



YOSEMITE & TUOLUMNE HIKER PEAKS, CREEKS AND WATERFALLS

Itinerary



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| MEETING PLACE: | La Casa Loma River Store, 8 miles east of Groveland on Hwy 120 (At the intersection of Hwy 120 & Ferretti Rd) |
| GPS LOCATION: | 37.818955, -120.108526 (Intermittent GPS-cellular service in area) |
| MEETING TIME: | 8:30 AM |
| RETURN TIME: | Return approximately 10:00 AM to La Casa Loma River Store |
| RIVER RATING: | Class IV+ (Suitable for intermediate to advanced rafters) |
| RIVER MILES: | 18, with 15 recognizable rapids |
| AGE LIMIT: | Minimum age is 12 (16 at high water) |
| TRIP LENGTH: | 6 days/5 nights |
| BOAT OPTIONS: | Paddle raft; oar raft; oar raft with paddle-assist |
| ACTIVITIES: | Rafting, Hiking and Exploring in Yosemite National Park |

The Tuolumne River is considered by many to be the best whitewater trip in California. Its headwaters originate in Yosemite National Park, and then surge through an isolated, spectacular canyon, forming eighteen miles of non-stop, Class III-IV+ rapids. Intricate boulder gardens, rushing cascades and churning holes promise action-packed paddling from put-in to take-out. But it's not just the whitewater that's earned the Tuolumne its distinction as the California river trip against which all others are measured. The Wild & Scenic Tuolumne River flows through a remote wilderness canyon, relatively inaccessible between our put-in at Meral's Pool and our take-out at Ward's Ferry. Tumbling creeks, waterfalls and glassy pools adorn the river corridor and its side canyons—perfect for hiking, fishing and swimming during your off-river time.

A visit to Yosemite, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, is a natural addition to a Tuolumne River trip. The beating heart of the Park is its spectacular glacier-carved Yosemite Valley, surrounded by dramatic mountains and filled with lovely meadows, aspen groves and jaw-dropping waterfalls. We hike, picnic and relish photo opportunities in the looming presence of Half Dome and El Capitan, two of the Park's most-famous rock monoliths. The celebrated playground of John Muir and Ansel Adams is ours to experience fully.

First we take in the Valley's drama from the awe-inspiring Glacier Point, and hike from nearby Sentinel Dome down to the Valley floor. But after a good night's rest, our adventure then takes us up into the less-traveled, granite-dominated high country of Yosemite, where we explore the headwaters of the Tuolumne River. From

Tuolumne Meadows, our hiking options abound, including a demanding scramble to the top of Cloud's Rest, with its amazing perspective of the iconic Half Dome, or a potential summit hike up 13,000 foot Mount Dana. Our days of naturalist-led hiking are tailored to different levels of intensity, based on each group's interests. We can choose relatively easy walks to the top of Lembert Dome or strolls through the astounding sequoia giants of the Merced Grove, or tackle intense day-long forays to the crest of the Sierra Nevada Mountains.

AWARD-WINNING NATURE-BASED ADVENTURES SINCE 1969

O.A.R.S. has been in business for over 40 years and that is no accident. Great trips on some of the world's best rivers and coastlines are part of the recipe for this success. Always focused on our clients and their vacations, it is our genuine belief that river trips and nature-based adventures are extremely valuable life experiences. With that as our foundation, we have committed ourselves over the years to providing the best trips available, with the best guides and the best equipment, always with an eye on improvement.

BOAT TYPES

- 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.

WHITEWATER

- California's premier whitewater river, the Wild & Scenic Tuolumne, courses through outstanding rapids in a wonderfully remote canyon in the central Sierra Nevada Mountains. Many of California's most adventurous rafters cut their teeth on the exciting, boulder-strewn rapids from Meral's Pool to Ward's Ferry. More than a dozen drops rated Class IV dot the run and there are many unnamed Class III and III+ rapids, as well. You'll run rapids such as **Rock Garden** and **Nemesis** before reaching **Clavey Falls**, the biggest rapid on our eighteen-mile section. Follow up with **Grey's Grindstone**, **Thread the Needle**, **Hell's Kitchen** and **Pinball**, to name just a few.
- Water flow for the Tuolumne River is a result of releases from hydroelectric facilities located upstream. Such water releases are not subject to commercial rafting companies operating under permits from the US Forest Service, but solely controlled by the city of San Francisco and their Hetch Hetchy Reservoir. It is important for our passengers to understand that the water flow on the Tuolumne is directly related to the amount of snow in the Sierra Nevada, as well as demand for water and hydropower. Bottom Line: **Flexibility is the key to a great run.**

SPECIALTY TRIPS

- **Photography:** Join an acclaimed photographer for a special photography workshop on the river. Our photo expeditions are geared for photography, with special attention to being at the right place at the right time for the "perfect light." Whether you are just starting out or have years of experience, you will benefit from our professional photographers' tips and advice.

