



IDAHO RIVERS GUIDE
**ADVENTURE IN ITS
NATURAL LIQUID STATE**



RAFT IDAHO

raftidaho.org

IDAHO RIVERS: ENDLESS MILES OF SMILES

Idaho's rivers truly are all things to all people. Whether you like the extremes of whitewater adventure or a relaxing drift on an urban river, Idaho is the water enthusiast's destination of choice. An outfitter is offered for every licensed river providing an experience unlike any other.

Check out **raftidaho.org** for more info.



TAKE A TOUR & BAPTIZE YOUR FREE SPIRIT

Without water, life would not only be impossible, but really boring. Thankfully, Idaho rivers provide ample opportunities to float, drift, and steer your way to a memorable day or multi-day trip. It's no wonder that Idaho is home to more miles of whitewater than anywhere else in the lower 48 states. Thing is, once you start playing in Idaho rivers, you can't stop. Good thing we've got plenty of H2O thrills to go around. **Bragging rights included.**

CLASS 5 FUN 4 STAR ACCOMMODATIONS

Whether you enjoy camping under the stars or prefer the comforts of resort-style lodging, there's nothing like living it up after roughing it on the river. Idaho's rivers carve their way through diverse, scenic landscapes that are home to some of the Northwest's most luxurious accommodations. Throughout the state, you'll find topnotch lodging complete with spas, shopping, and other activities. All a stone's throw away.





MULTI-DAY TRIPS

CHECK OUT THE CREAM OF THE CROP.
THREE TO SIX DAY TRIPS IN AND OUT OF
THE WILDERNESS...

Spend quality time on the river with friends or family in a gorgeous wilderness. No cell service. Camping on the beach. Let the gentle purr of the river current put you to sleep while you gaze at stars bright as diamonds. Raft with an outfitter who has all of the essential gear or put together your own trip. **Idaho's premium multi-day rivers:**

- MIDDLE FORK OF THE SALMON RIVER*
- SELWAY RIVER*
- MAIN SALMON RIVER*
- LOWER SALMON GORGE
- HELLS CANYON*
- OWYHEE RIVER
- JARBIDGE-BRUNEAU RIVER

*PERMIT REQUIRED BY THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE

DAY TRIPS

IDAHO NOT ONLY OFFERS RELAXING FLOATS BUT **BIG-TIME** WHITEWATER RAPIDS AND EVERYTHING IN BETWEEN.

On guided trips, outfitters offer half-day or full-day trips. These trips typically include a complimentary lunch, wet suits, helmets and a professional licensed guide. On self-guided trips, it's always good to go with someone who has solid equipment and experience. Solo kayakers will often find boaters to tag along with by hanging out at a popular launch site. **Idaho's best day trip rivers:**

- BOISE RIVER
- PAYETTE RIVER - MAIN, NORTH + SOUTH FORKS
- SALMON RIVER - RIGGINS
- SALMON RIVER - SHOUP/ NORTH FORK
- SALMON RIVER - STANLEY
- SNAKE RIVER - SOUTH FORK
- SNAKE RIVER - MURTAUGH
- SNAKE RIVER - HAGERMAN
- CLEARWATER RIVER
- ST. JOE RIVER
- MOYIE RIVER
- COEUR D'ALENE RIVER



BOISE RIVER

When the temperature hits 90 degrees in July, it's time to float the Boise River, a clear mountain stream which winds through Idaho's capital city. The main route runs for 8 miles from Barber Park, where rental rafts and tubes are available, to Ann Morrison Park. Avid anglers and whitewater boaters also flock to the South Fork and North Fork of the Boise River. The lower Boise from Glenwood Bridge to Eagle is a lesser-known urban jewel for canoeists or inflatable kayakers.

PUT-IN

BARBER PARK
IN EAST BOISE

TAKEOUT

ANN MORRISON PARK IN BOISE
(BUS SHUTTLES AVAILABLE)

SEASON..... **Late Jun-Aug**
RATING..... **Class 1-2**

MILES..... **8**
TRIP LENGTH..... **1 day**





HELLS CANYON

Hells Canyon of the Snake River, the nation's deepest gorge, features the biggest whitewater in Idaho. Run through 16-foot waves in Wild Sheep Rapids, a giant Class 4 drop, which makes the largest of rafters feel small. Steep black-rock cliffs border the river, turning to grassland and forest at higher elevations. The fishing in Hells Canyon can be spectacular for rainbow, bass, catfish, steelhead—and North America's largest freshwater fish—the white sturgeon.

FOREST SERVICE PERMIT REQUIRED.

