



Tatshenshini River–Alaska **TRIP PLANNER**

Congratulations! You are about to embark upon the vacation of a lifetime...O.A.R.S.' Tatshenshini adventure in British Columbia.

As you plan for your trip, many questions may arise. What should I pack? What equipment will be provided? What will the weather be like? What about accommodations before and after the trip?

Please use this Trip Planner as a resource for general information on your Tatshenshini 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 email us at info@oars.com.

Pre-Departure Information

****Please fill out the Guest Registration form included with your Confirmation e-mail and return it to our office at least 90 days prior to your departure – this information is invaluable to us in planning your trip.****

Getting There

Your trip begins and ends in Whitehorse, Yukon. Unless you have pre-trip plans elsewhere in the Yukon or Alaska, you will want to fly into Whitehorse via Vancouver.

By Air

- Vancouver is served by numerous carriers. From Vancouver, connections to Whitehorse are available on Air Canada (www.aircanada.com) or Air North (www.flyairnorth.com) (1-800-764-0407 from the USA and 800-661-0407 from Canada).

Your flight reservations should be made as far ahead as possible. Please contact your agent, your favourite online booking site or the airline of your choice as soon as you have decided on travel dates in order to avoid last-minute inconveniences.

Rendezvous

- You must arrive in Whitehorse the day before your trip begins (**Day zero**) for our pre-trip meeting at 8:00 PM. The airport is an approximate ten-minute taxi ride to town. The High Country Inn provides complimentary airport shuttle.

After your trip

- Depending on the weather, we should arrive in time to make connecting flights that depart after 8:00 PM. However, we strongly recommend that you stay in Whitehorse one more night and often the group will gather for a farewell dinner in Whitehorse. If you have any concerns about your return flights or hotel reservations, your guides will be happy to re-confirm them for you. Should you decide to connect out of Whitehorse that night, you will be dropped off at the airport upon our return into town.

Pre- and Post-Trip Accommodations

We recommend the facilities listed below. All are fine establishments: well maintained, clean and comfortable. (Pre- and post-trip lodging is not included in the trip cost).

- **High Country Inn: 1-800-554-4471 (Please reference our room block under ROAM-OARS)**
- Westmark Whitehorse: 1-867-668-4700
- Yukon Inn: 1-800-661-0454
- Inn on the Lake B&B: 1-867-660-5253 (outside of Whitehorse – you will need a car)

What's Included?

- Skilled professional guide service
- 10 nights catered camping
- All meals from lunch day 1 through lunch day 11
- Vintage wines, liqueurs, and imported and microbrew beer at dinner
- Expedition equipment, including 2-person shared tent, sleeping bag & pad, floater jacket (combination personal flotation device with jacket) and dry bags
- Transfer from Whitehorse to the river and flight from the river back to Whitehorse
- All park fees and necessary permits

What's Not Included?

- Transportation to and from Whitehorse
- Pre- and post-trip accommodations and meals
- Insurance of any kind, including travel and **mandatory** medical and evacuation insurance
- Fishing gear and license
- Items of a personal nature (see Packing List below)
- Gratuities

Equipment & Clothing

The personal equipment list we provide you with has been developed through years of practical experience. Your personal equipment should not weigh more than 40 pounds and all clothing (with a few exceptions) should be quick drying and made of synthetics. Warmth and comfort are the main objectives with this outline. Weather conditions can vary considerably in the North. It's important to dress in layers so that you can maintain a comfortable body temperature no matter what Mother Nature may have in store. The inner layer should move perspiration outside, where it can evaporate. The intermediate layer should insulate while the outside layer should act as a barrier to wind and rain.

Footwear

We plan to hike and walk as much as possible. The importance of good footwear cannot be overstated. Given that our trails are often gravelly or sometimes muddy, you need a good walking boot with a firm sole, good ankle support and a degree of water resistance. It's now easy to find a "hybrid" walking boot, which combines the lightweight, ventilated features of a shoe with the support and durability of a boot. If you buy new walking shoes or boots for the trip, make sure you break them in well before you go.

