



# HELLS CANYON RAFTING ON THE SNAKE RIVER

*Itinerary*



<b>MEETING PLACE:</b>	Red Lion Hotel, Lewiston, Idaho
<b>MEETING TIME:</b>	7:00 PM, the evening before your trip
<b>RETURN TIME:</b>	Approximately 4:00-6:00 PM
<b>RIVER RATING:</b>	Class III (with 2-5 Class IV rapids, depending on water levels)
<b>RIVER MILES:</b>	31 to Pittsburg Landing, 79 to Heller Bar
<b>PUT-IN:</b>	Hells Canyon Dam
<b>TAKE-OUT:</b>	Pittsburg Landing (3-Day) or Heller Bar (5-Day)
<b>AGE LIMIT:</b>	Minimum age is 7 (12 at high water)
<b>TRIP LENGTH:</b>	3 Days / 2 Nights or 5 Days / 4 Nights
<b>BOAT OPTIONS:</b>	Oar raft, paddle raft, dory, inflatable kayak

Hells Canyon, home of the mighty Snake River, is one of the deepest gorges in North America. Marking the border between Idaho, and Oregon, Hells Canyon plunges to depths of nearly 8,000 feet between the Seven Devils range to the east and Oregon's rim country to the west. Through this tremendous gorge, the warm, clear waters of the Snake River thunder through some of the most exciting, big-wave rapids in the Northwest; in calmer sections, the Snake serves up great fishing opportunities. Hells Canyon's watery bliss is matched by its stunning rockscapes and the intriguing remnants of past inhabitants, both indigenous and transplanted, creating a rich river adventure that's hard to beat.

## **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 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, always with an eye on improvement.

## BOAT SELECTION

- Because of the river's volume, we are often able to offer the full gamut of O.A.R.S.' river vessels on the Snake River through Hells Canyon, depending on water levels, and you may be able to experience them all! Riding in an oar boat one day and a whitewater dory the next, then challenging the whitewater hands-on in a paddle raft or inflatable kayak ensures a diverse and exciting river adventure for each member of your party.

## WHITewater

- The dam-controlled Snake River flows steadily all season long, creating powerful Class III rapids and, in certain water levels, a few adrenaline-pumping Class IVs. Exuberant drops and roller-coaster wave trains provide an exciting ride, whether you're challenging the whitewater hands on in a paddle raft or inflatable kayak, bucking through the rapids in a hard-hulled dory, or just holding on as you plow right through in a stable oar boat. Periodic stretches of calm water offer plenty of chances to swim in the cooling river.

## SPECIALTY TRIPS

- **Benefit:** O.A.R.S. strives to positively impact all of the communities in which we operate. Through a strong history of social and environmental responsibility, O.A.R.S. works with local and national conservation groups and community organizations to help make the joys of the wilderness accessible to everyone, while fostering deeper appreciation and preservation of indigenous cultures and natural ecosystems. Each year, O.A.R.S. donates a portion of the proceeds (ranging from 20% to 100%) from several departures to help fund conservation efforts and local educational programming.
- **Wine on the River:** Our wine trips offer an elegant alternative to our regular departures, and combine mouth-watering menus and award-winning wines with the appeal of the wilds. After each day of vigorous river rafting, enjoy gourmet meals and premium wines introduced by regional experts. The wines are carefully chosen to complement the bill of fare each night and each winery brings its own personality to the river, where the tastings can turn into blending seminars or heated discussions of Old World versus New World wine making. Rest assured that whatever direction we take, these trips inevitably result in an outrageously good time.
- **Family trips:** The Snake River through Hells Canyon is an excellent family river trip, offering something for every generation. Inflatable kayaking, spotting wildlife, swimming, fishing, and hiking are activities the whole family will love—even your teenagers won't mind spending quality time with Mom and Dad in this setting! Floating down a river, cares and worries are swept away as fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, come closer together with each passing mile. TV, computers and telephones are replaced with campfires, tents and time on the water—memorable moments that you'll share with your kids. Since we take care of trip details including meal planning and preparation, your time is free to enjoy yourself and one another. Our Family Friendly departures are specifically designed with your children in mind.

## Sample Itinerary

We pride ourselves in running a relaxed and flexible schedule. Every trip is different depending upon the group, other trips on the water and sometimes the weather. The following is a sample of what your trip might be like.

## The Day before Your Trip

- We'll meet at 7:00 PM in the Red Lion Hotel for a pre-trip meeting. This is an opportunity to meet your fellow travelers and trip leader and ask any last-minute questions. Your trip leader will give you a thorough trip orientation, and pass out your waterproof river bags so that you can pack your belongings that evening. If you are not able to attend the meeting, please let us know in advance and then be

certain to check for a message at the desk of your hotel upon your arrival in Lewiston.

## **Day 1**

- We'll meet early at the Red Lion Hotel for our departure from Lewiston at 7:30 AM on a charter flight to Halfway, Oregon. An appropriate introduction to our journey ahead, this flight offers a spectacular bird's-eye view of our pathway through Hells Canyon, and is often considered a favorite highlight of the trip. From the landing strip, we'll shuttle to our put-in point just below Hells Canyon Dam where our colorful boats and your O.A.R.S. crew await. After an informative safety talk and some brief paddle raft/inflatable kayak instruction, we're off on our river adventure!
- Our first day generally sets the pace for our river trip. Typically, we spend a few hours on the water in the morning, sometimes stopping for a short hike, a swim, or a visit to Nez Perce pictographs or another historical site. Come lunchtime, we pull over and enjoy a delicious picnic on the shores of the river. After feasting and relaxing (or perhaps swimming, a game of Frisbee, or a nature walk), we get back in our boats for more exciting whitewater. Be sure to try your hand at the paddleboat and inflatable kayak! Mid-to late-afternoon we 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). 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 a satisfying feast, the evening is yours to spend however you wish. Maybe music, stories, or jokes will bring us together tonight; perhaps 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.

