

# Middle & Lower Owyhee River Whitewater Rafting Adventure



## 2011 Dates

*March 12, 19, 26*

*April 2, 9, 16, 23, 30*

*May 7, 14, 21, 28*

*June 4, 11, 18, 25*

## TRIP HIGHLIGHTS

- 7 or 8 Days Class III, IV, and V+ whitewater rafting
- 6 or 7 Nights Luxury beach camping with delicious river meals
- Stunning remote canyon scenery
- Optional hiking, fishing, kayaking, and hot spring soaks
- Fishing opportunities for trout and bass can be good dependent upon water levels
- Appropriate for ages 16 and up



## Trip Overview

Our combination Middle & Lower Owyhee expedition is truly one of the nation's wildest river expeditions. We'll venture deep into the remote Owyhee mountains to run Class V+ whitewater while exploring remarkable desert canyon scenery, with its bizarre geological formations, abundant wildlife and natural hot springs.

It is rare to encounter more than one or two other parties on these spring trips. Floating the Owyhee provides an exciting opportunity to see a wild desert canyon in full bloom. Lupine, Indian paintbrush, and other wild flowers abound. Canadian geese and their goslings are seen frequently along the river. Prairie falcons, eagles, and other raptors soar overhead. Bighorn sheep and pronghorn antelope may be glimpsed scrambling over the rocky talus slopes.

The Owyhee runs in the springtime between mid March and mid June (in some years the season is shorter). Water levels can be variable and occasionally we need to move these trips to Hells Canyon if the water is too low.

The first person to book each trip chooses the length of that trip. The 8-day trip allows for a little more leisurely pace, with more time to hike and explore the canyon.

## Difficulty Rating

The Middle Owyhee is VERY CHALLENGING, the Lower Owyhee is EASY. Due to the spring rafting, this trip has potential for inclement weather.

## Types of Water Craft NWV Offers:

**Oar Rafts:** In these boats, the guide sits in the middle of the boat with oars and has complete control of the raft. You can paddle if you wish, but paddling is optional at all times. In oar boats, you can sit back, enjoy the scenery and let the guide do all the work if you wish. This is our most relaxing and least participative option.

**Paddle-Assist Rafts:** In paddle-assist boats, the guide has oars (typically mounted in the back of the boat) but needs paddling help during rapids and occasionally during some of the flat water. This is the most popular boat for people who wish to paddle during their trip.

**Paddle Rafts:** Our paddle boats have a guide in the back with a paddle (no oars) and the guide steers, but provides no power. Paddling is required the entire day. Due to the nature of our rivers being big volume pool and drop rivers (very different from small volume technical East Coast & California rivers), and the tendency for upstream wind, this option is only appropriate for people who really want to paddle all day long. We have found that most people who request paddle rafts are actually happier in paddle-assist rafts.

**Inflatable Kayaks:** Thrill-seekers can brave our biggest rapids on their own in one of our single or double "duckies." In smaller rapids and calmer waters, the kayaks are great for anybody (including younger kids) who wants to get a little closer to the action. They do not require experience or knowledge of how to "Eskimo-roll". If you flip the kayak, you fall out and swim, we come rescue you and everyone is happy!

Once you book your trip, we will have you complete a trip questionnaire that will help us plan the right mix of boats for the entire group on your launch date.

## Weather

The weather in Southeast Oregon during spring is typically warm, but there can be occasional days of chilly weather or rain. Up in the mountains, we receive many feet of snow in the winter that offer great recreation opportunities and help supply our rivers with melt water come springtime.

## Detailed Trip Itinerary

Please plan to fly into Boise the day before our trip departs. We typically will meet in Jordan Valley the evening before we launch, (although sometimes we can meet people in Boise the afternoon before the trip). Here we can answer any last minute questions and introduce you to the guides and other guests.