For foot wear in the boat most of the time you will need high top rubber boots (such as those used for sailing or gardening) and socks. At times an amphibious shoe or a comfortable pair of athletic shoes with good soles may be appropriate, but most likely sandals will not provide the protection you want from the water. Your feet will get wet getting in and out of the boat and the water is chilly. Make sure you get good-grip, no-slip soles! If you plan to buy footwear for the trip make sure you get it far enough in advance to break it in and wear your footwear until it's comfy—if your feet hurt you won't enjoy the trip. Wetsuit booties, neoprene socks, or fleece or wool socks are recommended as an option to help keep your feet warm while rafting.

Boatwear

Start with sunscreen, long underwear, pants and a long-sleeved shirt, and then add additional layers of fleece,

socks, rain pants, and rain jacket depending on the time of year. As the day warms up layers can be taken off and stored in your small waterproof bag.

Hiking Clothes

Choose lightweight, synthetic fabrics that breathe well for warm weather walking. Whatever you choose, make sure you have comfortable freedom of movement, especially for uphill and downhill walking.

Socks

Bring at least one pair for each day of hiking. We recommend merino wool material. It may be a good idea to bring along some additional items such as foot powder, cushioned pads and/or bandage or 2nd Skin®, which provides cushioned comfort with an antiseptic for blistered and sore feet. Many people find a product called moleskin gives them great relief from blisters. The guides carry a blister kit as part of their first-aid supplies. You will need a supply of wool or fleece socks for the river. They will keep your feet warm, even when wet. It's a good idea to change into clean, dry socks once you're off the river at the end of the day at camp.

Pile or Fleece

The best we've found is 200-weight Polar Plus, which is used by a variety of companies. This fabric is warm, dries quickly and is not excessively bulky. It can be found in many different styles and colours.

Sun Protection

Protecting yourself from the sun should be taken seriously, even in the far north. A sun hat, sunscreen, lip balm and sunglasses are a must. At the end of each day you will want to have some good moisturizing lotion or cream to replenish your skin from the drying effects of sun and water.

Suggested Packing List

If you do not already own any of the items on the suggested packing list feel free to call our office for suggestions. However, most items listed are available for purchase online at www.oars.com in the **OARStore**. Please be mindful of the natural environment when purchasing items for your trip. Whenever possible, consider recyclable containers, rechargeable batteries, natural (non-toxic) sunscreens, lotions, biodegradable soaps and so on.

Equipment:

- Backpack/Daypack for day hikes. It should be large enough to carry raingear, jacket, camera and water bottle
- Water bottles: 1 heavy-duty and minimum 1-liter capacity. For day hikes, 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
- Camera and accessories

Personal Items:

- Sunglasses with securing strap and a spare
- Towel: small, quick-drying and washcloth
- Bathing towels/wipes: pre-moistened disposable wipes such as Coleman *Swash Cloths*
- Toiletries including biodegradable soap and shampoo with moisturizer
- Sunscreen: waterproof & SPF 30 or higher
- Lip protection: SPF 30 or higher
- Moisturizing lotion or cream: 1 bottle (skin tends to get dry on the river—this is an important item)
- Insect repellent (with DEET - mosquitoes are not usually a problem, but biting flies can be bothersome)
- Personal first aid kit (Band-aids, antibiotic ointment, ibuprofen, moleskin, eye drops, anti-itch cream for insect bites, etc.)
- Spare pair of glasses and/or contacts (wind and blowing sand can cause problems for contact wearers)
- Cash for gratuities and goodies

Clothing:

- Long-sleeved shirt: 2–3 quick drying (UPF rated shirts are great)
- Long pants: 2–3 lightweight and quick-drying
- T-shirts or lightweight quick-drying tops: 3–4
- Shorts: 1-2 pair
- Long underwear tops and bottom: 3 (synthetic)
- Pile or fleece jacket: 2 (medium to expedition weight)
- Down or synthetic insulated jacket for camp wear
- Pile or fleece pants: 1-2 (medium to expedition weight)
- Rain jacket & pants: good quality, *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. It should also be compact enough to fit easily in your backpack.
- Shade hat or visor with securing strap
- Fleece hat and gloves
- Bandana
- Swimsuit
- River sandals, amphibious shoes or sneakers: 1 pair to wear at camp
- Lightweight hiking boots or shoes: 1 pair, comfortable and with good tread for hiking
- High top rubber boots: 1 pair, as used for sailing or working in the garden, and essential for the river
- Socks: 5-10 pair warm wool or fleece socks

Optional Items:

- Feminine urinary device (see *For Women Only*)
- Binoculars: small
- Whiskbroom: small (no long handle) to sweep wet sand off tent and ground cloth
- Compass: For the avid map-reader. We carry a full set of topographical maps on the trip.
- Paddling gloves
- Lightweight cord and clothespins for drying clothes in camp
- Reading and writing materials
- Fishing Rod with case and tackle (optional)

Cameras

We provide a small waterproof bag (17" tall x 9" diameter—approximate sealed size) to hold your camera and other items you might want during the day. It is secured in a readily accessible spot on the raft. While our bags are waterproof to further protect your camera you may wish to place it in a zip-loc plastic bag, or special waterproof camera case. We also recommend padding it with a towel or clothing. Sand can be a problem—so clean your camera every night with tissue, a brush and lens paper. 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.

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. (o.b. ® tampons are 1/3 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 <http://oars.newheadingsllc.com/>. For interesting and informative reviews, search for *FUD* at <http://www.rei.com/>.

Packing Your Gear

While we encourage you to travel light, you'll also want to be sure you pack all the essentials. Please make sure you are prepared for both land and water environs. Weight and volume restrictions come into play with air charters, so please follow our recommendations closely. The night before your trip, we will be given your waterproof bag for stowing all of your gear, including sleeping bag and pad. There will be a separate bag for tents.

Valuables

We recommend that you 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.

Extra Luggage

We recommend you take on the river only what's absolutely necessary. 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 that you need to store, you may be able to store it at your hotel in Whitehorse. Please check with them prior to departure.

Weather

Average daytime highs in August are mid-sixties (Fahrenheit) while average nighttime lows can creep into the thirties. We will still experience the North's long hours of daylight but these departures may also witness the dramatic northern lights. There is no guarantee against a few days of overcast weather, rain or even snow, so follow or recommended equipment list, as our experience suggests a multi-layering approach with a range of conditions and temperatures in mind. You may want to check one week prior to your trip for an up-to-date weather forecast. We recommend you check <http://weather.noaa.gov> or www.wunderground.com

Essential Travel Documents

Your Passport - If you don't have a passport, apply for one immediately because the process can be lengthy. If you do have a passport, find it and check the expiration date. Make a photocopy of the photo page of your passport and carry it separately from your passport. If your passport is lost or stolen, a photocopy will help the authorities speed up authorization for replacement. We also request that you send us a copy to keep on file for emergencies during your trip.

Check your passport for blank pages. If you do not have a least two blank pages in your passport, we recommend that you apply to have additional pages added.

Do not pack your passport in your check-in luggage or leave it in Whitehorse. You may be asked for your papers not only upon departure but at various times during your travel and you will need to show your passport when crossing the border on your way to the river. If you are carrying a customs form, please keep it in a safe place at all times, perhaps in your pouch along with your other valuables. We recommend that you pack this in a plastic 'ziplock' that you can store in the bottom of your large dry bag while on the river.

Visas - Visas are not required for U.S. citizens to enter Canada. For others, please check with the Canadian Consulate.

Travel and Evacuation Insurance - Travel insurance that includes medical emergency evacuation is mandatory in order for you to take part in this expedition. You must provide proof of purchase of evacuation insurance prior to the trip. Travel Insurance Services offers three levels of coverage. Call them at 1-800-937-1387 or visit their website at <http://www.travelinsure.com/cobrand/select/oars>. Coverage for baggage loss, medical protection, trip cancellation, trip interruption is highly recommended. When selecting a policy please make sure you are very

clear about what it will and will not cover. No travel insurance covers all scenarios. Proof of insurance will be required prior to your trip.

