

PHANTOM RANCH TO DIAMOND CREEK



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TRIP PLANNER

Please use this Trip Planner as a resource for general information on your Grand Canyon adventure. The information enclosed covers most everything you'll need to know before your trip. Of course, if you have questions that are not answered in this packet, we are happy to help! Just call 1-800-346-6277 in the USA or Canada or 1-209-736-4677 if outside the USA or Canada to speak with an adventure consultant, or e-mail us at info@oars.com.

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TRIP PREPARATION CHECK LIST

- Purchase Travel Insurance:** We strongly recommend you protect yourself, your belongings, and your vacation with the purchase of a short-term traveler's policy. A trip cancellation policy covers your non-refundable payments, in most cases, should you have to cancel your trip at the last minute due to illness or injury. As with most major travel arrangements, there are cancellation fees that will apply regardless of why or when you might need to cancel.
- Trip Forms:** Each participant will need to complete the enclosed trip forms (Guest Registration and Risk Forms and any forms or documentation required for your trip) and return them to our office as soon as possible, and no later than 90 days prior to your trip departure. If you are reserving your trip within 90 days, please complete the forms immediately.
- Reserve flights and/or shuttles:** Confirm travel arrangements to and from your departure and return cities.
- Hotel Reservations:** Reserve overnight lodging for the night prior to your trip, if applicable. You may also wish to reserve a room for the night that you return from the river. It is important to make reservations early as rooms may be limited during peak travel periods.
- Physical Conditioning:** Your outdoor adventure will be an active participatory trip. Regular exercise prior to your departure will certainly add to your enjoyment. Take the time to get into shape with a consistent fitness routine.
- Payments:** A second deposit is due by November 1 of the year prior to your trip. Final payment is due in our office 90 days prior to your trip departure. *(If you are traveling as part of a charter group, please note that final payments are due 120 days prior to departure.)*
- Final Packet:** Approximately 110 days prior to your trip departure, a final packet of information along with an invoice will be sent to you including a mile by mile guide book of the Colorado River.

TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

You will need to get yourself to the South Rim the day prior to the start of your river trip. At the end of the trip we will return to Flagstaff. We therefore recommend using Flagstaff as your beginning and ending travel destination from your home city, then take a one-way van shuttle to the South Rim to begin your trip.

Meeting Place & Time

- The day before your trip we will meet at 7:00 PM in the lobby of the Maswik Lodge on the South Rim in Grand Canyon National Park for a pre-trip meeting. You will have the opportunity to meet your hike escort, others on your trip, and ask any last-minute questions about the hike. The hike escort will also reconfirm the meeting time for the following morning.



Getting to Flagstaff/South Rim

By Air to Flagstaff continuing by Shuttle Van or Taxi to the South Rim:

- US Airways (800-428-4322 / www.usairways.com) has flights into Flagstaff via Phoenix.

Van service from the Flagstaff Amtrak Station to the South Rim takes about 1 hour 45 minutes. Shuttle service can be arranged through the following company. (*Advance reservations required & prices subject to change without notice*): Arizona Shuttle (800-888-2749) / www.arizonashuttle.com) One-way fare: \$29 per person.

If the van shuttle times do not accommodate your travel schedule, you may wish to check with one of the following taxi companies that offers service between Flagstaff and the South Rim:

Allstar Taxi: 928-213-8294

A Friendly Cab: 800-853-4445 or 928-774-4444 / www.afriendlycab.com

By Van from Phoenix

- If you fly into Phoenix Sky Harbor International Airport, you can arrange to be met at the airport and transferred by van shuttle to Flagstaff and the South Rim. The trip takes about 5 hours and can be arranged through Arizona Shuttle listed above (*advance reservations required*).

By Car

- We suggest you leave your car at the Radisson Woodlands Hotel in Flagstaff. They have a long-term lot, which is complimentary to O.A.R.S. passengers who stay at the Radisson Woodlands Hotel before or after their trip.

- **Approximate driving times:**

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Las Vegas to South Rim | 275 miles | 5 hours |
| Los Angeles to Flagstaff | 466 miles | 7½ hours |
| Phoenix to Flagstaff | 146 miles | 2 ½ hours |
| Flagstaff to Las Vegas | 250 miles | 4 ½ hours |

By Bus or Train

Greyhound and Amtrak both service Flagstaff. Amtrak arrives each evening from the East and every morning from the West.

After Your Trip

After your trip, you will be dropped off at the Radisson Woodlands Hotel in Flagstaff. You will usually arrive there between 2:00 and 3:00 PM.

Pre- and Post-Trip Accommodations

We recommend that you make reservations well in advance in order to guarantee lodging. (Pre- and post-trip lodging is not included in the trip cost).

At the South Rim Before the Trip

The South Rim has a number of lodges to choose from. Along the rim, closest to the Bright Angel trailhead are the El Tovar, Bright Angel, Thunderbird and Kachina Lodges. Set back about two blocks from the rim is the Maswik Lodge and about 2 miles away is the Yavapai Lodge. For reservations, call Xanterra Parks & Resorts (888-297-2757) or check their web site at www.grandcanyonlodges.com. Because this is a national park, the lodges fill **very** quickly, so we recommend booking early. Reservations can be made up to 13 months in advance.

