



Welcome to R.O.A.M.'s **KLINAKLINI EXPEDITION** **Heli-Rafting through Glaciers & Mountains**

Getting Started

Welcome to the Klinaklini Heli-Raft Expedition: an unforgettable river trip through some of British Columbia's most spectacular glacial wilderness. To fully enjoy this adventure, please take the time to familiarize yourself with the information provided. We want to be with you every step of the way in your expedition preparations so please do not hesitate to call if you have any questions or concerns.

Notes from the River

A letter from Brian McCutcheon

In the autumn of 1996 we flew into the Coast Mountain Range of Southwestern British Columbia for an exploratory look at a river expedition. Some colleagues that worked on the film, *Seven Years from Tibet*, had told us about an impressive watershed they had flown over during filming and descriptions alone prompted the flight.

With Knight Inlet, a stunning fjord penetrating 60 miles into the mountains from the Pacific Ocean on our left and flanked by British Columbia's highest mountains, the Klinaklini River did not disappoint us. Wrestling its way from the Chilcotin Interior to the Pacific Coast it harbors some of the most dramatic scenery we had ever seen.

I realize that is hard for people in the lower 48 to comprehend that there are vast tracks of wilderness and un-navigated waterways less than 200 miles north of Vancouver. However, if you ever have a chance to fly over this region you will soon see how this can be true. The Coast Mountains have proven over the test of time to be a formidable opponent to development, let alone explorers. Stretching up as far as the Yukon, these mountains are the birthplace of many raging rivers flowing out to the Pacific. The Klinaklini is one of the prize jewels.

After months of preparation, and *Men's Journal Magazine* along to cover the event, we attempted the first ever descent of the Klinaklini. Our expedition utilized two floatplanes, a helicopter and a host of professional river runners. In August of the same year, we operated the first-ever commercial trip. It is exciting to have been involved in a part of history and be able to develop a state of the art expedition allowing participants to travel where it was once thought unimaginable.

It is ironic that technology now allows us to access regions of the earth where we go to escape technology. Like a magic carpet, you visit untouched alpine meadows and diamond blue glaciers. Unlike explorers of the past we are blessed with the comforts of home as well.

Brian McCutcheon founded Rivers & Oceans in 1985 and has been operating rafting and kayaking trips in British Columbia since the late eighties. In 2000, we changed to Rivers Oceans And Mountains as the addition of "mountains" better reflects the topography of the regions we visit. In 1997, Brian orchestrated the first-ever descent of the Klinaklini River. Since then, he has run the Klinaklini more than any other person. When not out on the water, Brian is the Managing Director of ROAM from our offices in Nelson, British Columbia.

Why the Klinaklini?

If you want to go where only a handful of people has ever rafted, this is the trip for you. The Klinaklini was descended for the first time in 1997 with *Men's Journal Magazine* and writer Steve Jermanok covering the event. Other magazines such as *SELF*, *Harper's* and even *Marie Claire* have all followed suit. Since then, Brian and company has led all the other trips down the corridor. Why? First, the river is remote – native populations did not even inhabit the upper river because of inaccessibility. Second, it requires remarkable logistics to complete the journey – all of our equipment and supplies must be flown in advance and we heli-portage to traverse an impassible canyon. But you won't notice all the behind-the-scenes work. While guides look after the portage, you can enjoy a remarkable day of heli-hiking through vast glacial ice fields and high alpine meadows.

Today, this carefully planned state of the art expedition allows participants to travel where it was once thought unimaginable. And yet, the Klinaklini is a great trip for even those with no rafting history. It is a unique experience to raft through the dramatic Coastal Mountains, past glaciers and the highest peak in British Columbia. When we finally emerge at the Pacific Coast, it is into Knight Inlet, a 60-mile long fjord that meets the sea at the north end of Vancouver Island. This area defines the notion of pristine wilderness, nature's purest form. Discover immense ice caves, wide plateaus of wildflowers and crystal clear air. It seems impossible to imagine that Vancouver and the rush of civilization are just an hour's flight away.

