



Snake River through Hells Canyon **ITINERARY**

(Meeting at Hells Canyon Dam)

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| MEETING PLACE: | Hells Canyon Dam, Idaho |
| MEETING TIME: | 9:00 AM (PST), the morning of your trip |
| RETURN TIME: | Afternoon of day 3 or day 5 (depending on your trip length) |
| RIVER RATING: | Class III (with 2-5 Class IV rapids, depending on water levels) |
| RIVER MILES: | 31 miles to Pittsburg Landing, 79 miles to Heller Bar |
| PUT-IN: | Hells Canyon Dam |
| TAKE-OUT: | Pittsburg Landing (3 Day) or Heller Bar (5 Day) |
| AGE LIMIT: | Minimum age is 7 (12 at high water) |
| TRIP LENGTH: | 3 days/2 nights & 5 days/4 nights |

Visiting Idaho is like stepping back in time to an America that existed hundreds of years ago—a beautifully wild land untouched by urban development. Idaho is one of America's final frontiers, featuring miles upon miles of protected wilderness areas that have changed little since appearing on the U.S. map. In the mountains, valleys, canyons, and forests of these wild regions lie outstanding opportunities for nearly any outdoor adventure imaginable—climbing, hiking, skiing, mountain biking, and our favorite, river rafting, on the roughly 3,100 miles of whitewater that pulse through Idaho's backcountry.

Hells Canyon, home of the mighty Snake River, is the deepest gorge 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.

Why Hells Canyon?

Here are just a few reasons why this is one of our most popular trips:

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. Hells Canyon is also blessed with some very pretty camps, which are well worth the hike up to their benches. These shelf camps offer the big picture view of the river and canyon walls as well as flat ground on which to pitch your tent or just throw down a ground cloth and sleeping bag for dozing under the stars.

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 well suited for families looking for an easy, yet exciting, river vacation. The dam-controlled water releases guarantee there'll be whitewater action throughout the summer, no matter when your vacation time is scheduled. Because the water is released from the top of the Hells Canyon Dam, the Snake River's water is some of the first to warm up in May and June. Warm weather, warm water that is released from the top of the reservoir, and moderate rapids make this a great trip for kids, parents, and grandparents of nearly any age. Floating down the river, cares and worries are swept away as families 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. You'll have a blast inflatable kayaking, spotting wildlife, swimming, fishing, camping—even your teenagers won't mind spending quality time with Mom and Dad in this setting! Other than helping unload the boats and carrying gear if you're able, we take care of all the details of the trip so that your time is free to enjoy yourself and one another. Ask about our Family Friendly departures: trips specifically designed with your children in mind.

FISHING

- The Snake River supports a variety of cold- and warm-water fish, including steelhead, salmon, rainbow trout, catfish, and bass. Hells Canyon is one of the last strongholds of the giant white sturgeon. The fishing here can be good, and our guides are happy to point out the best places to wet a line—so don't forget your gear!

HIKING

- The short walks available in Hells Canyon lead to historic sites, Indian rock art, and for the more intrepid, the spectacular vista from Suicide Point.

HISTORY

- Hells Canyon is filled with the remnants of ancient civilizations and more modern cultures, from archaic Native American ruins to 20th century gold mining relics. This canyon was home to the Nez Perce Indians and their ancestors for 6,000-8,000 years. Besides tangible artifacts from their life here, places like Nez Perce Crossing—where, in 1877, Chief Joseph and his band of Willowa Nez Perce were forced to leave their home, miraculously crossing the spring-flooded Snake River with all their belongings and no loss of life—tell the story of the original inhabitants of Hells Canyon. In 1806, members of the Lewis and Clark party passed through the lower reaches of the canyon in their return journey from the Pacific. The discovery of gold in nearby Pierce in 1860 and the establishment of Idaho Territory in 1863 opened the floodgates for miners, ranchers, and early river runners in the canyon, and the Snake's Old West history unfolded in their wake.

BOAT SELECTION

- Because of the river's volume, we can bring the full gamut of O.A.R.S.' river vessels on the Hells Canyon Snake River and you may 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.

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 water, and sometimes the weather. The following is a sample of what your trip might be like.

Before Your Trip

- *Please ensure you have made advance reservations to have your vehicle shuttled* from Hells Canyon Dam to Pittsburg Landing (3 day trip) or Heller Bar (5 day trip). Call Diana at **Hells Canyon Shuttle** at **1-800-785-3358** or visit <http://www.hellscanyonshuttle.com/>.

Day 1

- Meet at 9:00 AM (PST) at the put-in point just below Hells Canyon Dam where our colorful boats and your O.A.R.S. crew await. The trip leader will hand out your waterproof bags so that you can pack your belongings before we launch. After an informative safety talk and some brief paddle raft/inflatable kayak instruction, we're off on our river adventure!
- The 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 Indian 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 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. Those folks 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.