In Flagstaff After the Trip

- Radisson Woodlands Hotel
1175 W. Route 66, Flagstaff, AZ 86001
800-333-3333 (Radisson Nationwide Reservations) or 928-773-8888 (Flagstaff)
\$95/night (single or double occupancy). *Prices subject to change without notice.*

To make a reservation, call one of the numbers above and mention that you are traveling with O.A.R.S. to receive the special rate. The Radisson also offers complimentary van transportation to the airport and Amtrak station.

TRIP DESCRIPTION

Hiking Down to the River from the South Rim

The hike from the South Rim to the river is a serious, long (9.7 miles) and strenuous hike. This hike takes you into one of the deepest canyons in the world with an elevation decrease of more than 4500 feet. People almost inevitably underestimate the difficulty of hiking the Bright Angel Trail. Temperatures on the trail can easily reach 110 degrees or more during the summer months. Transport of your personal gear by mule is provided, but you still need to make the hike carrying a daypack holding your water bottles, breakfast, snacks, camera, etc. The extra weight of your daypack significantly increases the stress and amount of effort exerted. You need to take the time to get into very good physical condition before you begin your trip. The hike to the river from the

South Rim generally takes four-seven hours. Hiking into the canyon may appear to be "easier" than hiking out because your body naturally propels downward, but the punishing consequences to your body are greater than hiking uphill. The combination of your legs holding back your body weight and the pressure from stepping down and across numerous log "stairs" can create a great strain on your knees and joints. ***Please Note: This hike should only be undertaken by those in very good physical condition. It is not recommended for anyone in poor general health, who is elderly, has heart or lung disease, is overweight, or is not physical fit. If you have any of these conditions or are unsure whether you are in good enough shape for this hike, we strongly urge you to get your physician's approval for this trip.***

As required by the National Park Service, we have a hiking escort accompany our guests on the hike into the canyon. We use the Bright Angel Trail which has the advantage of water, some shade and easy accessibility. Essentially you hike at your own pace, so you may hike as fast or as slow as you like, although during the summer months you want to complete the hike as early in the day as possible to avoid the greatest heat.

The Bright Angel Trail is a well-traveled, well-defined, maintained trail and offers some spectacular views of the canyon. It is also patrolled by National Park Service rangers. Drinking water is available (subject to pipeline breaks) throughout the year at Indian Gardens and Bright Angel Campground. Water is available seasonally (May-September) at 1.5 mile and 3 mile rest houses from the rim.

To ease your hike into the canyon, O.A.R.S. has prepaid (this is included in your trip cost) for 30 lbs. of your gear to be carried by mule while you are hiking. Please use a duffel bag (or similar soft bag) to pack your gear in. A duffel with the ***approximate*** dimensions of 24" x 12" x 11" should hold all of your gear and keep you under the weight limit. You are welcome to use a different size duffel however ***your duffel bag must not exceed 30 lbs. in weight, nor be larger than 36"x20"x13"*** and it ***CANNOT*** be several small bags tied together. If heavier than 30 pounds, the fee to transport a second duffel will be charged.

While most people hike down to the river, some people prefer riding passenger mules. Keep in mind that as a rider you must be in good physical condition. Riding requires upper and lower body strength as well as good overall muscular condition. The mule service costs approximately \$850 for up to five riders and must be reserved in advance. If you decide on this option, you should make a reservation as soon as possible since they often book 12 months in advance. For reservations, call Xanterra Parks & Resorts at 888-297-2757. ***Please note that the weight restrictions for each individual passenger on the mule ride may not exceed 200 lbs. (Not including your gear weight.)***

Camp Life

After each active day on the river, we pull ashore to camp for the night. Upon arrival, our first task is to unload the boats using a fire line of crew and passengers to expedite the process. Individuals then collect their waterproof bags and locate an area on the beach to camp for the night. On the first night in camp, a crew member will give a demonstration on setting up a tent, which you'll see is quick and easy. The guides will set up the kitchen and central dining/seating area with camp chairs. They will also locate a secluded area away from camp to set up the portable toilet, where privacy is assured. As dinner is being cooked by the guides, hors d'oeuvres will be served and you will have an opportunity to relax, enjoy a drink if you wish, and reflect on the day with your fellow traveling companions.

In the morning, the first wake-up call will let you know that coffee, hot water for tea or cocoa, juice, fresh fruit and cold cereal are ready on the hors d'oeuvres table. You can fill your mug and grab a bite, then begin to pack up your personal belongings and sleep gear as the guides prepare breakfast. After breakfast is served, the entire camp will be broken down and packing will be completed. The gear will then be loaded onto the boats and we'll head downstream to see what new adventures await us.

Meals

The meals we serve are hearty and delicious, complete with fresh ingredients and a variety of foods. A typical morning on a multi-day trip might start with French toast, bacon, fruit, orange juice, and coffee or tea. Lunch might be a delicious spread of cold cuts and cheeses with several types of bread, or pitas stuffed with veggies and hummus. There are always cookies and a cooling drink to top it off. At dinner, our guides' cooking skills truly shine—sizzling steaks or salmon, chicken enchiladas, and delicious pasta dishes are all part of their repertoire. Dinner generally includes a salad, and desserts are frequent. Hors d'oeuvres are a pleasant surprise before many meals.