The Terrain

Our trip begins with a dramatic flight into the only calm stretch of the river system at Klinaklini Lake. On the way, we will ride up and over the Coast Mountain range passing many peaks shrouded by glaciers. We spend the first days on the main river of the Klinaklini, a narrow, intimate part of the river with many stretches of big, steep splashy whitewater. Later, we detour to the western arm for a layover day of walking on a glacier. Then, the final days are spent dodging icebergs while the river's course literally loops around Mt. Waddington, B.C.'s highest peak. With the river finishing at sea level and Waddington's summit in excess of 14,000 feet, the vertical difference is greater than that of Everest base camp and its peak. Our trip culminates with a steady current carrying us through giant forests of cedar and valley meadows before spilling into a tidal lagoon on the Pacific Ocean.

The River

Rafting the Klinaklini River offers the adventurous traveler a bounty of images and experiences. No previous experience is required, yet there are exciting stretches of whitewater ranging from Class III – V rapids. Both of the Class V drops are optional, as portage routes have been developed, but the long stretches of Class IV waves cannot be avoided. The Klinaklini canyon is impassible and heli-portage is mandatory.

Cultural Notes

In June of 1919, a rowboat powered by a 2 1/2-horse motor, headed into the 90-mile long Knight Inlet. In it were Jim and Laurette Stanton, abandoning city life to seek contentment in the wilderness. For decades they eked out a precarious living by trapping, fishing and hand logging the mouth of the Klinaklini River. Both of the Stantons considered the abundant grizzly bear as their friends, not enemies. At times, four bears slept within 100 yards of their cabin. So plentiful were the bears that Jim would encounter six a day on his trap line and Laurette even helped raised three orphaned cubs.

Professional Guides Services

Our river guides are as impressive as the scenery and passionate about their work. Seasoned professionals, they are delighted to pass on their knowledge and skills. As university and college

graduates, they have strong backgrounds in natural history, geology and anthropology. They also have knowledge of the local region and its folklore. Part chef, part naturalist, trained in wilderness first aid and professionally certified, our leaders are eager to please and will ensure you have a memorable experience.

Equipment

We utilize state-of-the-art self-bailing rafts. The rafts have been designed with center mount oar rigs and allow participants the option of paddling or just soaking up the views. For those unfamiliar with self-bailing boats, the benefits are revolutionary. As water enters the boat, it collects on the inflated floor then drains out through grommet holes along each side.

Weather

The weather from the end of June to mid September is the best of the year. Temperatures can reach the high 80's (deg F) during the day and drop to the mid 50's at night. It is the driest time of the year but our equipment list prepares us for the occasional shower.

Wildlife and Flora

Provincial wildlife officials estimate that there are hundreds of resident grizzly bears living in the Klinaklini Valley and sightings are virtually guaranteed. Other mammals often seen include wolf, wolverine, lynx, marten, mink and moose. In the latter parts of the season, hundreds of bald eagles congregate on the river to feast on the spawning salmon and steelhead. Other birds of prey include the golden eagle, rough legged hawk, red tailed hawk and peregrine falcon.

Mergansers are found throughout the river system and we may see flocks of Canada geese on their migration southward. A variety of songbirds also call the Klinaklini home. All five species of Pacific salmon and steelhead spawn in the Klinaklini during the months of August and September; rainbow trout mingle in their midst. The main insect season is over by the middle of summer and the few remaining mosquitoes will be of little concern.

The forests in the Klinaklini are in their natural state. The upper Klinaklini is forested with pine, spruce and fir. The lower river valleys are forested with stands of giant cedar and hemlock and carpeted by verdant, rich layers of thick mosses and ferns.

Fishing

Our first night at Nimpo Lake boasts some excellent fishing. The Klinaklini supports dolly varden and rainbow trout on the upper river while record-size salmon spawn on the lower river. We suggest you bring a rod with case and the smallest of tackle boxes with the appropriate lures or flies. People wishing to fish should purchase a license in Vancouver or at Stewart's Lodge.

