



# SOUTH FORK AMERICAN RIVER WINE & RAFT

*Itinerary*



- MEETING PLACE:** American River Inn, 6600 Orleans Streets, Georgetown, CA
- MEETING TIME:** 10:00 AM
- RETURN TIME:** Approximately 5:00 PM, Mother Lode River Center on day 2
- RIVER RATING:** Class III (Moderate whitewater suitable for first-timers)
- RIVER PUT-IN:** Mother Lode River Center
- RIVER TAKE-OUT:** Salmon Falls Bridge
- MILES COVERED:** 10 river miles with 15 recognizable rapids
- AGE LIMIT:** Minimum age is 21 (Legal age for alcohol in California)
- BOAT OPTIONS:** Paddle raft (Oar rafts may be available upon request)
- TRIP LENGTH:** 2 Days

*\*\*Please fill out your Guest Registration form and return it to our office as soon as possible\*\**

The American River—flowing through the heart of California’s Gold Country—was the birthplace of the state’s gold rush in the late 1840s. The grassy foothills of the Sierra Nevada hid a great wealth along their streams and rivers until James Marshall discovered the first gold on the South Fork of the American in 1848. By the end of the following year, hundreds of thousands of hardy souls from all over the world—now known as the “49ers”—flocked to the Sierra foothills to find their fortune.

Today, some gold still remains along the shores of the American, but the main attraction on the South Fork is no longer a precious metal. Adventure lovers discover a different treasure on this stretch of river: a wealth of fun and exciting rapids that have made it California’s most popular whitewater run!

## 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.

## WHITEWATER

Water levels sufficient for rafting on the South Fork of the American River during the summer months are a result of releases from hydroelectric facilities located upstream. Such water releases are not subject to the control of El Dorado County or commercial rafting companies. It is important for our guests to understand that the water flow on

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the American is directly related to demand for hydropower. Fortunately, there is a relatively predictable flow schedule in place so we can maximize the whitewater excitement. We run the river in 12- to 14-foot inflatable rafts—each craft under the direction of a professional river guide.

### **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:

#### **DAY ONE**

- Our driver will meet you at 10:00 AM at the American River Inn at 6600 Orleans St, Georgetown, CA (Main & Orleans Streets), please be prompt. Guest vehicles will remain at the inn's parking area throughout your wine tour.
- We will begin a scenic drive through El Dorado County's Wine Country. Wine tasting includes visits to several wineries of your choice. Options include, but are not limited to: Madroña Vineyards, Venezio Vineyards, Auriga Wine Cellars, Lava Cap Winery, Boeger Winery, Sierra Vista Vineyards and Winery and Holly's Hill Vineyards. The number of stops and destinations depends upon the group, however, we expect to visit 2-3 wineries prior to lunch.
- We will stop mid-day for a gourmet picnic lunch, provided by O.A.R.S.
- We will continue with approximately 2-3 more wine tasting stops before returning you to the American River Inn at approximately 5:00 PM at which time you may check in. The evening is yours to relax and enjoy dinner on your own. There are several restaurants located near the American River Inn (see Page 8).

#### **DAY TWO**

- Drive your vehicle from the American River Inn approximately 15 minutes down the road to meet your O.A.R.S. guides at the Mother Lode River Center in Coloma at 11:00 AM. We'll have lunch at our riverside camp and then get you outfitted with all necessary equipment. After a thorough safety talk and some practice paddle strokes, we will begin rafting the South Fork American River *Gorge Run*.
- We will follow the river as it spills through the narrow granite walls of *The Gorge*. The sudden tightening of the river corridor along with a now steeper gradient creates some of the biggest, most exciting whitewater on the South Fork American River, including Fowler's Rock, Satan's Cesspool and Hospital Bar.
- Flat water near the Salmon Falls Bridge means the end of your rafting experience and take-out. There is a short, steep hill from the river's edge to where our shuttle vehicles wait for us. Although our guides very much appreciate any help in carrying the rafts and other equipment up to the vehicles, it is not required or even encouraged if you are not in good physical condition. Beverages, including cold soda or juice, will be available.
- We will return you to your vehicles parked at Mother Lode River Center at approximately 5:00 PM.