What’s Included?

- Skilled professional guide service
- 4 (or 2) nights catered camping
- Meals from lunch on Day 1 through lunch on Day 5 (or day 3), 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 cloth, and waterproof bags to hold your gear
- High quality inflatable rafts and kayaks, colorful handcrafted dories, and related river equipment including paddle, helmet, personal flotation device (PFD)
- Wetsuits and splash jackets for paddlers – weather dependent

What’s Not Included?

- Transportation to the river put-in and from the river take-out
- Pre- and post-trip accommodations and meals
- Meals not covered in the itinerary
- 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

Why Visit Idaho?

When Meriwether Lewis and William Clark first arrived in Idaho in 1805, they found a nearly impenetrable wilderness of mountains, forests, and formidable waters, a beautiful but inhospitable land. With the help of local Native Americans, the explorers found buffalo-hunting trails and navigable rivers that led them through areas rich in wildlife and innumerable plant species. The maps and journals that they created on their journey to the Pacific initially enlightened America, at that time bordered to the west by the Mississippi River, to the beauty and possibilities of the unabashed, yet intriguing, Wild West.

Today's visitors to Idaho find a much more welcoming and negotiable land than that which greeted the Lewis and Clark expedition. However, some things haven't changed a bit in 200 years. Even today, Idaho's wilderness areas are among our nation's most rugged and remote lands. All the more reason to visit this spectacular state; its peaceful, pristine wilderness regions offer a breath of fresh air—literally and figuratively—to the weary city dweller.

Here are just a few more reasons to visit Idaho:

- Mountains are the centerpieces of the state, and awe-inspiring ranges such as the **Sawtooth** and **Seven Devils** offer panoramas unmatched in the entire world. They're also a Mecca for skiing, climbing, hiking, mountain biking, and more.
- **National forests**, including the Sawtooth, Clearwater, and Payette, and **protected wilderness areas**, such as the Frank Church River of No Return and the Selway-Bitterroot, also offer a host of outdoor activities.
- **Craters of the Moon National Monument** displays a fascinating natural exhibit of basaltic volcanic formations. The resident lava fields, covered with cinder cones, so resemble the craters of the moon that astronaut Alan Shepard and his crew trained here for their lunar landing.
- Scenic **Coeur d'Alene** is a mountain resort town; its recreational center, Lake Coeur d'Alene, was once named one of the five most beautiful lakes in the world by *National Geographic*. The lake offers ample boating and fishing opportunities and the town's surrounding areas are the only place outside of India where the star garnet can be found.
- Idaho's capital, **Boise**, is a great base for excursions into the state's more rural areas. Besides offering a wide selection of accommodations and restaurants, Boise is home to museums, botanical gardens, and a notable orchestra and opera. One of the city's particularly interesting museums is the **World Center for Birds of Prey**, where live eagles and falcons are viewable, as well as other exhibits on biology, ecology, and conservation.
- A popular health resort, **Lava Hot Springs** features mineral springs that have likely remained the same temperature—110 degrees Fahrenheit—for 50 million years. A soak in these steaming pools is a great way to invigorate yourself after an active day of hiking or biking, which are also offered at the resort.
- Idaho's rivers, streams, and lakes are renowned for their excellent **fishing**.
- **Hells Canyon**, which straddles the border of Idaho and Oregon, is the deepest gorge in North America. It is home to an abundance of wildlife—elk, mountain goats, bighorn sheep, cougars, bear, and various birds, to name a few. The tremendous **Hells Canyon National Recreation Area** protects over 650,000 acres of this region, from the Snake River through Hells Canyon to the alpine lakes of the Seven Devils. Outdoor activities, such as hiking, fishing, and boating on the warm waters of the Snake, abound in this federally protected area.

Why O.A.R.S.?

O.A.R.S. has been in business since 1969 and that is no accident. Great trips on some of the world's best rivers, coastlines, and mountains are the recipe for this success. Always focused on our clients and their vacations, it is our genuine—if not biased—belief that river trips and wilderness vacations are extremely valuable life experiences. That said, we have committed ourselves over the years to providing the best trips available, always with an eye on improvement. Here are a few things we believe set our trips apart:

EXPERIENCE

- In 1969, O.A.R.S. became the first exclusively oar-powered rafting outfitter to offer river trips through the Grand Canyon. The immediate success of these trips inspired founder and President George Wendt to expand his business into the largest and most geographically diverse rafting, sea kayaking, and multi-sport company in North America.

Since 1969, the family-owned and operated company has shared in the world's waterways with more than 450,000 guests. With more than 75 itineraries on over 35 rivers and coastlines worldwide, four decades of experience in the industry, and some staff members who have been with the company since nearly the beginning, O.A.R.S. is routinely recognized for serving up some of the "Best Trips on the Planet," and for setting the standard for top-notch guides, expertise and superior customer service.