Dietary Restrictions

We need to know as soon as possible about any dietary requirements we should consider in planning your trip. If you have food allergies or restrictions, we will do our best to accommodate your needs. **However, some specific needs can only be met if we charge you a supplemental menu fee to cover our increased costs.** If you are a vegetarian or vegan and you let us know well in advance, we can provide meals for you without additional cost. We cannot always provide for the same diversity or sophistication as our regular menu for special dietary requests.

Beverages / Alcohol

In camp we provide sodas, water, coffee and tea. We also carry powdered drink mixes such as Gatorade, Gookinaid or similar to mix in your water bottle. National Park Service regulations prevent us from providing alcoholic beverages to our guests. You are welcome to bring a supply of alcoholic beverages in non-breakable containers or you can order them using the beer/wine order form which will be sent to you with your final invoice. ***Please Note: There is no drinking allowed while on the river. Consumption of alcoholic beverages is only allowed while in camp.***

Boat Type (see photos at www.oars.com/our_adventures/river_ratings.html)

- Oar Raft—The O.A.R.S. flagship, oar rafts carry the bulk of the gear on most of our multi-day adventures. Your guide pilots with long oars from a center-mounted aluminum frame. Ample deck space allows for lounging in calm stretches, sturdy weight and width give your guide confidence to hit the big waves head-on. They hold up to four passengers. We travel in a flotilla with the maximum group size of 16-20 passengers.

Hikes Along the River

Each day varies, but on an average you'll spend three-five hours on the boats. The rest of the time is spent hiking and exploring side canyons, eating, or just relaxing in camp. The easiest hikes are no more difficult than negotiating a few yards of beach sand or stepping over a few rocks. Others may go for several miles over a rough trail, climb steeply up a hot hillside, require the use of both hands over awkward boulders and demand caution as you totter on a narrow trail above a steep cliff. Our guides are happy to help novices with hand and footholds and reassurance. Many times their helpfulness enables the timid and inexperienced to get to special places that many other groups pass by. Remember, however, all hikes are optional and you can choose to lie on the beach and take in a few of Arizona's famous tanning rays or read a book instead.

Fishing

Fishing is an additional activity you can do in camp or when we stop for lunch. The best fishing is on the upper section from Lees Ferry to the confluence of the Little Colorado River where the catch is trout, but you can fish anywhere along the river. The conditions are dependent upon the clarity of the water. You will need to purchase an Arizona state fishing license, which can be purchased online through Arizona Game & Fish at www.azgfd.com. A license can also be purchased in Flagstaff at Wal-Mart, or at the South Rim in the General Store (located in Market Plaza). We practice catch and release with artificial lures and flies. You should

therefore de-barb your hooks before you leave home. You'll need to bring your own gear and it's best to have a collapsible pole in a case.

The Portable Toilet

While the idea of a river trip is appealing to most people, many are inhibited or reluctant because of modesty or uncertainty. To minimize our impacts, we carry out all solid human waste and use a portable toilet system that is set up each day at camp in a secluded location where privacy is assured. It is essentially a toilet without plumbing and is available from the time you pull into camp each afternoon until you leave camp the next day.

We also carry a small container called the "day tripper" that can be easily accessed during the day should the need arise. It is a personal disposable toilet, which includes an odor-proof transport bag, chemical solidifier and odor eliminator, toilet paper and oversized hand wipe.

On popular stretches of wilderness rivers, the common refrain is "dilution is the solution to pollution." We practice this approach by urinating in the river during the day. For use in camp at night we provide pee buckets so that urination can occur in a secluded location and then be dumped into the current where it will be carried downstream.

Bathing

Bathing is only allowed in the river, but is definitively not allowed in any of the side streams that feed into the river. If you plan to bring soap, we recommend using a liquid biodegradable soap such as Campsuds or Dr. Bronner's (www.drbronner.com), which can be purchased in most stores that have a camping section. Disposable anti-bacterial towelettes (Coleman Swash Cloths, baby wipes, etc.) are good alternatives to submersion in the river and are especially convenient for spring and fall trips.

Foot Care

Good foot care is a must. You should have footwear that is comfortable and well broken-in, but is newer and will not fall apart. Closed toe shoes are the best protection for hikes. Avoid sunburn and try and keep your feet out of the water. Keep your toenails trimmed. After a day on the river, wash your feet with soap, moisturize and put on clean dry socks and shoes. Always wear shoes, even in camp. If you experience any foot care problems, ask your guides for assistance.

Skin Care

It's very important to take care of your skin while on your Grand Canyon trip. The combination of sun, sand, water and wind gradually and quickly cause extreme dryness, which can then lead to cracked skin. Once your skin cracks it will have a hard time healing until you return home. Hands and feet tend to take the greatest beating and therefore should be given the most attention. When you arrive in camp each afternoon it is a good idea to bathe and moisturize your skin with a heavy-duty moisturizer. Put on clean dry shoes to give your feet a break from the elements. Some people also like to apply moisturizer to their feet and hands before bedtime and then cover them with socks and/or gloves. Each morning before leaving camp, apply plenty of sunscreen and remember to reapply during the day. By drinking plenty of water and staying well hydrated you can also help prevent your skin from cracking.

