



## ***Tuolumne River*** **TRIP PLANNER**

Congratulations! You are about to experience California's best whitewater trip...O.A.R.S.' Tuolumne River rafting adventure.

As you plan for your trip, many questions may arise. What should I bring? What equipment will O.A.R.S. provide? 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 Tuolumne River 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](mailto:info@oars.com).

### **Pre-Departure Information**

*\*\*\*Please fill out the enclosed Guest Registration form and return it to our office at least 90 days prior to your departure – this information is invaluable to us in planning your trip.\*\*\**

### **Trip Options and Meeting Times:**

**One Day – 8 AM**

**Two Day – 8:30 AM**

**Three Day – 8:30 AM**

### **How do I get to the Tuolumne River?**

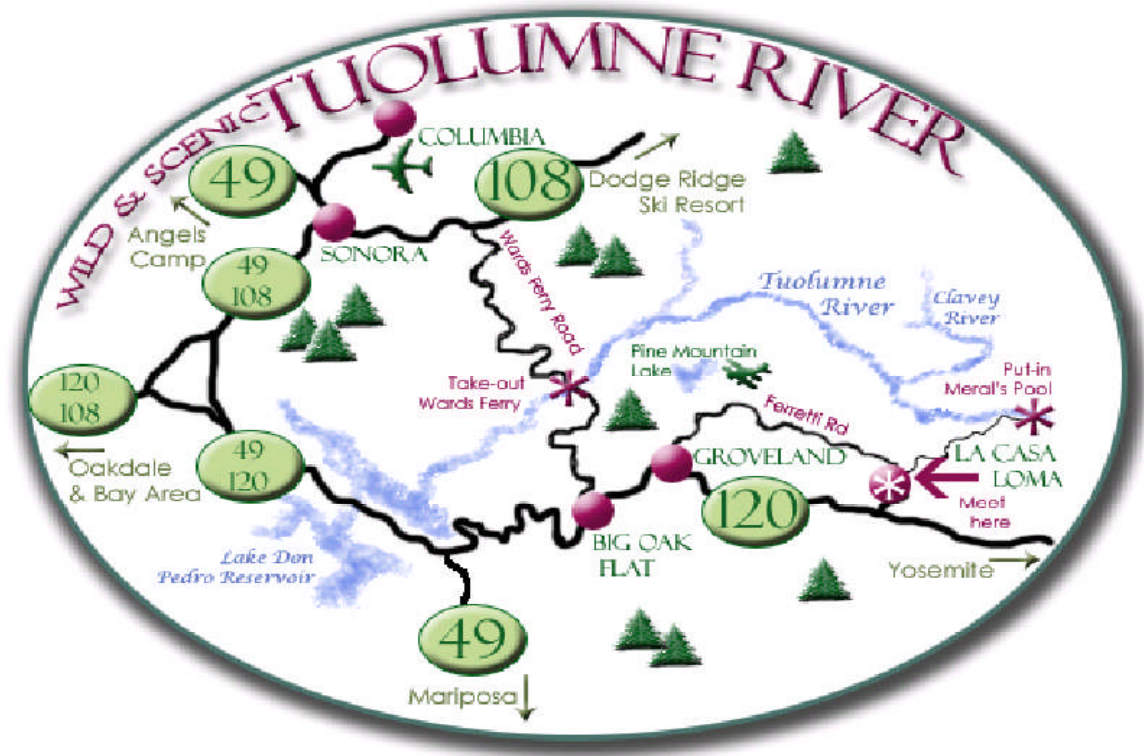
#### **By Air**

- For those that are flying, the closest airport is in Sacramento, which is accessed by most major airlines. A variety of car rental companies are available at the airport. It is a 2 hour and 45 minute drive from the airport to our meeting place in Groveland.
- Oakland and San Francisco are also optional airports, and are about 3 – 4 hours away from Groveland.

#### **By Auto**

- Most people drive to our meeting place at La Casa Loma River Store, approximately 8 miles east of Groveland on Hwy 120. The most direct route to Hwy 120 from northern and southern California locations is via Hwy 99.
- Traveling south on Hwy 99: From Manteca, take the Hwy 120 East/Yosemite Ave exit towards Sonora, then turn left onto Hwy 120.
- Traveling north on Hwy 99: From Modesto, take Hwy 132 East to Coulterville. Continue through Coulterville on J-132 to Hwy 120 and turn right. Or at Coulterville, take Hwy 120 East to Groveland.
- From the San Francisco Bay Area, take I-580 East to I-205 East. After merging with I-5 North, immediately exit onto Hwy 120 East.