**Day 1:** We will pick you up from your hotel in Jordan Valley at 7:00 a.m. the morning of our trip. The drive to Three Forks is on a rough road, and can be quite an adventure if the weather has been bad recently. Once we arrive at our launch site, while our guides will rig our equipment, you will

participate in a very thorough safety orientation to inform you of the hazards to be aware of along the river.

Right out of the gate, we'll hit some huge Class IV and V rapids, including "Ledges". We'll stop to have lunch on the river, and after a few more hours of awesome scenery and exciting whitewater, you'll arrive in camp and enjoy a wonderful meal prepared by the guides. In camp you will have a chance to gather around the campfire to get to know each other better and start to slip into that relaxing thing we call "river time". *L, D... NWV Camp*

As we enter the Owyhee canyon in the afternoon, our guides share colorful stories of the history of the canyon and its inhabitants. We usually arrive at camp in the late afternoon. Our camps are typically on sandy beaches with access to spectacular hiking trails. Our camp crew has already set up camp and done all the work, so there is plenty of time to explore the canyon, fish for rainbow trout and bass, play horseshoes or bocce ball, or just relax in camp.

Appetizers and a delicious dinner are served in the evening. Following dinner, we continue to unwind and begin to enter into the flow of the trip—something we call “river time.” Dessert is always baked fresh in our Dutch ovens, and the night ends with warm companionship and a sky full of brilliant stars. *B, L, D...NWV Camp*

**A Typical Day:** These days follow the same general pattern as Day 1. After breakfast, we return to the river and continue our downstream journey. Each day features numerous rapids (mostly Class Vs on the Middle Owyhee and Class IIIs and IVs on the lower Owyhee), several planned stops and amazing scenery. During the trip, we have the chance to stop at two hot springs and soak away any spring chills. If the water levels are right, we even camp next to one of the hot springs!

Adventurous spirits looking for a little more excitement may choose to paddle in our inflatable kayaks during the day, following the guides through the rapids. With each day, we find the river slowly seeps further and further into our soul. With each night, we become more relaxed and more in touch with our surroundings. *B, L, D...NWV Camp*

**Last Day of Trip:** After reaching the beginning of the Owyhee Reservoir, we hook up our small motor and travel the last few miles on the reservoir before

reaching our take-out at Leslie Gulch. After loading the boats and equipment, we begin the drive out of the Owyhee canyon. *B, L*

## Trip Cost

8 Day... \$1949 per person

7 Day... \$1799 per person

## What's Included

- All river and camping equipment including sleeping bags
- Meals as noted in the itinerary (*B=breakfast, L=Lunch, D=Dinner*)
- Professional, experienced and fun-loving river guides
- Private tents for each 2 people (solo travelers have single tents)
- Thick sleeping pads and sleeping bags (if requested)
- Camp chairs and tables
- Solar heated river shower
- Large shade tarp to escape the rare rain storm or the sun, and for covered dining

## What's Not Included

The cost of the trip does not include airfare to Boise, Idaho; transportation from the airport to Jordan Valley; lodging the nights before or after your trip; optional gratuities, and applicable taxes.

Tipping is not required, but is generally customary if you feel your guides have worked hard and provided you with a wonderful experience. While any amount is appreciated, a gratuity of \$20 per guest per day is considered a nice tip. For multi-day trips on which a crew of several guides has worked, your gratuity can be given to any of the guides and they will pool and share all tips equally.

## Why Northwest Voyageurs

**Safety:** The most important part of any outdoor adventure is safety. Safety comes first and foremost from having experienced, well trained guides who know how to avoid dangerous situations and minimize risk. All outdoor adventures have inherent risks associated with them. Our job as your outfitter is to minimize that risk as much as possible. In 25 years of guiding whitewater trips, we have never had a serious injury. Our safety record is impeccable and speaks for itself.