Personal Preparation

No previous river experience is required. Your guides will give you an orientation to safe rafting and expedition practices on the first day and teach you all the basic skills that you'll require to enjoy the trip. Our prime consideration is to provide you with a trip that is as safe and comfortable as possible while still maintaining the integrity of a wilderness experience. A high level of fitness is not a prerequisite for participation as our trips can be as relaxing or challenging, as you like. However, regular exercise before any outdoor experience will certainly add to your enjoyment. All participants will be required to complete a medical questionnaire prior to departure.

Ecological Sentiment

We are committed to the preservation of Canada's wilderness habitat. Our excursions are designed to promote an understanding of the delicate ecosystems that make our province unique while preserving their fundamental integrity. We ask participants to share our concern for the environment by practicing low impact touring in this sensitive area. ROAM operates on a "no trace" policy meaning we travel in a self-contained manner, carrying in what we require and carrying out all garbage and human waste. We believe the survival of the natural environment and the wildlife it supports depends on establishing an economy beyond simple resource harvesting. Our goal is to immerse our clients in Canada's vast natural beauty that, in turn, supports eco-tourism as a viable, economic choice.

Safety and Personal Responsibility

Expedition rafting, like everything else, is a very safe and enjoyable sport if done properly and professionally. Safety is our utmost concern and a satellite phone will be carried in case of any emergencies. It is important however, that each expedition member realize that there are inherent risks involved in river rafting, as there are in many other outdoor activities. Individuals must be responsible for their own actions and accountable for their own decisions. To acknowledge this assumption of risk, each expedition member is required to read, understand and sign a liability release form. We will provide you with all the information you require to make your decision about joining us or taking part in any specific activity. We will support any decision made by expedition members to opt out of any activity that they are concerned about or feel is beyond their capabilities.

Registration

Due to the small group size and limited departure dates, we encourage participants to book as soon as possible to avoid disappointment. In order to confirm your space on the trip, we only require a \$500 non-refundable deposit. Upon receipt of deposit, we will send you a letter of confirmation, pre-departure information, equipment list, medical questionnaire and an acknowledgement of risk release form. The latter two items should be returned to our office with the balance of payment due 90 days prior to departure. All payments are non-refundable so we recommend purchasing trip cancellation insurance at the time of deposit. Trips start and finish in Vancouver, British Columbia.

What's Included?

- All helicopter and float plane transfers as outlined in itinerary
- Accommodation at Stewart's Lodge on first night
- Professional guide services
- All meals from Dinner Day 1 through Lunch Day 7
- Vintage wines, liqueurs, imported and micro brew beer
- Expedition equipment, including 2-person shared tent, sleeping bag & pad, life jacket, wetsuit, spray jacket and dry bags
- All park fees and necessary permits

What's Not Included?

- Pre-trip accommodations (Day Zero) in Vancouver
- Items of a personal nature and equipment outlined in personal equipment list
- Fishing gear and license
- Gratuities

Klinaklini Expedition – Sample Itinerary

Day Zero (Saturday)

Today is your arrival day in Vancouver. Downtown Vancouver is approximately a 20-minute taxi ride from the airport. Please check your trip planner for recommendations on accommodations.

Day One (Sunday)

We meet for our **12:00 Noon** flight at the SOUTH TERMINAL of the Vancouver Airport. (Remember this is not the main Vancouver airport terminal.) Please make sure your gear is packed in soft luggage. This will allow for easy storage and transfer of your gear into waterproof river bags. As soon as everyone's gear is stowed we will board our chartered plane for the incredible flight over the mountains and glaciers to Stewart's Lodge. Here we will meet our guides, check into our rooms and enjoy the evening at the lodge. A lakeside view at dinner and an evening to go over last minute details and issuing expedition equipment will help you settle into the moods and rhythms of the trip.