Physical Preparation

Our trips are designed for people who enjoy the out-of-doors, rather than for fitness fanatics. Still, they are active holidays. Age is unimportant when it comes to your ability—the more important consideration is your physical condition. If you haven't attempted the kind of exercise levels required by our trips within the last couple of years, please be aware of the sort of trip you're taking. It's an active one, and you'll enjoy it more if you've been doing some exercise before you go. No previous experience is required.

Your guides will teach you all the basic skills that you'll require to enjoy the different aspects of the trip. Our prime consideration is to provide you with a trip that is as safe and comfortable as possible while still maintaining the integrity of a wilderness experience.

Activities that involve aerobic conditioning, such as swimming, walking, jogging and tennis are great for overall physical conditioning. Keep in mind the relative topography of where you live compared to the region you will be visiting. If you live in flat country, for example, consider supplementing your training with artificial hill training on a treadmill or stair-master.

Special Considerations

Please let us know if you're having a birthday or anniversary on the trip, so we can plan a surprise or two! We'll also need to know of any medical or dietary requirements that you'd like us to consider in planning your trip (i.e. if you're a vegetarian or vegan, or if you have any food allergies.). Please note this on the Guest Registration Form (be specific as to what your needs are) and return it to our office at least 90 days before your trip. If you're booking your trip less than 90 days before departure, please make sure you've discussed any special requests with our office.

During Your Trip

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 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 privy. 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 call will be for "coffee," which includes other drinks such as hot tea, cocoa, and juice. You can 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 day might start with French toast, bacon, fruit, orange juice, and lots of 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 and 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.

Alcohol

We provide a variety of canned beverages, water and lemonade during the day and a selection of good wine and beer at camp, with the occasional after dinner drink. For your safety and the safety of others, alcoholic beverages are limited to camp.

Boats - see photo at http://www.oars.com/our_adventures/river_ratings.html

On the Tashenshini River trip we use oar rafts with paddle assist. The most agile of any boat in the O.A.R.S. fleet, your guide powers the raft with two hefty oars on a rear-mounted frame, while the crew wields single bladed paddles up front for added horse-power. (Four to six passengers)

Hikes

We plan to hike and walk as much as possible. Please let your trip leader know if you are an avid hiker and remember to bring extra water bottles and good shoes (see Footwear P. 2). Remember, however, that all hikes are optional and you can choose to stay at camp and relax or read a book instead.

Fishing

The Tashenshini-Alsek is one of the North's most prolific salmon habitats and commercial fisheries. It has massive sockeye salmon runs and is a spawning ground for spring and coho salmon. However, because of the glacial run-off from the world's largest non-polar ice fields, the fishing is not great. If you plan on staying in the Yukon before or after your expedition, there are a number of wonderful char, grayling and trout fisheries in the region. We suggest you bring a rod with a case and the smallest of tackle boxes with the appropriate lures or flies.

The "Privy"

While the idea of a river trip is appealing to most people, many are inhibited or reluctant because of modesty or uncertainty. Perhaps a few facts will relieve (pardon the pun) your concerns. We use what is called a "porta-potty" system that is set up each day at camp in a secluded location that assures privacy. 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.

Bathing

Bathing is allowed in the river, however the water is cold (some say very). On occasion though, after a long hike or on a warm day, some of our guests have been moved to take a dip. Most often they prefer to cleanse with disposable anti-bacterial towelettes (*Coleman Swash Cloths, baby wipes, etc.*) which are especially convenient. We also bring a rudimentary shower that can be set up on layover days and filled with heated water—be sure to ask your guide if you're interested. 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 and can also be used to wash clothes. You may also find a good selection at your local health food store.