**Exceptional People:** When we consider hiring anyone in our company, we want to ensure first and foremost that the person is extraordinary. Maybe we are selfish - we like to surround ourselves with inspiring people! We know we can teach almost anyone the skills to row a boat, or work at our front desk. But we can't teach people to understand people and how to exceed their expectations. This trait is inborn and we search long and hard to find these people.

**Experience:** Experienced guides bring more to the table than a safe trip. They bring deep knowledge of our rivers and destinations - and they also know how to maximize the fun-factor while minimizing risk. We boast some of the most experienced guides in the industry, as evidenced by a fair amount of white and grey hair in our guide staff. We also boast a very high level of education in our guides and staff in a variety of fields.

**Service:** Our owners have extremely high expectations of themselves and our staff. We differentiate ourselves on providing an extraordinarily high level of service on our trips and in our lodge. Our goal is to solve your problems and issues before you have them and to smile the entire time. Ultimately, it's our passion for sharing the outdoors with people who may be out of their element that drives us to provide this level of service. It makes your experience that much more rewarding - and makes you want to come back again and again.

**Professionalism:** While our guides are fun-loving and relaxed, they are also professionals. They've been trained in customer service and are able to handle difficult situations with grace and poise.

**Delicious Gourmet Food:** One of the elements of our trips that stay with our guests the longest is our amazing food. People are in awe of what we can create in the middle of the wilderness. Dutch-oven cooking, fresh baked

desserts, lots of variety, and often a bit too much food! We can also accommodate any special dietary requests with advanced notice to ensure your enjoyment of our meals. Our menus vary with seasonal availability but here is an example of what you may enjoy on your journey:

*Breakfast:* Made-to-order omelets, banana walnut pancakes, home-made "Egg McMuffins," fresh fruit salad, and only the finest gourmet coffee - we are coffee snobs!

*Lunch:* New York Style Deli spread, smoked salmon and bagels, chicken salad on fresh croissants, taco salad, all with a selection of fresh fruit, veggies and dip, chips and a Katy's homemade cookies.

*Dinner:* Lime-dill salmon grilled to perfection with sautéed garlic asparagus, juicy steaks with giant Idaho potatoes and all the trimmings, chicken pesto fettucine with roasted red peppers, freshly baked breads, fresh green salads,.

*Dessert:* Pineapple upside-down cake, fresh picked blackberry cobbler, fudge brownies, strawberry shortcake or even a birthday cake - all baked fresh on the river.

## Getting Here

**Flight Information:** Most guests choose to fly into Boise, Idaho and then rent a car to meet in Jordan Valley the evening before our launch. All major carriers except American Airlines fly into Boise.

### Directions to Jordan Valley, Oregon

- From the Boise airport, drive west on I-84 for approximately 14 miles to the Highway 55 SOUTH exit, near Nampa.
- Follow Hwy 55 South for approximately 18 miles to Hwy 95 South.
- Follow 95 South for approximately 44 miles to Jordan Valley.

## Accommodations Before and After Your Trip

### Owyhee River Lodging Options

We typically meet our guests the night before in Jordan Valley for our Owyhee trips. Lodging options are limited:

**Sahara Motel:** Simple motel in town. Room from \$40-55.  
(541) 586-2501

**Basque Station Motel:** Simple motel near town. Room from \$40-55.  
(541) 586-2244

If you wish to stay in Boise before or after your trip, our Boise hotel recommendations are all close to downtown where there are many good restaurants to choose from.

**The Owyhee Plaza Hotel**  
1109 Main St.  
Boise, ID 83702  
(208) 343-4611

**The Best Western Safari Inn**  
1070 W Grove St  
Boise, ID 83702  
(208) 344-6556

**The Grove Hotel**  
245 S Capitol Blvd  
Boise, ID 83702  
(208) 333-8000  
\*Nicest hotel in Boise

## What to Bring

### **Spring and Fall Rafting (April, May, June, September, October)**

If you have decided to join us in the spring or fall for cooler weather, please pay special attention to the packing list for those seasons. The water and air temperatures are cooler and the chances of rain are higher. As we mentioned above, even though we hope we never have to use the bad weather gear, it is important that you bring it along, just in case.