## **Day 2**

- Your day begins with the morning light turning the canyon walls the colors of sunrise. Fresh coffee and tea are waiting for you when you get up; grab a cup, sit back, and take in the glory of the awakening river. Soon breakfast is served—omelets made to order, blueberry pancakes, sizzling bacon, fresh fruit, and juice are among the treats in which you'll indulge. Once you've eaten your fill, you'll pack up your things as the guides break down camp. Then our new day's adventure begins.
- Today is an exciting whitewater day, culminating in two of Hells Canyon's biggest rapids: Wild Sheep and Granite. Our anticipation builds as we stop at the top of each rapid, looking down at the thundering whitewater that awaits us. Those of us brave enough to paddle the inflatable kayaks get some last-minute instruction before we challenge the big waves and drops, flying through the frothy rapids and coming out slightly wet (maybe very wet!), but elated.
- As the roiling rapids give way to more gentle stretches, we may stop and hike up Granite Creek for viewing Native American pictographs. Or, perhaps we'll float down to Bernard Creek for a hike to McGaffee Cabin—a homestead preserved from the early 1900s—and panels of pictographs.
- This section of the Snake River offers excellent trout fishing. During periods of calmer water, or perhaps at lunch today, the anglers in the group will have some great opportunities to cast their line in deep pools.

## **Days 3-4**

- Whitewater action continues with big hits like Waterspout, Rush Creek, Somers Creek, Tryon, Lookout Creek, Five Pine, Wild Goose, and Deer Head rapids—some of which are great for swimming!
- A visit to Kirkwood Historic Ranch and Museum provides a taste of living history, exhibiting the lifestyle

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of Hells Canyon's inhabitants in the 1930s. This is also the site of extensive historic and prehistoric Indian artifacts, which are displayed and interpreted in the Kirkwood Museum. This scenic ranch is a must-see on any Snake River trip. Further downstream, Pittsburg Landing offers an even more fascinating look at the life of the early Native Americans in Hells Canyon. Lodge rings, petroglyphs, and other artifacts still remaining on the shore teach us more about the inhabitants who prospered for thousands of years along the Snake River.

- This is the ending point of the 3-day trip. After visiting Pittsburg Landing, we'll say our goodbyes, then those of us leaving will take a three-hour ride back to Lewiston; those staying on for the 5-day trip will continue down the river. As the water becomes calmer, we'll refocus our attention on the rocky canyon walls, looking for resident wildlife—including bear, deer, elk, mountain goats, and bighorn sheep—and marveling at the majestic beauty of the deepest gorge in North America. We'll also see evidence of development and multiple-use impacts as we continue our float.
- Those looking for a challenging climb might have the chance to negotiate the steep but scenic trail to Suicide Point. Panels of Indian rock art are highlights of possible hikes to Temperance Creek and Deep Creek. The latter is also the site of a darker history; in 1887, 31 Chinese men were murdered here for their gold. Other interesting destinations for the avid to explore are Salt Creek and Coon Hollow.

## **Day 5**

- Depending on our individual trip's schedule, we could have an early start and get under way after a cold breakfast, or we may enjoy a hearty breakfast and a more leisurely pace, but we are now much more accustomed to our life in the wilderness. The thought of returning to "civilization" brings mixed emotions—sadness at leaving Hells Canyon and our new friends, and perhaps excitement at the prospect of returning to creature comforts. Our final day's float brings us past the Snake's confluence with three major rivers: the Imnaha, Salmon, and Grande Ronde. After the latter, we reach our take-out point at Heller Bar. A 45-minute shuttle ride brings us back to Lewiston, where we bid farewell to our guides and fellow travelers. It doesn't take us long to realize that although we have left the river, the river will never leave us.

## **What's Included?**

- Skilled professional guide service
- 4 (or 2) nights catered camping
- Meals from lunch on day 1 through lunch on the last day, with limited beer, wine and soda at dinner
- Expedition equipment, including 2-person shared tent, sleeping bag with liner, sleeping pad, pillow with pillow case, ground tarp and waterproof bags to hold your gear
- High quality inflatable rafts and kayaks, colorful handcrafted dories, and related river equipment including paddle, helmet and personal flotation device (PFD)
- Wetsuits and splash jackets for paddlers – weather dependent
- Transfers from Lewiston to the river and back, including a scenic charter flight

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

- Transportation to and from Lewiston, Idaho
- Pre- and post-trip accommodations and meals
- Single supplement tent (\$30 plus tax)
- Insurance of any kind, including travel insurance
- Items of a personal nature (an equipment list will be provided)
- Gratuities

## **SOMETHING VOLUNTARY**

- In reviewing your statement, you'll notice a \$1/person/day donation to Hells Canyon Preservation Council (HCPC), a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to protecting and restoring the inspiring wildlands and pure waters of the Hells Canyon-Wallowa ecosystem. One-hundred percent of these funds go directly to HCPC 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 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](http://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, please notify us as soon as possible. The cancellation fee after you've made your deposit can range 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).
- Cancellations 60 days or more prior to your trip earn a full refund less a \$100/person fee. Cancellations 59 days or less prior to your trip are not refundable.
- 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 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. cancellation policy, there will be no refund of the trip fees at that time.

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

- O.A.R.S. Dories, 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

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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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