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

- Skilled professional driver and guide services
- One day of wine tasting tours around our local vineyards
- One night lodging (based on double occupancy)
- Meals as outlined in the sample itinerary above
- High-quality inflatable rafts and related river equipment
- Personal Floatation Device (P.F.D.) to be worn on river at all times
- Transfer to El Dorado wineries from the American River Inn
- A shuttle from the river take-out to your vehicle at Mother Lode River Center
- El Dorado Wine Country map

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

- Pre- and post-trip accommodations

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- Meals not covered in the itinerary
- Alcohol (other than wine tasting)
- Single supplement \$65
- Wetsuits (available for rent on early season or cold weather trips)
- Items of personal nature (see suggested packing list)
- Insurance of any kind, including travel insurance
- Gratuities

## SOMETHING VOLUNTARY

- In reviewing your statement, you'll notice a \$1/person/day donation to American Rivers, a non-profit conservation organization dedicated to Wild and Scenic Rivers. One-hundred percent of these funds go directly to protecting Wild and Scenic Rivers 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 if that is your choice.*
- 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.

## TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

### Rendezvous

- The meeting point for O.A.R.S.' **South Fork of the American Wine and Raft** trip is the American River Inn located at 6600 Orleans St (Main and Orleans Streets) in Georgetown, CA

### Getting to the American River Inn

#### By Auto

- **From Sacramento on U.S. Hwy 50:** Take U.S. Hwy 50 east toward Placerville and Lake Tahoe. In Placerville, take Hwy 49 north (turn left at Spring Street) toward Coloma. Go one (1) mile on Hwy 49 to Hwy 193 (at the Acapulco Restaurant). Turn right at Hwy 193, heading north toward Georgetown. In Georgetown, turn right on Main Street. The American River Inn is at the corner of Main and Orleans Streets.
- **From South Lake Tahoe:** Take U.S. Hwy 50 west toward Placerville. In Placerville, take Hwy 49 north (turn right at Spring Street) toward Coloma and follow the directions above.
- **From Reno/North Lake Tahoe:** Take I-80 west toward Auburn and Sacramento. In Auburn take Hwy 49 south/193 (Elm Street) toward Cool. Turn left to stay on Hwy 193 E/Georgetown Rd. The distance to Georgetown is 12 miles. Make a left on Main St/Wentworth Springs Rd. The American River Inn will be on the right.
- **From American River Inn to the Mother Lode River Center:** The distance is less than 11 miles, and the trip should take approximately 15-20 minutes. Turn right onto Main Street. Go to stop sign. Cross Hwy 193. Go approximately 50 yards and take a left on Marshall Road. Stay on Marshall Road for nine (9) miles to the stop sign at Hwy 49. Turn right on Hwy 49 and travel 1 1/2 miles to the Mother Lode River Center.

#### Mileage and Driving Times:

- |                         |           |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| • From San Francisco    | 3 hours   | 140 miles |
| • From San Jose         | 3.5 hours | 175 miles |
| • From Sacramento       | 1 hour    | 50 miles  |
| • From South Lake Tahoe | 2 hours   | 62 miles  |
| • From North Lake Tahoe | 2 hours   | 98 miles  |
| • From Reno             | 2.5 hours | 130 miles |
| • From Los Angeles      | 8 hours   | 420 miles |



**By Air**

- The closest major airport is in Sacramento (SMF), which is served by most major airlines and car rental companies. Oakland (OAK), San Francisco (SFO) and Reno (RNO) are within a 3-hour drive.