Something Voluntary

In reviewing your statement, you'll note a \$1/person/day donation to the Alaska Wilderness League, a non-profit conservation organization leading the effort to preserve Alaska's wilderness by engaging citizens, sharing resources and collaborating with other organizations, educating the public and providing a constant voice for Alaska in the nation's capital. Currently the League is fighting to permanently protect the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness, promote the sustainable future of the Tongass National Forest and check the unbalanced and potentially destructive development of Alaska's Arctic waters and Western Arctic public land. Your contribution is tax-deductible. This donation is voluntary and may be removed from your invoice if you choose not to participate. Please notify our office if you would prefer to delete the donation from your balance.

Further Useful Travel Information...

Currency

The Canadian monetary unit is the Canadian dollar (CDN). Like U.S. currency, coins are the penny, nickel, quarter and the dollar or "Loonie" piece. More recently, a two-dollar coin has come into circulation to replace two-dollar bills. Avoid carrying large sums of cash at any time during your holiday. Credit cards are widely accepted, especially VISA and MasterCard.

American dollars and traveller's checks are accepted everywhere though at exchange rates that thieves envy. When converting American to Canadian dollars, you'll get the most favourable rates at banks. Most banks are open from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM Monday to Friday though some branches stay open later and on Saturday mornings. ATMs are everywhere.

Canada's Goods & Services Tax (GST)

On July 1, 2010, British Columbia combined their Goods and Services Tax and Provincial Sales Tax into the Harmonized Sales Tax (HST) of 12%. However, for non-residents of Canada, a rebate is available. For the tax assessed on your trip fees, we are able offer a credit of 6% with the completion of the rebate portion of your registration form. For other purchases while in Canada, be sure to keep receipts, and ask customs officials on your departure from the country for the necessary forms and information.

Emergency Phone

While on the river, our guides will be carrying a satellite phone for emergency purposes only. Should you need a phone at your disposal, you should make arrangements for your own satellite communication. Because of our remote locale, cellular phones are not an option.

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 "Thank you" and 10% of trip cost is a general tipping guideline. If you plan to tip, remember to bring cash—ATMs are hard to find in the backcountry!

A Few Important Details

Reservations and Deposits

- An \$800/person non-refundable deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance is due 90 days prior to departure.

Cancellations and Refunds

- If you find it necessary to cancel your trip, please notify us as soon as possible. All payments are non-refundable and we regret we cannot make exceptions for personal emergencies. For this reason, we strongly urge our participants to investigate trip insurance (see Insurance).
- If you transfer from one trip to another within the same season, there is a \$50/person charge up until 90 days before the trip. Transfers made after this time will be treated as cancellations.

Medical

- Under most circumstances, if you are of an adventurous spirit and in reasonably good health, you should have no problem enjoying this trip. People with medical conditions, including pregnancy, should have a physician's approval before taking an adventure travel trip.

Insurance

- Although every effort is made to insure a safe trip for all, **we require that you purchase medical evacuation insurance to participate in this expedition.** Call Travel Insurance Services at 800-937-1387 or visit their website at <http://www.travelinsure.com/what/imedhigh.htm?32635> for inexpensive options that cover this requirement. We also 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 at the last minute due to illness or injury, as well as including the coverage required above. Trip participants should realize that in the event of illness or injury on a river trip, evacuation could be prolonged, difficult, and expensive. Personal belongings and cameras are carried entirely at the owner's risk, and we accept no responsibility for lost, damaged, delayed, or stolen property.

Acknowledgement of Risk

- Everyone is required to sign an 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 R.O.A.M. cancellation policy, there will be no refund of the trip fees at that time.

Responsibility – An Important Notice

- R.O.A.M., Inc./ROAM Adventures 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 (this trip requires a minimum of 6 guests), 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.

Contact Information:

- For more information on this or any of our over 75 rafting, sea kayaking or multi-sport adventures, please call 1-800-346-6277 in the USA or Canada or 1-209-736-4677 if outside the USA or Canada or email us at info@oars.com and one of our knowledgeable adventure consultants will be happy to help you.

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