STAFF

- Our employees are the single most complimented component of our organization and the number one reason over 60% of O.A.R.S. travelers return for additional trips or are referred by past guests each year. Our reliable, responsible, and experienced guides are some of the best anywhere. All are qualified in CPR and First Aid; many have earned credentials in Wilderness First Responder, swift water rescue and Leave No Trace. They are friendly, open, and approachable, and they want to share and learn along with you. Their vast experience and knowledge of not just the river, but also the entire region, virtually guarantee an in-depth adventure and that your questions will be answered. So that our guests can take the best advantage of our guides' skills and personalities, we maintain the best guide-to-guest ratio in the business: only four guests for every guide.

The heart and soul of O.A.R.S.—from the president and founder to the more than 300 dedicated guides and employees on our team—is that we are all genuinely invested in every passenger, every trip, and every lifetime memory.

MEALS

- The meals we serve are hearty and sumptuous, complete with fresh fruits and vegetables throughout your entire journey. Our menu features great camp cooking in a wilderness atmosphere. Wake up to pancakes, omelets, or eggs cooked to order, complemented by bacon or sausage, juice, and plenty of fresh-brewed coffee, tea and cocoa. Sate your appetite at lunch with a delicious spread of cold cuts and cheese on assorted breads, hummus and veggies in soft pitas, or tasty taco salad wraps. At the dinner table, our guides' cooking skills truly shine. You may snack on hors d'oeuvres while waiting for fresh green salads, vegetables, pasta, rice, and the main course: steak, grilled salmon, Baja tacos, sizzling fajitas, or perhaps a delicious Dutch oven lasagna. Vegetarian options are available if you tell us of your preference ahead of time. And, if you can find room, there will almost always be something for dessert. Expect to eat as well – or better – than you do at home, without having to do any of the work.

EQUIPMENT

- O.A.R.S.' boats and equipment are top-of-the-line and rigorously maintained. Rest assured knowing that we use only the best and most reliable. All river-related gear is included and we offer many accessories to ensure your comfort on dry land as well. To give your camp by the river most of the comforts of home we provide sturdy tents, warm sleeping bags, and thick sleeping pads. Please check with your Adventure Consultant or refer to your trip planner for details regarding what will be included on your trip.

ECOTOURISM

- For four decades O.A.R.S. has been a leader in ecotourism. Our goal isn't simply to be one of the most environmentally responsible tour operators in the world, but to continually raise the bar and challenge other companies to raise their standards as well. From escorting congressional staffers, eco-celebrities, and politicians on the waterways of the Western U.S. to establishing a model business for ecotourism operators in Fiji, O.A.R.S. is professionally committed to the cultural and environmental well-being of the places we visit. Our main operations office in Angels Camp, California, and our warehouse and office in Flagstaff, Arizona, run on 100% solar energy, and through the support of domestic carbon offset projects that are inspected, verified and or certified by independent third parties including Green-e, the Gold Standard, CDM, and the Climate, Community and Biodiversity Alliance our company is 100% carbon neutral. Through partnerships with environmental organizations such as the Grand Canyon Conservation Fund, Idaho Rivers United, Alaska Wilderness League, American Whitewater, The International Ecotourism Society and Leave No Trace, O.A.R.S. is committed to reducing our impact on the natural world. We actively support awareness, deeper appreciation, and the preservation of rivers and wild places.
- For a detailed packing list please call us at **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 for our Snake River through Hells Canyon Trip Planner, also included in your trip confirmation packet when you book. You can shop online for all your adventure travel needs at www.oars.com in the **OARStore**.

How Do I Get to Hells Canyon?

- Hells Canyon Dam, Idaho is the meeting point of your Hells Canyon trip. Pittsburg Landing is the ending point of a three day trip. Heller Bar is the ending point for the five day trip.
- For driving directions to the dam, please use www.googlemaps.com, www.mapquest.com or www.yahoomaps.com for the most direct route from your starting point. Use Oxbow, OR 97847 as your destination point at Hells Canyon Dam.
- **Driving times to Hells Canyon Dam from**

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|----------------|------------|
| Spokane, WA | 5 ½ hours |
| Lewiston, ID | 5 hours |
| Boise, ID | 3 ½ hours |
| Seattle, WA | 6 ½ hours |
| Portland, OR | 6 hours |
| Halfway, OR | 1 ¼ hours |
| Pine Creek, OR | 50 minutes |

A Few Important Details

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 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 us at **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.

Did you know that travel related activities account for about 1/3 of the greenhouse gas emissions worldwide? Visit www.oars.com/CarbonNeutral to join O.A.R.S. in making your entire travel experience environmentally friendly and 100% carbon neutral.