Sample Itinerary

We pride ourselves in running a relaxed and always-flexible schedule. Every trip is different depending upon the group, other trips on the river, as well as other groups in Yosemite and the effects of the weather, snowpack in the high country and when it comes to our Yosemite hiking, afternoon thunderstorms. The length of your river trip will vary from two to three days, depending on the date. The following is a sample of what your trip might be like:

- We'll meet at the La Casa Loma River Store, at the intersection of Highway 120 and Ferretti Road, eight miles east of Groveland, where you'll park your car. The trip leader will give you a waterproof bag in which to pack your belongings. Departing our rendezvous point, we'll take a steep shuttle ride down to the river via Lumsden Road—a fitting introduction to a trip filled with big descents! Arriving at our put-in point, you'll meet the rest of the O.A.R.S. crew and feel your anticipation build as you see the rafts waiting for you. After the guides present an orientation and safety talk, our adventure begins!
- Within the first two miles of the trip, we'll encounter three of the Tuolumne's most notorious rapids: Rock Garden, Nemesis and Ram's Head. The quick succession of fast chutes, sudden drops and technical maneuvering around boulders immediately sharpens our paddling skills, and our teamwork develops as we conquer the consistently exciting Class IV rapids.
- Come lunchtime, we'll pull over to a sandy beach for a delicious picnic. Your guides will lay out an abundant spread of cold cuts, cheeses, veggies and breads, or perhaps a tasty taco salad for roll-your-own burritos, accompanied by fresh fruit, cookies, cold water and lemonade.
- Then our moods shift as we hear a distant, rumbling sound up ahead. The reverberating noise turns into a loud roar as we approach the biggest whitewater in the canyon: Clavey Falls. The ultimate thrill, Clavey is actually a series of three staircase drops that are sure to deliver heart-pounding, frenzied-paddling and unabashed excitement! Flying through the bottom of the last drop, we'll feel an amazing sense of accomplishment and euphoria as we've just negotiated one of the most notable rapids in the West.
- Come mid- to late-afternoon, we'll stop and make camp; you grab your bags and set up your tent while we take care of the kitchen and "living room"—camp chairs and the site for tonight's campfire (if permitted). This is the perfect time for you to lounge on the beach with that book you've wanted to finish. Before long you'll be savoring pleasing hors d'oeuvres and the beverage of your choice—delicious as these refreshments are, they always taste better after a day on the river! Read, nap or just sit back and laugh with friends and family as we prepare dinner. After another satisfying feast, the evening is yours to spend however you wish. Maybe music, stories or jokes will bring us together tonight; maybe the popping of the fire, the whisper of the river and the clarity of the big, star-filled sky will encourage silent reflection on the amazing wilderness that is, for now, our home.
- Grey's Grindstone, Thread the Needle, and Hell's Kitchen provide more thrills as we continue down the Tuolumne. In between rapids, calm stretches of cool water invite us to jump in for a refreshing swim.
- Whether we're on the river for two or three days, we make time to explore the hidden wonders of this canyon. Great hikes along the Tuolumne's side streams bring us to waterfalls, swimming holes, natural waterslides and clear creeks that offer excellent trout fishing. We'll also have time for relaxing on the beach, taking in some tanning rays or joining a game of Frisbee, volleyball or horseshoes.
- As we reach Ward's Ferry and flat water, the river trip portion of our adventure draws to a close. At the take-out point, an O.A.R.S. shuttle will be waiting to give us a short ride up to the funky old mining town of Groveland, where we will stay for a night on the way to Yosemite. After getting settled in our rooms and a hot shower, we'll gather for a hearty dinner at one of the local restaurants and perhaps raise a glass in the Tuolumne's honor at California's oldest-continually-operating bar, the Iron Door Saloon.
- The following morning, after a delicious hot breakfast, we'll pass by La Casa Loma River Store, where your car is parked. Our guides and van will take us on into Yosemite, but we encourage you to bring

your own vehicle if you wish to stay longer in the Park, or are planning to continue your adventure to another destination directly from Yosemite Valley.