- La Casa Loma River Store is on the left-hand side of Hwy 120 at Ferretti Rd, approximately 8 miles east of Groveland. If you enter Yosemite National Park, you have gone too far. Driving time from the San Francisco Bay Area is approximately 3 1/2 hours; from Los Angeles approximately 7 1/2 hours. **These times are just estimates. Please allow yourself plenty of extra time. For more detailed driving directions, we recommend you check [www.mapquest.com](http://www.mapquest.com).**



### Pre- and Post-Trip Accommodations

We recommend that you make your reservations well in advance. Yosemite and its outlying areas are extremely popular, and hotels fill up quickly, especially during the summer. Pre- and post-trip lodging is not included in your trip cost.

#### **Groveland**

- Groveland Hotel 800-273-3314 <http://www.groveland.com/>
- Hotel Charlotte 209 962-7872 <http://www.hotelcharlotte.com/>
- Lillaskog Yosemite 209-962-1818 <http://www.lillaskogyosemite.com/>

#### **East Groveland**

- Yosemite Rose 866-962-6548 <http://www.yosemiterose.com>
- Sugar Pine Ranch 209-962-7823 <http://sugarpineranch.com/>
- Yosemite Westgate Lodge 800-253-9673 <http://www.yosemitewestgate.com>

#### **Yosemite National Park**

- Yosemite Lodging 559-252-4848
- Yosemite Nat'l Park Camping 800-436-PARK
- Yosemite Campground 209-372-8502
- Or refer to [www.yosemitepark.com](http://www.yosemitepark.com)

#### **Other Camping Options**

- US Forest Service campsites can be found here:  
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r5/stanislaus/groveland/camping>
- Groveland Ranger District 209-962-7825

### **What's Included?**

- Skilled professional guide service
- 1-2 nights of catered camping on multi-day trips
- All meals as outlined in itinerary with limited beer & wine at dinner
- High-quality inflatable rafts, kayaks, and related river equipment including paddle and helmet
- Transfers from La Casa Loma River Store to the river and back

### **What's Not Included?**

- Pre- and post-trip accommodations and meals
- Tents, sleep kits and wetsuits (available for rent)
- Insurance of any kind
- Items of a personal nature (see Packing List below)
- Gratuities

### **Equipment and Clothing**

#### **Footwear**

For daily wear in the raft we recommend an amphibious sport shoe or sandal (with an ankle strap) such as those made by Teva, or a comfortable pair of athletic shoes with good soles. These shoes will be wet all the time in the raft. Make sure you get good-grip, no-slip soles! Some people prefer to wear river sandals in the boat and on wet hikes, and cushioned-soled athletic shoes or lightweight boots for the longer hikes. In the boats, in camp and on shorter hikes, sport sandals are ideal. 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.

#### **Boatwear**

Start with sunscreen, a swimsuit, shorts and long-sleeved shirt, and then add additional layers of long underwear, socks, rain pants and rain jacket depending on the time of year. In the morning it can be cool on the boats. As the day warms up layers can be taken off and stored in your day pack. Wetsuits may be required on some trips.

#### **Campwear**

After a long day on the river you will want to refresh and change into clean, comfortable clothing. Soft, loose-fitting shorts or pants, t-shirts, etc. will allow you to truly relax in the evening. Many women find sarongs or cotton dresses a nice change in the summer. For spring and fall trips you will want to have something dry and warm such as long sleeved shirts, pants and fleece.

#### **Sleeping Bags**

You can either bring your own sleeping bag, pad and ground cloth, or you can rent our sleep kit. If you are purchasing your own bag for the trip, keep in mind that a synthetic-fill bag rated to 20 degrees Fahrenheit (the normal range for an all-around, "three-season" bag) is recommended for early and late season trips.

#### **Sun Protection**

Protecting yourself from the sun should be taken very seriously. A sun hat, sunscreen, lip balm and sunglasses are a must. Also it's a good idea to have a long-sleeved cotton shirt and lightweight long pants (preferably light colors) to cover up when you need a break from the sun. Women may prefer to bring a sarong or a piece of fabric to be used as a cover up. Lightweight gloves can also protect your hands. 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 the sun and water.