Day Two (Monday)

After a hearty breakfast, it's into the floatplanes for a spectacular flight to Klinaklini Lake. Upon arrival we will go through the safety procedures for the trip (including a grizzly bear briefing) and teach any would-be paddlers the basics. Depending on timing and water levels we will make our first camp just below The Little Drop of Horrors rapid (which was the very first descent ever by our guides in 1997). Those not wishing this Class V excitement can easily walk around this section on a portage route and there is an ideal point for taking photos of the rafts cascading through this dramatic drop.

Day Three (Tuesday)

After a riverside breakfast, we will board the rafts for a beautiful day on the water. Today will be our longest rafting stretch. We will raft a few Class III rapids before lunching at "Nobody Move" rapids. The largest drop of the trip, the guides will scout the river and decide on the options of running this incredible stretch of whitewater. If we can run the drop, participants will once again be given the opportunity to paddle or hike. The afternoon will feature some easy but continuous Class III rapids, which are reminiscent of the White Mile on the Chilko. Tonight's camp is below the North Klinaklini confluence. Here the glaciers and wildlife will inspire us for more adventure.

Day Four (Wednesday)

Today we will raft into the heart of the mountainous terrain. Surrounded by Waddington and Silverthorne, you will be overwhelmed by the size and scope of this land of legends. Tonight we will camp above the upper reaches of Klinaklini Canyon where not even the most intrepid adventurers dare travel. A prime wildlife viewing habitat, we will explore its wilderness with a few of the guides, while others help prepare another delicious riverside dining experience. The balance of the day is available for hiking, walking, photography, sitting by the campfire or just staring in wonder at the incredible views.

Day Five (Thursday)

Today the helicopter arrives to whisk us to places unimaginable. Alpine meadows and views of the enormous Klinaklini glacier make for an unforgettable day of hiking and exploring. Soon after, your magic carpet will drop you at our new camp at the foot of the glacier where icebergs calve into our secluded lake.

Day Six (Friday)

Today we will have a layover day. This will allow us to hike the lateral moraine, walk on the glacier and for the more adventurous, hike up to the ice caves. There should be plenty of time for hot showers, reading a good book and simply immersing yourself in this spectacular scenery.

Day Seven (Saturday)

Today we will enter the West Klinaklini River which features countless massive wave trains that roller coaster for miles in a rushing chorus. An exciting section of river, its speed dissipates as the river broadens and braids. This region is prime for sighting many of the 200 bird species that call the Klinaklini home. As the river widens, we will pick up the scent of salt air as we float into the magical Knight Inlet and a tidal lagoon, which is famous for its grizzly bears. You'll say good-bye to your guides and board your floatplane back to Vancouver rich with new experiences, new friends and fantastic memories. Weather permitting; we should arrive in Vancouver at approximately 6:00 PM.

A Few Important Details

Reservations and Deposits

- A \$500/person non-refundable deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance is due 90 days prior to departure.

Cancellations and Refunds

- If you find it necessary to cancel your trip, please notify us as soon as possible. *All cancellations are not refundable.* We regret we cannot make exceptions for personal emergencies. For this reason, **we strongly urge you to investigate trip insurance** (see Insurance).
- If you transfer from one trip to another, there is a \$50/person charge up until 90 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 R.O.A.M. trip. People with heart trouble and pregnant women should have their physician's approval before taking an adventure travel trip.

Insurance

- Although every effort is made to ensure a safe trip for all, **we require that you purchase medical emergency evacuation insurance** and also 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, evacuation could be prolonged, difficult, and expensive. Personal belongings and cameras are carried entirely at the owner's risk, and we accept no responsibility for lost, damaged, delayed, or stolen property.

Acknowledgement of Risk

- Everyone is required to sign an Acknowledgement of Risk 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 R.O.A.M. cancellation policy, there will be no refund of the trip fees at that time.

Responsibility – An Important Notice

- R.O.A.M., Inc./R.O.A.M. Adventures, 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 (the trip requires a minimum of 6 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 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.

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** 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.

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