- Yosemite is the perfect complement to a rafting trip on the Tuolumne River. Yosemite Valley's most famous landmarks are all around us: El Capitan and Half Dome, Bridalveil Falls, the nearly 2500-foot high Yosemite Falls (the highest waterfall in North America), the gorgeous Mist Trail to Vernal Falls. Tuolumne Meadows, Yosemite's high country and much less-visited region, includes serene meadows, hundreds of lakes, jagged mountain peaks, beaches (yes, beaches!), raging waterways, gently flowing streams and dozens of glacial-carved domes. Your jaw won't stop dropping.
- Our first day in Yosemite brings us first into "the most beautiful valley in the world," where we'll get our bearings and meet our Park naturalists/guides, and then on up to the stunning Glacier Point. The Valley, dominated by Half Dome, is now below us. After a picnic lunch, we might first tackle the easy summit of Sentinel Dome before descending down the approximately five miles to famous Curry Village and our next night's accommodations. We then relax at one of the Valley's fine restaurants for dinner before returning to Curry Village for our first night of comfortable camping in canvas tent-cabins.
- The following morning, we head toward Tuolumne Meadows, leaving the crowds behind, and coming full-circle to the granite landscapes around the headwaters of the Tuolumne River. Depending on the length of our river trip, we now have one or two days to explore any number of striking vistas in Yosemite's high country. As we walk amongst the largest living organisms on Earth, or meander our way up a high-alpine trail to take in another impressive view of Half Dome, our naturalists enlighten us about the forest and meadow ecologies of the Sierra Nevada.
- Depending on the interests of the group, we might first hike amidst the enormous sequoias of the Merced Grove, or tackle the short climb to the top of Lumbert Dome, overlooking the upper reaches of the majestic Tuolumne River. A more challenging option (we have the ability to temporarily split the group up into two groups, if need be) might be the eight-mile round-trip hike to Cathedral Lake, perched at the foot of peaks dramatically carved by glaciers.
- On the fifth and last full day of our itinerary we travel to the shores of Tenaya Lake and the trail-head for the approximately 14-mile round-trip hike to the top of Cloud's Rest, with its arresting 360° vistas of Half Dome and beyond. After the breathtaking walk along the narrow granite ridge leading to the top of spectacular Cloud's Rest, we are actually 1000 vertical feet above Half Dome, and the whole 'Range of Light' stretches out around us. And all the while, our guides set you up for success, providing you with the delicious food and fluids necessary to reach personal goals and offering consistent support throughout. (This physically-challenging finale climbs well over 1,500 vertical feet, and isn't ideal for anyone with a fear of heights. Depending on your level of fitness, we are able to offer other more moderate hiking alternatives to end your adventure with a bang.)
- After breakfast on the morning of day six, we return you to your vehicle at La Casa Loma River Store, and bid you a fond farewell. If you have driven your own vehicle to Curry Village, enjoy a leisurely morning in the Valley before continuing your adventure or returning home.

What's Included?

- Skilled, personable and professional guides, and interpretive hiking naturalists
- One-two night(s) catered-camping on the river
- One night lodging in a rustic Groveland hotel
- Two-three nights in classic Yosemite tent-cabins
- Delicious meals from lunch on day one through breakfast on day six

For more information, call 1-800-346-6277 in the USA and Canada or 1-209-736-4677 outside the USA or Canada, or e-mail info@oars.com

- Expedition equipment, including two-person shared tent, sleeping bag with liner, sleeping pad, pillow with pillow case, ground cloth and dry bags to hold your gear
- High-quality inflatable rafts and related river equipment including paddle and helmet and personal flotation device, wetsuits* and splash jackets for paddlers when required (generally only for spring and cold-weather trips)
- All transfers

* Wetsuit provided does not include wetsuit booties—please bring your own, or wear wool socks with tennis shoes as a good alternative.

What's Not Included?

- Transportation to our meeting location in the Groveland area
- Pre- and post-trip accommodations and meals
- Single Supplement of \$280 per person
- Insurance of any kind
- Alcohol (except for wine and beer provided at camp on the night(s) on the Tuolumne River trip)
- Items of a personal nature (a packing list is provided as part of your Trip Planner)
- Gratuities for the guides

SOMETHING VOLUNTARY

- In reviewing your statement, you'll note a \$1/person/day donation to Tuolumne River Trust, a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting the Tuolumne River through education, restoration projects and the advocacy for a healthy watershed. One-hundred percent of these funds go directly to these environmental actions, and your contribution is tax-deductible. Visit www.tuolumne.org for more information. This donation is voluntary, and may be removed from your invoice if you choose not to participate. *Please notify our office to delete the donation from your balance.*
- The O.A.R.S. Foundation is a not-for-profit 501 (c) 3 organization with the express goal of providing opportunities for young people to experience the magic of a river trip. Visit www.oarsfoundation.org to learn more about how your tax-deductible donation can change young lives for the better.

Terms & Conditions

Reservations and Deposits

- A \$250/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 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

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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 4 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.

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