### **We Supply**

- 2 waterproof bags to hold your gear for the trip (20" tall x 20" 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). *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*
- Personal flotation device (PFD) and helmet must be worn at all times on the river in compliance with safety regulations
- Camp chairs
- Eating utensils, cups and plates

### **Rentals**

- **Sleep Kits:** You may rent a sleeping bag and pad for \$25 per person. Sleep kits consist of a sleeping bag (lightweight for summer, medium weight for spring and fall), sleeping pad, ground cloth, sheet, pillow and pillowcase. If you choose to rent our sleep kit, please indicate this request on your Guest Registration form found in your confirmation packet. **This gear must be paid for in advance either by check or credit card.** We provide 2-person tent rentals. 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 \$30/tent. If you choose to rent a single tent or to rent our sleeping bag and pad, please indicate this request on your Guest Registration form found in your confirmation packet.
- **2-Person Tent:** Can be rented for \$30.00 per tent
- **Sleeping Pad:** The pad only may be rented for \$10.00
- **Wetsuits:** With advanced notice, wetsuits may be rented for \$10 per person/per day. (**Only necessary on April - June trips**). It is important for you to advise the office of your size if you are renting a wetsuit. Please indicate your request on the Guest Registration form found in your confirmation packet. Wetsuit rentals must be paid for prior to your trip. **Wetsuit rentals do not include wetsuit booties—please bring your own, or wear wool socks with tennis shoes as a good alternative.**

### **ALWAYS BE PREPARED FOR CHANGEABLE WEATHER!**

During the months of April, May and early June, California can experience extreme changes in weather. We recommend that you bring the following items, even though you may not use all of them:

**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 day pack after you take it off. It can be layered under your **waterproof** splash jacket and pants. In cooler weather, a fleece between your wetsuit and splash jacket is preferred for layering as the sun may come and go. Wetsuits do not only provide insulation but cushioning while on the raft and protection if you do happen to fall out of the boat as whitewater can be hazardous. **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.

**Midsummer trips:** These trips require less gear than spring or fall trips, but weather-conscious packing is still advised. A long-sleeved shirt is recommended to protect you from the intense summer sun.

Synthetic fabrics and wool dry fast and insulate better than other fabrics, even when wet. Be aware that cotton items once wet, do not insulate the body. We recommend that you leave dry shoes and clothing in your car to ensure a comfortable drive home.

### **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. 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. (HINT for tampon users: o.b. ® tampons are one third the size of regular tampons, tuck discreetly into pockets and have less paper wrapping). Many women suggest bringing a small supply of baby wipes.

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**

You may find it convenient to pack your gear in a soft duffel bag that you can then pack into your O.A.R.S.-issued river bag however this is not a requirement. Many folks pack their gear directly into the river bag, often lining it with a larger plastic bag. Please pack light; river attire is very casual—comfort, convenience and boat space take precedence over style.

The morning of your trip you will be issued two waterproof dry bags for stowing all of your gear, including sleeping bag and pad. We recommend that you pack your sleeping gear in one waterproof bag and clothes, etc. in the other. 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 Gear**

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 it should be locked in your car or stored at your hotel.

## **Weather**

You may want to check one week prior to your trip for an up-to-date weather forecast. We recommend you check the following web sites: [www.weather.com](http://www.weather.com) or [www.accuweather.com](http://www.accuweather.com). We have listed below average air and water temperatures.

	<u>Low</u>	<u>High</u> (°F)	<u>Water Temperature</u>
April	35	65	51
May	42	73	54
June	48	82	57
July	54	90	61
Aug	53	90	65
Sept	47	87	63

## **Physical Preparation**

The whitewater can be intense and reasonably high levels of physical fitness are recommended at high water. A combination of cardiac and strength training exercises—jogging plus push-ups and sit-ups, for example—will help ensure preparedness for your trip. Mid-summer and late-season dates feature more moderate whitewater; nonetheless, regular exercise prior to your trip will certainly add to your enjoyment.