For Women Only

Even if you aren't anticipating your menstrual period, come prepared for it. We recommend you bring some sandwich size zip-lock bags. They can be used during the day while you are on the river or hiking and can be disposed of when you reach camp. (For tampon users: o.b.® tampons are ½ the size of regular tampons, tuck discreetly into pockets and have less paper wrapping). Many women suggest bringing a small supply of baby wipes. We provide some feminine products on most trips for emergencies.

A number of our female guests have found a feminine urinary device (F.U.D.) very helpful on rafting trips and for camping in general. A F.U.D. allows women to urinate while standing and requires minimal undressing for discreet bathroom use. You can use the device in conjunction with a pee bucket (supplied on our trips) to avoid midnight visits to the privy. Previous guests recommend practicing with the device at home to maximize the benefits on your outdoor adventure. For additional information, see Accessories and Unique Items for the Pee Pod Feminine Funnel in the OARStore at www.oars.com/OARStore. For interesting and informative reviews, search for FUD at www.rei.com.

Cameras

We provide a small waterproof bag (17" tall x 9" diameter—approximate sealed size) to hold your camera and other items you might need during the day. While these bags are designed to be waterproof, you may wish to place your camera in a zip-loc plastic bag or waterproof casing for additional protection. We also strongly recommend you take out a rider on your homeowner's policy to cover your camera—especially if it's fine equipment. If you are planning on bringing a digital camera make sure to bring additional memory cards, batteries, and any other extras you will need. Disposable waterproof and panorama cameras are also a fun option.

We are not able to provide a power source for recharging camera batteries. A small solar charger is a good option if you think you'll need to recharge your camera battery during your trip.

Electronics & Technology

The use of electronic devices, especially music players, on your trip may represent an intrusion into the wilderness experience of your fellow guests. We ask that you please be mindful of the impacts to others and respect the wilderness nature of the trip.

Many of our guests travel with their smartphone even though there is no cell service. On a trip like this, there is always the risk of water damage to smartphones and other electronic devices, even when they are stowed in a dry bag. If you intend to take your phone with you on the river, consider investing in a small, waterproof container just for your phone.

Communication

Once you are on the river there is limited communication with the "outside world." Cell phone service is not available. Our guides carry satellite phones which are strictly used to call out in case of an emergency situation on the river. They can call out, but we cannot call them. Periodically the trip leader will check in with our office. If you have someone that needs to contact you about an emergency at home, they should call our office (800-346-6277). If possible, we will relay the message to you. Keep in mind, however, it could be several days or longer before the message actually reaches you. For your family at home you should define for them what you consider an emergency and provide them with instructions to call our office in the event one occurs during your vacation.

Weather

In the desert climate of the Grand Canyon, temperatures and weather can fluctuate a great deal throughout the day. It can be clear, dry and hot and in the next moment it can be cool and rainy. These conditions can manifest in any month. There are no absolutes when talking about weather in the canyon. The descriptions and chart below lists average weather conditions, maximum and minimum temperatures and average rainfall. This chart should be used only as a general guide. Packing according to the list will prepare you for all weather conditions.

April: April is less crowded in the canyon and is an excellent time to view cactus in bloom. The days are shorter with a chance of possible storms, but at night you can sit around the campfire (April & October only).

May: A favorite time for people to visit, but also one of the most crowded. The weather is moderate and consistent, but can be windy at times. The water is very often clear from mid to late May.

June: Early June has hot days and mild nights. Temperatures increase with each day into the month. A very busy time to be in the canyon

July: Very hot with the chance of some early monsoons which are more prevalent in August. Any and all weather can be experienced at this time. When rain showers do materialize the afternoons are generally cooler.

August: Traditionally this time of year is the monsoon season with clouds building up early in the day, releasing with heavy short bursts in the afternoon, and often clearing by evening. The clouds and showers help lower the extreme temperatures.

September: Moderate temperatures cooling as the month progresses. The days are mild with cool nights. There is less traffic in the canyon with September 15 the last launch date for motorized trips.

October: Can be very nice, but always presents a possibility of storms. Need to be prepared for changes in weather conditions. Nice temperatures for side hikes and opportunities to sit around the campfires at night (April & October only).

Average Air Temperatures/Rainfall

| Month | Day (°F) | Night) (°F) | Rainfall |
|-----------|----------|-------------|----------|
| April | 82° | 56° | .47" |
| May | 92° | 63° | .36" |
| June | 101° | 72° | .30" |
| July | 106° | 78° | .84" |
| August | 103° | 75° | 1.40" |
| September | 97° | 69° | .97" |
| October | 84° | 58° | .65" |

Summer Temperatures (June, July & August): Please note that the average summer temperatures listed can be misleading. These temperatures are recorded in very specific locations and circumstances. In the summer it is not uncommon for the temperature to rise above 110° F. At the same time temperatures can suddenly plummet with increased cloud cover. The advice is to always be prepared with rain gear and clothing that can be layered.

Temperature at the Rim: The temperature at the rim is generally 20-30 degrees cooler than along the river since the South Rim is around 7000' in elevation. Keep this in mind especially if you are on an early spring or late fall trip.

Current Weather Conditions

You may want to check one week prior to your trip for an up-to-date forecast. We recommend you check the following web site: www.wunderground.com On the webpage type Grand Canyon as your "City". When the page has loaded, scroll down to the "Extended Forecast" tab (near the radar map). Click on this tab. Here you will find the current weather forecast along the Colorado River as well as on the rim.