**By Van Shuttle from the Sacramento Airport:**

- [www.folsomlakeexpress.com](http://www.folsomlakeexpress.com) 916-984-3046
- [www.folsomairporter.com](http://www.folsomairporter.com) 916-983-7257

**Pre- and Post-Trip Accommodations**

- We recommend that you make reservations well in advance in order to guarantee lodging
- Riverside camping is available with O.A.R.S. at the Mother Lode River Center

**Motels**

- Gold Country Inn, Placerville (530) 622-3124 [www.goldcountryinnplacerville.com](http://www.goldcountryinnplacerville.com)
- Mother Lode Motel, Placerville (530) 522-0895 [www.placervillmotherlodemotel.com](http://www.placervillmotherlodemotel.com)

**Bed & Breakfast Inns**

- American River Inn, Georgetown (800) 245-6566 [www.americanriverinn.com](http://www.americanriverinn.com)
- Coloma Country Inn, Coloma (530) 622-6919 [www.colomacountryinn.com](http://www.colomacountryinn.com)
- The Sierra Nevada House (530) 626-8096 [www.sierranevadahouse.com](http://www.sierranevadahouse.com)

**RV Camping**

- Camp Lotus (530) 622-8672
- American River Resort (530) 622-6700

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## PACKING FOR YOUR TRIP

### Footwear

The best choice is an amphibious shoe that drains water, won't come off in swirling current and protects your toes from stubbing and the tops of your feet from sunburning. An old pair of tennis shoes will work almost as well. Sport sandals with a heel strap are OK. "Water socks" are not a recommended option and flip flops or "Crocs" are not acceptable. For trips in the spring, we recommend wearing shoes along with wool or neoprene socks to keep your feet warm. Wetsuit booties with a reinforced sole are also a good option.

### Clothing

We recommend starting with bathing suit/swim trunks and a lightweight synthetic shirt, then adding layers of synthetic long underwear and fleece as needed. It can be cool in the morning even during mid-summer.

### Sun Protection

Protecting yourself from the sun should be taken very seriously. A hat, sunscreen, lip balm & sunglasses are a must.

### Suggested Packing List

- Comfortable, casual clothes for wine tasting
- Sunscreen & lip protection: waterproof and SPF 30 or higher
- Water bottle with securing clip
- Shade hat/visor
- Sunglasses (preferably polarized) with securing strap
- Bathing suit
- Shorts (long board shorts preferable for sun protection) and quick drying top
- River/tennis shoes or river sandals with heel strap
- Wetsuit (for April – early June trips only)
- Synthetic long underwear (for spring and fall trips)

### Rentals

- **Wetsuits:** With advance notice, wetsuits may be rented for \$10 per person (**only necessary on some early-season 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. 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.**

### Reminders

- **ALWAYS BE PREPARED FOR CHANGEABLE WEATHER!** Especially during the months of April, May and early June, California can experience extreme changes in weather.
- **To avoid being cold:** Synthetic long underwear is a must-have on river trips in the spring and fall. It can be worn under shorts, rain gear, T-shirts, etc. and keeps you warm even when wet.
- **Wearing cotton items on a river trip is only appropriate when the weather is hot. Wet cotton will chill your body temperature.**

### Commercial Photographs

There are several professional companies taking photos of each raft at some of the South Fork's larger rapids, which provide some great action shots. These companies are not affiliated with O.A.R.S. and you will need to contact them separately to purchase these pictures. Hot Shot Imaging is conveniently based in Lotus; visit them after your South Fork of the American trip at their storefront on Hwy 49 to order pictures: (530) 621-0400

### Extra Gear

We recommend that you leave your valuables at home or in your private vehicle and take on the river only what's absolutely necessary. We recommend that you leave dry shoes and clothing in your car as well to ensure a comfortable drive home.

### 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.wunderground.com](http://www.wunderground.com)

[Low](#)   [High](#)   [Water Temperature](#)

April	42	69	58
May	47	77	60
June	52	84	66
July	57	92	68
August	55	90	67
September	53	85	66

### **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, please remember to bring a personal check or cash, since Mother Lode River Center does not have an ATM.

### **A Few Important Details**

#### **Reservations and Deposits**

- A \$125/person deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance is due 30 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 \$15/person charge up until 30 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 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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