ wide-brimmed hat (preferably with chin-strap), or baseball cap

- _____ 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

- _____ 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

- _____ 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.
- Transportation to the boat launch from Lewiston, and from the take out point back to Lewiston. 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 can be accommodated with advance notice.
- Durable, professional quality rafts and river running equipment, including U.S. Coast Guard Approved lifejackets.
- 3-person tent (for 2 people), sleeping bag, sleeping bag liner and "paco" river style sleeping pad. (Deluxe kits available, includes cot & bigger tent).
- Waterproof river bags and boxes for your personal gear.
- Cups, plates, and eating utensils.
- Camp chairs.

Fishing

Fishing on the Salmon is generally only fair for bass and trout during the summer (although fishing improves in the fall). If you would like to fish you'll need an Idaho fishing license, which may be purchased at a number of sporting goods stores in Lewiston.

Camping

We select beautiful beaches 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

While in the area consider a drive up Highway 12 along the Lochsa River. Along the Lochsa you'll find many lovely trails, good camping, and a number of excellent natural hot springs. Or pay a visit to nearby Hells Canyon National Recreation Area, the deepest canyon in North America. For more information on Hells Canyon contact the HCNRA at P.O. Box 699,

Clarkston, WA 99403, (509) 758-1957. Also consider a visit to the Nez Perce National Historic Park just east of Lewiston.

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 Bureau of Land Management office (Cottonwood, Idaho) at 208-962-3245. They should also call the O.R.E. office at 503-563-1500