Water Levels & Temperature

The water levels of the Colorado River through the Grand Canyon are regulated by the release of water from the Glen Canyon Dam. The Colorado generally fluctuates up and down several feet within the day, based on the time of year and demand for electricity. Because the flow is dam regulated, even in a drought year, the water levels are fairly consistent. The temperature of the river is always 48°-55° F.

GETTING READY

Physical Requirements

Our primary goal is for you to have an enjoyable experience. The nature of the trip is such that it involves some physical exertion and potential exposure to the elements, including cold water, heat, sun, wind and rain. We have experience accommodating people with a wide range of physical disabilities and/or health conditions. However, individuals who are overweight or lack conditioning 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. In general, trip participants must be able to:

- Wear a Type V Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (maximum chest size of 56 inches)
- Climb on and off the boats multiple times each day
- Navigate uneven terrain in camp and on hikes
- Carry your own dry bags (20 – 30 lbs) from the boats to your camping location and back
- Self-rescue by swimming to a boat or to shore in the event of an involuntary swim in a whitewater rapid
- Hike 9.7 miles downhill into the Grand Canyon with an elevation change of over 4500 feet

Physical Preparation

Due to the physical nature of this trip, we highly recommend that you engage in regular exercise for at least 3-6 months prior to departure to ensure preparedness. You should be a person who exercises a ***minimum*** of 3-5 times a week. Because your trip requires a 9.7 mile hike into the canyon you need to be particularly diligent in your training work out. The best way to get ready for a hike in the Grand Canyon is to combine cardiovascular (aerobic) exercise, strength training and hiking. Walking or slow jogging is not enough. More strenuous activity such as lengthy hikes on inclines, cycling, running or swimming is required. Your best exercise is to do the real thing – hiking. While training, it is helpful to carry a daypack and wear the same footwear that you will be using for your Grand Canyon hike. Please refer to the document *“Training for your hike into the Grand Canyon”* which is part of the trip literature that was sent to you.

We Provide

- Skilled professional guide service
- All meals from lunch on day 1 through lunch on the last day
- **2 waterproof bags** to hold your gear for the trip (20” tall x 14” diameter —approximate sealed size). Your sleeping bag and pad must fit into one bag and your remaining gear will fit into the other bag. *Please note: If you rent our gear it will come already packed in one of the two waterproof bags issued to each passenger. Your remaining gear, therefore, must fit in one bag.*
- 1 small waterproof bag for camera and film and other small items you'll want during the day (17” tall x 9” diameter—approximate sealed size)
- Transport of one (1) duffel per person by mule from the South Rim to the Boat Beach
- 2-person tents on a shared basis (there is a \$35 charge for a private tent)
- Personal flotation device (PFD) which must be worn at all times on the river in compliance with National Park Service regulations
- Camp chairs
- Eating utensils, cups and plates

- Highest quality inflatable rafts and related equipment
- Transportation by van from Diamond Creek to Flagstaff

Available For Rent

- **Sleep Kit:** Can be rented for \$50 per person. Sleep kits consist of a sleeping bag, sleeping pad, ground tarp, sheet, pillow and pillowcase. Please indicate on your Guest Registration Form whether you want to rent a sleep kit or if you prefer to bring your own.
- **2-Person Tent:** We provide 2 person tents. It is assumed you will share this tent with another person. You can (if you prefer) have a tent to yourself for an additional charge of \$35 per tent.

PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP

Clothing

During the day – Start with a swimsuit and/or swim trunks and synthetic shirt as a base layer. Additional layers, like long underwear, fleece and rain gear, can be added and subtracted depending on the weather, temperature and how wet you’re getting in the rapids.

In camp – When the weather is warm, lightweight cotton pants/skirt or shorts and shirt make great campwear. Those so inclined may enjoy wearing a cotton skirt or sarong on summer evenings. In the spring and fall, or on trips at the higher elevations, a dry set of synthetic long underwear is the perfect base layer under long pants and a fleece sweater.

Footwear

During the day – The best choice is an amphibious shoe that drains water, protects your toes and won’t come off in swirling current. A retired pair of athletic shoes can work well, too. Sport sandals with a heel strap are a good option, especially on rivers with sandy beaches.

In camp – We recommend wearing shoes in camp due to risk of kicking a rock buried in the sand, or stepping on a sharp stick. The athletic shoes or light hikers you bring for hiking can double as your camp shoes. It’s nice to put on dry socks and shoes after a day on the water. Flip flops or “Crocs” are OK for wearing in camp only.

Please note: If you buy new shoes or sandals for the trip, make sure you break them in first!

Headwear

During the day – Wide-brimmed hats are a good choice for sun protection. Ball caps are also useful since they fit under helmets, which are required in some of the larger rapids.

In camp – When the weather is cool or cold, you’ll want a beanie-style hat to wear in camp. They are the perfect remedy for bed-head as you rise from your sleeping bag to secure your morning cup of coffee or tea, or for retaining warmth in the evening hours after the sun sets.

Boating Gear

Each passenger is required to wear a PFD (personal flotation device) while on the boats and in the water. On the first day of the trip you will be issued a PFD that will be yours to wear for the duration of the trip. The guides will make appropriate adjustments to your PFD to insure a proper fit. (Please note: You must weigh less than 260 pounds and have a chest size smaller than 56” in order to fit into the PFD.) For your added protection, in some of the larger more challenging rapids, your trip leader will also ask you to wear a helmet. Some passengers may decide to wear it even in some of the smaller rapids.