PUT-IN	HELLS CANYON DAM NEAR CAMBRIDGE	TAKEOUT	PITTSBURG LANDING OR HELLER BAR
SEASON.....	May-Oct	MILES.....	35-79
RATING.....	Class 2-4	TRIP LENGTH.....	3-6 days

LOCHSA RIVER

Lochsa means “rough waters” in Nez Perce, and it’s an appropriate way to describe the experience of running the Class 3-4 river along U.S. Highway 12 in north-central Idaho. Springtime weather on the Lochsa can range from heavy rain to 90-degree heat, but the whitewater action on the river always proves to be fun and eventful. The climax of the trip is running Lochsa Falls, a major cataract that can flip rafts and kayaks with ease. Test your skills on the Lochsa and see how you measure up.

PUT-IN

FISH CREEK
NEAR LOLO PASS

TAKEOUT

SPLIT CREEK BRIDGE
NEAR LOWELL

SEASON..... **Apr-Early Jul**
RATING..... **Class 3-4**

MILES..... **9+**
TRIP LENGTH..... **1-3 days**





MOYIE RIVER & ST. JOE RIVER

In the spring, mountain snowmelt brings the Moyie River and the St. Joe River to life for exciting Class 2-3 adventures through cedar-lined rocky canyons. Both rivers reside in remote locations, making for an intimate experience between boater and nature. The Moyie and the St. Joe are the premium whitewater day trips close to Coeur d’Alene. Both guided and unguided trips are available. But you need to seize the day in May or June when the whitewater is running in the fun zone.

MOVIE	PUT-IN	BUZZARD CREEK	TAKEOUT	DAM RESERVOIR NEAR BONNER'S FERRY
ST. JOE	PUT-IN	GOLD FLAT	TAKEOUT	QUARTZ CREEK NEAR ST. MARIES
SEASON..... May-Jun			MILES..... 11-16	
RATING..... Class 2-3			TRIP LENGTH..... 1 day	

OWYHEE RIVER & JARBIDGE-BRUNEAU RIVER

True adventure-seekers watch the weather and river levels closely in the springtime to pull off a trip in the Owyhee River system or on the Jarbidge-Bruneau River. The challenge is to plan a trip when river levels and weather coincide with your personal schedule. If it works out, the rewards are high. The canyons are spectacular, the rapids challenging, and side hikes and camping are outstanding. A seasoned guide and a high-clearance 4-wheel drive vehicle are crucial for these river trips.

OWYHEE PUT-IN	ROME, ORE.	TAKEOUT	BIRCH CREEK OR LESLIE GULCH
JAR-BRU PUT-IN	HOT SPRINGS	TAKEOUT	NEAR TOWN OF BRUNEAU
SEASON..... Apr-Jun		MILES..... 40-65	
RATING..... Class 2-4		TRIP LENGTH..... 3-5 days	





PAYETTE RIVER

The Payette River, located just 30-45 minutes north of Boise, is an ideal whitewater training ground for kayakers and rafters. Novices start out on the Class 2-3 Main Payette River below Banks and work up to running Class 4 rapids on the South Fork, and possibly Class 5 on the North Fork. The Cabarton section of the Payette is a Class 2-3 secluded jewel near Cascade and Smith's Ferry. Park-and-play kayakers flock to the "Gutter" in Horseshoe Bend and other play spots on the Payette to practice their tricks in holes and waves.

NORTH	PUT-IN	CABARTON BRIDGE	TAKEOUT	SMITH'S FERRY
MAIN	PUT-IN	BANKS	TAKEOUT	BEEHIVE BEND
SOUTH	PUT-IN	GARDEN VALLEY OR DEAD-WOOD RIVER CONFLUENCE.	TAKEOUT	BANKS

SEASON.....	Apr-Sept	MILES.....	5-12
RATING.....	Class 1-4	TRIP LENGTH.....	½-1 day

SALMON RIVER DAY TRIPS

In three key areas of Central Idaho, the Salmon River emerges from the wilderness and provides Class 2-4 day trips near civilization. In Riggins, loosely dubbed the “Whitewater Capital of Idaho,” hundreds of people float a 12-mile section full of big waves and rapids near U.S. 95. Below Stanley, upper Salmon provides chills and spills near the old Sunbeam Dam along Idaho 75. Near the town of Salmon, a great whitewater day trip exists near near Shoup/North Fork and U.S. 93.