## **Special Considerations**

Please let us know if you're having a birthday or anniversary on the trip, so we can pack a surprise or two! We'd also like to know of any medical or dietary requirements we need 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 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 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 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 accompanied by fresh fruit. 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 morning on a multi-day trip 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 (Multi-day trips only)**

We provide two sodas per person per day, water, lemonade and a small amount of beer and wine with dinner. You are welcome to bring your own supply of your favorite beverage, alcoholic or non-alcoholic, in a non-glass container. If you choose to bring extra sodas or alcoholic beverages, please let us know in advance. For your safety and the safety of others, alcoholic beverages are limited to camp.

**Boat Selection** see photos at [http://www.oars.com/our\\_adventures/river\\_ratings.html](http://www.oars.com/our_adventures/river_ratings.html)

As the Tuolumne is a Class IV+ run, we recommend previous paddling experience on at least a Class III river. First time paddlers should be aggressive and adventurous. During periods of high water, we will only offer oar rafts with paddle assist. On most trips, logistics require that we run both oar rafts and paddle rafts down the river in order to carry kitchen and camping gear. Because of this, we cannot guarantee the paddle option for everybody at all times. It is expected that those who choose the paddle option will be willing to take turns to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to paddle. A great part of rafting is the satisfaction of teamwork and camaraderie. With this spirit in mind, everyone can have the experience of a lifetime on the Tuolumne River.

**Fishing**

The Tuolumne River holds the most diverse fishing in the Sierra Nevada. It's headwaters host magnificent, hard to reach fisheries that produce trophy rainbow, brown, brook, or golden trout. Our guides will be happy to explain proper handling techniques for catch and release fishing, if you are not already familiar with them. You'll need to bring your own gear. Please bring your rod protected in a hard case. We recommend collapsible poles for ease in packing and an assortment of dry flies. Early season fly casters generally use large nymphs, wooly buggers, and bead-headed prince nymphs.

You may buy your fishing license by calling (916) 928-6882, or by purchasing it on the Internet at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/licensing/ols/intro.html>. Fishing licenses are also widely available at nearby sporting goods stores. A one-day license currently runs at \$10.75/person. Stream trout season runs from April through mid-November. Fishing from bridges and docks is prohibited. Rainbow trout are catch-and-release only in Yosemite Valley from Happy Isles to Foresta Bridge.

**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 not allowed in the Tuolumne River or in any of the side streams that feed into the rivers. You're welcome to bring solar showers or you can borrow a bucket from one of the rafts to rinse off after soaping up. Both are used at least 100' feet away from the water source in an area that will absorb the runoff. We recommend using a liquid biodegradable soap such as *Campsuds* or *Dr. Bronner's* ([www.drbronner.com](http://www.drbronner.com)), which can be purchased, in most stores that have a camping section and can also be used to wash clothes. Disposable anti-bacterial towelettes (*Coleman Swash Cloths*, *baby wipes*, etc.) can also be purchased and are especially convenient for spring and fall trips.

**Something Voluntary**

In reviewing your statement, you'll note a \$1/person/day donation to Friends of the River, a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting California's rivers, streams, and watersheds. One-hundred percent of these funds go directly to Friends of the River, and 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.

**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 a personal check or cash—ATM's are hard to find in the backcountry!

## **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.

## **A Few Important Details**

### **Reservations and Deposits**

- **1 Day Trips** – A \$125/person deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance is due 45 days prior to departure.
- **2-3 Day Trips** - A \$125/person deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance is due 60 days prior to departure.

### **Cancellations and Refunds**

- If you find it necessary to cancel your trip, notify us as soon as possible. All payments are nonrefundable and we regret that we cannot make exceptions for personal emergencies. For this reason, we strongly urge our participants to investigate trip cancellation insurance (see Insurance).
- If you transfer from one trip to another, there is a \$50/person charge up until 60 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 an O.A.R.S. 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 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. Trip participants should realize that in the event of illness or injury on an adventure travel trip, evacuation can be prolonged, difficult and expensive. Personal belongings and cameras are carried entirely at the owner's risk, and O.A.R.S. accepts no responsibility for lost, damaged, delayed or stolen property.

### **Liability Waiver**

- Everyone is required to sign a standard release 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. cancellation policy, there will be no refund of the trip fees at that time.

### **Responsibility – An Important Notice**

- O.A.R.S. West, 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 for 1 day trips or 4 guests for multi-day trips), 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. 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. On advancement of deposit the depositor agrees to be bound by the above recited terms and conditions. Prices subject to change without notice.