To Avoid Being Cold

Synthetic long underwear is a must-have on river trips. It can be worn under shorts, rain gear, T-shirts, etc., then stripped off when the chill of the morning has worn off. It keeps you warm even if it's wet (which can happen easily), dries quickly, and it's compact enough to be stuffed into your small waterproof bag or daypack after you take it off. It can be layered under your **waterproof** rain jacket and pants. In cooler weather a rain jacket and pants work better than a wetsuit, because the jacket and pants can be put on when it's cold, or when you're going through whitewater, then easily taken off when the sun comes out and it's hot. **Be aware that cotton items, once wet, do not insulate; only synthetic and wool materials will keep you warm during cool, wet weather.**

Something warm for your top & bottom: Although the weather will probably be delightful, you need to be prepared for inclement weather. Bring a good fleece or wool top and bottom, along with a warm hat and gloves. You'll want to double up on your synthetic layers so that you'll have a set to wear in the boat and a set of warm, dry clothes for camp.

April, Early May, Late September and October Trips: These are surely some of the most beautiful months in the canyon, but they can also produce some surprisingly chilly times. During the spring and fall the sun is not far enough north in the sky to reach its warming rays down into the bottom of the canyon for as many hours a day as it does in the summer. This means more shady areas, fewer sunny ones. The temperature of the river is the same in August as it is in January, 48°-55°. Therefore, when you are splashed (drenched) going through the rapids and you're in a shady area, you will get very cold unless you are prepared.

Midsummer trips: These trips require less gear than spring or fall trips, but thoughtful packing is still required. A long-sleeved shirt is recommended to protect you from the intense summer sun. The weather in the Grand Canyon can also be changeable and unpredictable at this time of year. A rain jacket and pants may still be needed during the summer months.

Raingear

Raingear protects you from the splash of the rapids, rain and wind. It is one of the essential items that all passengers should have no matter what time of year you are traveling. Look for jacket and pants that are 100% waterproof, not just water resistant. A hooded jacket is recommended as well as good secure closures around your head, neck, wrists and ankles to prevent water from seeping in. Do not bring a rain poncho as it cannot be worn under your PFD.

Sun Protection

Protecting yourself from the sun should be taken very seriously. A hat, sunscreen, lip balm and sunglasses are a must. In many cases, a long-sleeve shirt is the best method for preventing sunburn on your upper body. Light-weight long pants may also be appropriate to protect your legs.

Bugs & Mosquitoes

Bugs and mosquitos are generally not a problem on this trip, although it's a good idea to come prepared with a small amount of insect repellent just in case.

Sleeping Gear

You can either bring your own sleeping bag, pad and ground tarp, or you can rent our sleep kit. If you are purchasing your own bag for the trip, a medium weight synthetic-fill bag is recommended for April and October. Keep in mind, if you bring your own sleeping gear, it will be counted as part of the 30 lbs. allotted for your one duffel that will be transported by mule to Phantom Ranch. We therefore, highly recommend that you consider renting the sleep kit.

SUGGESTED PACKING LIST

Equipment:

- Duffel bag: bring your gear packed in one duffel (*not to exceed 30 lbs. packed*) which will need to fold down and fit into our waterproof bag
- Sleeping bag, sleeping pad, ground tarp (approximately 5'x7'), sheet and small pillow. **Sleep kits including these items may be rented for \$50.** (April, May, September and October trips require a medium weight synthetic-fill bag)
- Daypack for day hikes. It should be large enough to carry water, lunch and camera, as well as a warm layer of clothing for spring & fall trips (750 – 2000 cu. in)
- Water bottles: 2 heavy-duty and minimum 1-liter capacity each with a carabiner to attach it to the boat. For day hikes and the hike in, hydration systems like a CamelBak® are great, but you will still want 1 water bottle while in the boat
- Headlamp or flashlight, extra batteries and bulb
- Plastic bags: large trash bags and zip-loc bags to separate clean and dry clothes from wet and dirty
- Sunglasses with securing strap and a spare
- Towel: small, quick-drying and washcloth
- Toiletries including biodegradable soap and shampoo with moisturizer
- Sunscreen: waterproof & SPF 30 or higher (Bring lots of it!)
- Lip protection: SPF 30 or higher
- Moisturizing lotion or cream: 1 bottle (Skin tends to get REALLY DRY – a VERY important item!)
- Insect repellent: Mosquitoes are generally not a problem, but it's always best to be prepared.
- Personal first aid kit (Band-aids, antibiotic ointment, ibuprofen, moleskin, eye drops, etc.)
- Spare pair of glasses and/or contacts (Blowing sand can cause problems for contact wearers)
- Cash for gratuities and goodies at Phantom Ranch (credit cards also accepted at Phantom Ranch)

Footwear:

- River sandals: 1 pair to wear in the boat and for short wet hikes (such as Teva)
- Athletic shoes or lightweight hiking boots: 1 pair, comfortable, with good tread and well broken-in (not new)
- Hiking socks: 3-4 pair mid-weight

Clothing:

- Long-sleeved shirt: 2-3 lightweight and light color for sun protection (UPF rated shirts are great)
- Long pants: lightweight and light color for sun protection (No jeans while on the river, but okay in camp.)
- Shade hat or visor with securing strap and a spare
- Bandana
- Rain jacket & pants: *waterproof* (not water resistant) to protect you from the wind and splash from rapids, as well as rain. A hooded jacket is recommended as well as good secure closures around your head, neck, wrists and ankles to prevent water from seeping in
- Swimsuit / Swim Trunks: 2 (two piece suits recommended for women). Tankinis are a great option
- Underwear: quick-drying
- Shorts: 2 pair lightweight, and quick-drying
- Hiking shorts: 2 pair (some people prefer different shorts for the river and hiking)
- T-shirts or lightweight quick-drying tops: 3-4
- Synthetic long underwear top & bottom: 1 set light to mid-weight (optional for late June & July trips)
- Fleece top & bottom: 1 set light to mid-weight (optional for late June & July trips)

Additional Essentials for spring (April/May) & fall (September/October):

- Extra pair of dry shoes for camp
- Wetsuit booties and/or neoprene socks
- Additional fleece top & bottom
- Additional synthetic long underwear top & bottom
- Warm hat and gloves: 1-2 sets, synthetic or wool
- Fleece vest
- Extra Dry Skin Cream: Look for creams that have such labeling as healing, therapeutic, salve, for rough cracked skin, etc. Healing foot creams are also a good idea.

Optional Items:

- Camera and accessories
- Sarong: also useful as a cover-up from the sun, when bathing or to discreetly change clothes
- Trekking poles: collapsible (for the hike into the canyon). Do not need to fit in waterproof bag.
- Solar shower: small "solo" showers heat up faster and are easier to use
- Bathing towels/wipes: pre-moistened, disposable
- Binoculars: small
- Whisk broom: small (no long handle). To sweep wet sand off of tent and ground tarp
- Lightweight cord and clothespins for drying clothes
- Notebook and pen

Packing Your Gear

You should pack your gear into a soft-sided duffel which will be carried into the canyon by mule. If you are bringing your own sleeping gear it will also need to fit into the one duffel. At the river each person will be given two large waterproof bags (20" tall x 14" diameter— approximate sealed size). One bag will be for your clothing, personal items and the soft-sided duffel. The second bag will be for your sleeping gear (sleeping bag, sleeping pad, ground tarp, sheet and pillow). These two bags will essentially be your "checked luggage" and will only be accessible in camp. Tents are stowed separately. **Please note: if you rent our sleep kit, it will come already packed in one of the two waterproof bags issued to each passenger.** We also provide a small waterproof bag for day use where you can keep items such as raingear, camera, sunscreen, lip balm, etc. (17" tall x 9" diameter—approximate sealed size). The bags are cylinder in shape and pack from the top. Please pack light; river attire is very casual—comfort, convenience and boat space takes precedence over style. At the end of the trip you will return to Flagstaff with your packed waterproof bags where you will be able to unpack your gear for your return trip home. Please note: for mule transport your one duffel bag must not exceed 30 lbs. in weight, nor be larger than 36"x 20"x 13". A duffel approximately 24" x 12" x 11" should hold all of your gear and keep you under the weight limit.

Clothing can easily be washed out in the river with biodegradable soap. With the dry warm climate in the canyon, lightweight clothing generally dries out quickly. Please Note: The color of the river fluctuates from completely clear to very silty. Light colored clothing has the possibility of becoming permanently stained.

Extra Luggage: We recommend you take on the river only what's absolutely necessary (see our enclosed packing list). Keeping gear to a minimum insures it will fit into the waterproof bags we supply and reduces unnecessary packing and unpacking in camp. If you do have extra luggage you do not wish to take on the river, O.A.R.S. has arranged a special storage room at the Radisson where passengers may store additional bags. Please note: If you wish to leave luggage at the Radisson, you will need to call O.A.R.S. ahead of time to prearrange for access to the storage room.

Valuables

Leave your valuables at home. For necessary personal items such as a wallet, credit cards, etc., we recommend putting them in a zip-loc bag and at the bottom of your waterproof bag with your clothing.

Gratuities

Guests often ask whether gratuities are appropriate, and in what amount. If you feel your guides have provided a very special trip for you, a gratuity may be left with the trip leader and will be shared among the crew. Entirely discretionary, anything between 5% and 10% of the trip cost is a general tipping guideline. If you plan to tip, remember to bring a personal check or cash—ATM’s are hard to find in the backcountry!

Something Voluntary

In reviewing your statement, you'll note your trip cost includes a \$1/person/river day donation to the Grand Canyon Fund for River Conservation, an environmental trust fund. Your contribution will be deposited with the foundation, through which grants are distributed to organizations such as the Grand Canyon Trust, Friends of the River, etc. This donation is voluntary and may be subtracted from your trip cost if you choose not to participate in the program. Please notify our office if you choose not to participate.