During cooler weather, it is always appropriate to wear quick dry, non-cotton clothing to keep you warm even when you are wet. The well known saying “COTTON KILLS” applies to all of our spring and fall trips. Synthetic fabrics such as polypropylene, capilene, and polyester fleece dry quickly and keep you warm when wet. Wool is a good and less expensive option however it tends to dry more slowly and is less comfortable.

When planning your clothing for cool weather rafting, think layers. The first layer is often your long underwear, which provides warmth and wicks away moisture. Again, the newer synthetic fabrics are an excellent choice. The middle layer is often a fleece, heavier or lighter weight depending upon the expected weather conditions. The outer layer is typically a water proof or resistant layer. Since most of our body’s heat loss is through the top of our head, we highly recommend wearing a synthetic or wool hat.

If the weather and water temperatures call for wetsuits, Northwest Voyageurs will provide them. We offer a “farmer John” style wet suit (one piece, long pants, sleeveless front zipper).

## How to Pack

We supply each person with one large overnight bag. For items you may need during the day, we supply one medium sized bag for two people to share. Your overnight bag has plenty of room for your sleeping bag and one good sized duffle bag for your personal items. (Note, you can not typically fit suitcases in this bag.) This bag should be packed knowing that you will not have access to it until you arrive at that evening’s camp.

Your second bag is a day bag which you will have access to during the day. This smaller bag is typically shared with one other person and is large enough to hold things you will need access to during the day such as a camera, sun screen, warm fleece or rain jacket etc.

We use water tight NRS Dry Bags. When packed and sealed correctly, these bags will stay dry under most conditions. Our guides will help you to ensure they are sealed well. To fully protect your gear, particularly items that can’t get wet such as cameras, medications etc., you may want to bring along several zip lock bags for double protection. If you plan to bring an expensive camera, we recommend purchasing a dry box such as a pelican case. See Detailed Packing List on last page of this packet.

## Fishing

The Owyhee River features excellent fishing opportunities. Opportunities are available to fish from the bank during lunch and in camp. You can often fish from our boats during the day. You will need to bring your own fishing tackle and obtain a valid Oregon fishing license.

Fly fishing recommended gear:

- 5-6 weight fly rod
- 5-6 weight floating line w/ medium to fast sinking tip-Bass flies: Varies. Try purple, green and white poppers. Streamer patterns.
- Trout flies: Caddis patterns, midges.

Spinning Gear recommended:

- Average sized trout rod with light tackle, or ultralight rod
- 2-4 pound test line
- Lures: Spinners, mepps, spoons, jigs

Northwest Voyageurs can provide rental spin fishing equipment, including a supply of lures, for \$25 per rod per day. Rental equipment is in limited supply and must be reserved in advance.

## Recommended Reading List

Owyhee Trails: The West's Forgotten Corner Mike Hanley, Ellis Lucia

## Emergencies

Should your friends or family have an emergency, please ask them to contact us directly at the lodge at (208) 628-3021. We will do our best to get any appropriate message to you. It is often exceedingly difficult for us to reach our trips with a message, as we are often in remote, roadless wilderness areas. You will be responsible for any cost associated with retrieving you early from a trip or getting a message to you. So please be sure to let your friends and family know that they should be very clear with us the urgency of the message.

## Payment and Cancellation Policy

Northwest Voyageurs requires a non-refundable \$400 deposit from each person to secure your reservation on this trip. Final payments are due no later than 90 days prior to the departure date. If you find you must cancel your trip, please notify Northwest Voyageurs in writing as soon as possible. If we have not received your final payment by the due date, and if we have not received written notification of your need to cancel your reservation, Northwest Voyageurs may at its sole discretion charge the remaining invoice balance to your credit card on file or consider the reservation cancelled and release your spaces.