HELPFUL LINKS

Shop for the latest in top-quality gear for your trip

www.oars.com/OARStore

Connect with the other travelers on your trip

eddy.oars.com

Recommended reading list

reading.longitudebooks.com/O38994

O.A.R.S. practices a Leave No Trace conservation ethic.

www.lnt.org

Watch our “How To Pack For A River Trip” video

www.oars.com/videos/how-to-pack

Grand Canyon Info and Area Maps

www.nps.gov/gcra

TERMS & CONDITIONS

Reservations and Deposits

- We require a deposit of \$750 per person for all Grand Canyon trips, by check or money order only.
- \$500 is due in our office within 10 DAYS of your initial reservation; the remaining \$250 must be paid by November 1 of the year prior to your trip.
- If you make your reservation after November 1 of the year prior to your trip, the entire \$750 deposit is due in our office within 10 DAYS of your initial reservation.
- **Please note: We do not accept credit cards for Grand Canyon river adventures.**

Final Payment

- Statements will be mailed in ample time to remind you of the payment due date.
- Final payment of all trip costs is due in our office, not less than 90 days prior to the departure date of your trip. Accounts on which final payment has not been received 80 days prior to the departure date will be **CANCELLED** without exception.

Cancellations and Refunds*

- If you find it necessary to cancel your trip, please notify us as soon as possible. The cancellation fee after you’ve made your deposit can range from \$250 up to the entire trip cost, based upon the number of days prior to your trip that we receive your cancellation notice. We regret we cannot make exceptions for personal emergencies. For this reason, **we strongly urge you to investigate trip insurance** (see Insurance).

Date of Cancellation

360 or more days prior to your trip
359 to 180 days prior to your trip
179 to 90 days prior to your trip
89 days or less prior to your trip

Cancellation Fee

\$250/person
\$500/person
\$750/person
Full Fare

* **If you are traveling as part of a charter group** please note that deposit/cancellation policies differ from those listed above. Charter Policies can be found on the group leader’s contract & on the Charter Trip Visitor’s Acknowledgement of Risk Form.

Medical

- Under most circumstances, if you are of an adventurous spirit and in reasonably good health, you should have no problem enjoying an O.A.R.S. Grand Canyon, Inc. trip. People with heart trouble and pregnant women should have their physician's approval before taking an adventure travel trip.

Insurance

- Although every effort is made to insure a safe trip for all, we strongly recommend that you protect yourself, your belongings, and your vacation through the purchase of a short-term traveler's policy. A trip cancellation policy covers your non-refundable payments in most cases, should you have to cancel your trip due to illness or injury – yours or that of an extended family member – even at the last minute. Trip participants should realize that in the event you require extensive medical attention and need to be evacuated from the canyon, or in the unfortunate circumstance of the death of an immediately family member and the National Park Service (NPS) is requested to notify you by helicopter – the NPS charges the expense of the helicopter service to the individual involved. Obviously, no one wants or expects a helicopter to become necessary during their trip, but the service can be difficult and expensive. Consequently, we encourage you to secure the insurance that we offer or other alternative insurance that can cover this possible expense. Personal belongings and cameras are carried entirely at the owner's risk, and O.A.R.S. Grand Canyon, Inc. accept no responsibility for lost, damaged, delayed or stolen property.

One Trip per Year Rule

- Grand Canyon National Park Service regulations prohibit individuals from participating in more than one recreational river trip (commercial or non-commercial) per year on the Lees Ferry to Diamond Creek section of the Colorado River. Because of this regulation, O.A.R.S. Grand Canyon, Inc. cannot accept a reservation from any individual who has or will participate in any other full or partial canyon commercial or non-commercial river trip within the same calendar year. If you have already completed or have plans to participate in any other Grand Canyon river trip during the same year you are traveling with us and would like to go again, please wait until the following year or later for your next trip. Grand Canyon National Park's one-trip-per-year rule is strictly enforced by the National Park Service.

Acknowledgement of Risk

- Everyone is required to sign a standard Acknowledgement of Risk form before the trip, acknowledging awareness that some risks are associated with the trip. Safety is of the utmost concern on our trips. However, due to the nature of the activities, a condition of your participation is that you will sign this form and return it to our office before the trip begins. Anyone who refuses to sign the form will not be allowed to participate, and consistent with O.A.R.S. Grand Canyon, Inc. cancellation policy, there will be no refund of the trip fees at that time.

Responsibility – An Important Notice

- O.A.R.S. Grand Canyon Inc. and cooperating agencies act only in the capacity of agent for the participants in all matters relating to transportation and/or all other related travel services, and assume no responsibility however caused for injury, loss or damage to person or property in connection with any service, including but not limited to that resulting directly or indirectly from acts of God, detention, annoyance, delays and expenses arising from quarantine, strikes, theft, pilferage, force majeure, failure of any means of conveyance to arrive or depart as scheduled, civil disturbances, government restrictions or regulations, and discrepancies or change in transit over which it has no control. Reasonable changes in itinerary may be made where deemed advisable for the comfort and well being of the participants, including cancellation due to water fluctuation, insufficient bookings and other factors. There is risk in whitewater rafting, particularly during high-water conditions. Rafts, dories and kayaks do capsize. You could be swept overboard. Your guide will make every attempt to assist, but you must be strong and agile enough to "self-help" and "float-it-out" without further endangering yourself or others. We reserve the right not to accept passengers weighing more than 260 pounds or with a waist/chest size exceeding 56 inches. We may decide, at any time, to exclude any person or group for any reason we feel is related to the safety of our trips. We are experienced at accommodating people with various disabilities. Please give us an opportunity to make you feel welcome. We need to discuss any special requirements ahead of time. On advancement of deposit the depositor agrees to be bound by the above recited terms and conditions. Prices subject to change without notice.