All payments are non-refundable. However, if you notify us in writing of your need to cancel your trip at least 90 days prior to your departure, we will hold payments on your account less the initial deposit for a period of one year. If you notify us less than 90 days prior to your departure, all payments will be forfeited. Please understand that once you sign up, we lose the right to sell your space to another individual. Therefore, we regretfully cannot make exceptions to our cancellation policies. Northwest Voyageurs **STRONGLY** recommends purchasing travel insurance for all multi-day reservations.

## Travel Insurance

Travel insurance can cover unforeseen costs or problems such as lost baggage, cancelled flights, and the costs of canceling your trip due to illness or injury. Northwest Voyageurs **STRONGLY** recommends purchasing travel insurance for this trip. It is very important to consider purchasing your insurance within 15 days of making your reservation, as there are additional benefits included in the policy including a waiver of pre-existing medical conditions. For more information, or to purchase travel insurance, please visit:

<http://www.travelinsure.com/what/selecthigh.htm?32922>

## Other Questions

If you have any further questions, please feel free to contact us by email at [info@voyageurs.com](mailto:info@voyageurs.com) or by phone at (800) 727-9977 and we will be more than happy to assist you in any way that we can.

## Detailed Packing List:

### Gear & Equipment List

- Sleeping bag (if you bring your own)
- Camp pillow
- Flashlight or headlamp
- Waterproof camera & film
- 2 - 1 Litre water bottles, refillable during the day
- Light-weight duffel bag for clothes – used to put into our dry bags
- Several zip lock type bags for personal items

### Clothing and personal items

- Pack for layering: non-cotton warm layers, poly-propylene underwear, fleece, a warm coat, etc.
- Warm Goretex/waterproof jacket and pants or good quality rain jacket and pants (we can provide splash jackets and pants if needed)
- 2 Warm tops (fleece or wool)
- 2-3 Pair pants (jeans, fleece, carhartts, for in camp)
- 2 Sets long underwear (synthetic, quick dry fabrics like polypropylene, capilene, and polyester fleece)
- 2-3 Pairs wool or synthetic socks
- Non-cotton winter hat and gloves
- 2 Short-sleeve t-shirts
- 1 Long-sleeve t-shirts or old dress shirts (for sun protection)
- 1-2 Pair quick dry shorts
- Bathing suit
- 2-3 Pairs of socks
- Personal undergarments
- Sunglasses with retainer straps
- Plenty of waterproof sunscreen
- Lip balm or chapstick
- Towel, bio-degradable camp soap, lotion and personal toiletry items
- Floppy hat, baseball hat, or visor for sun protection\*
- Sandals with heel strap or water shoes
- Walking shoes for in camp and short hikes

### Optional Items to Bring

- Fishing license
- Fishing rod and tackle
- Lightweight hiking boots
- Camera or camcorder
- Musical instrument
- Alcoholic beverages - no glass bottles please. If you wish to bring wine, we recommend pouring it into a lexan “nalgene” bottle prior to departure.

### Northwest Voyageurs Provides

- Life jackets
- Tents
- Thick sleeping pads
- Sleeping bag (if requested)
- Wet suits (if necessary)
- Camp chairs and tables
- Dry bags for your personal gear
- Camera boxes
- First aid supplies
- All cooking equipment and meals
- Ice and mixers for alcohol (please request any specific mixers)

### Please Do Not Bring:

- Radios (personal headphones OK)
- Valuables
- Pets
- Firearms

### **Where can I buy these items?**

Many of the other items can be purchased from a variety of general stores or local sporting goods stores. For specialty river or camping items including synthetic clothing, some of the many vendors to consider are:

*Northwest River Supply:* [www.nrsweb.com](http://www.nrsweb.com)

*REI:* [www.rei.com](http://www.rei.com)

*EMS (Eastern Mountain Sports):* [www.ems.com](http://www.ems.com)