PUT-IN	RIGGINS, SUNBEAM OR PINE CREEK	TAKEOUT	LUCILE, TORREY’S LANDING OR PANTHER CREEK
SEASON.....	May-Sept	MILES.....	7-15
RATING.....	Class 2-4	TRIP LENGTH.....	1 day





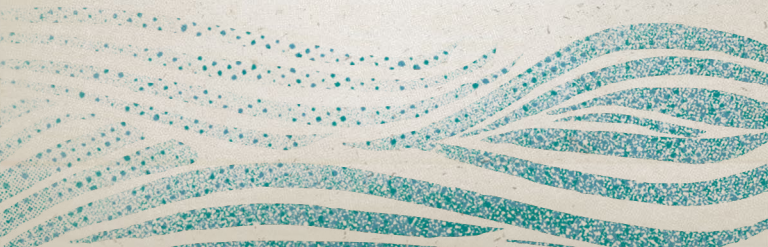
MAIN SALMON RIVER

The Main Salmon River splits the 2.3-million-acre Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, moving east to west through the heart of Idaho. The Main Salmon is considered the quintessential river trip for families because it flows more gently than the Middle Fork or the Selway. Also, there are big sandy beaches and deep pools for the kids to play in.

FOREST SERVICE PERMIT REQUIRED FOR UNGUIDED TRIPS.

LICENSED OUTFITTER REQUIRED FOR GUIDED TRIPS.

PUT-IN	CORN CREEK NEAR SHOUP	TAKEOUT	CAREY BAR NEAR RIGGINS
SEASON.....	May-Sept	MILES.....	80
RATING.....	Class 2-4	TRIP LENGTH.....	4-7 days



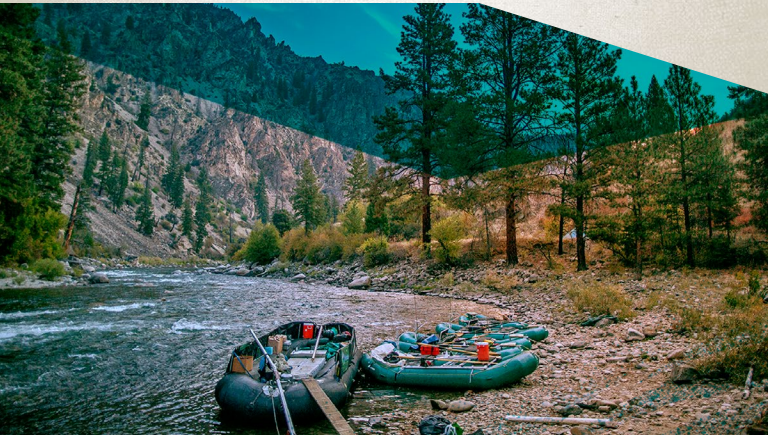
MIDDLE FORK OF THE SALMON RIVER

Watch a wild cutthroat trout leap out of a turquoise pool to catch a mayfly. Feel the exhilaration of running Rubber Rapids, a big whitewater drop in the Impassible Canyon. Sift the sand between your toes on a riverside sandy beach while sipping an evening beverage. Let your body melt in a natural hot springs pool while you watch an eagle circle in the sky overhead. These are just a few of the things you can do while enjoying a week-long wilderness river trip on the Middle Fork, one of the most popular river trips in America.

FOREST SERVICE PERMIT REQUIRED FOR UNGUIDED TRIPS.

LICENSED OUTFITTER REQUIRED FOR GUIDED TRIPS.

PUT-IN	BOUNDARY CREEK NEAR STANLEY	TAKEOUT	CACHE BAR NEAR SALMON
SEASON.....	Jun-Sept	MILES.....	102
RATING.....	Class 2-4	TRIP LENGTH.....	6-8 days





LOWER SALMON GORGE

The Lower Salmon Gorge is a close cousin to the Main Salmon, but since no permit is required it's more accessible. Families and kids love the giant sandy beaches on this trip – it's a great place to bring horseshoes and a volleyball set. It's also a great place for people to learn how to kayak in mid-summer.

PUT-IN	HAMMER CREEK NEAR WHITEBIRD	TAKEOUT	HELLER BAR NEAR LEWISTON
SEASON.....	Jun-Sept	MILES.....	50
RATING.....	Class 2-4	TRIP LENGTH.....	4-5 days



SELWAY RIVER

Buckle up and get ready for a rip-roaring whitewater adventure on the Selway River which has many challenging whitewater rapids. Expert guides are essential. The Selway cuts a 50-mile swath through the 1.2-million-acre Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness. A cedar and ponderosa pine forest adorn the river bank, and elk may be seen grazing in high-mountain meadows above.

FOREST SERVICE PERMIT REQUIRED FOR UNGUIDED TRIPS.

LICENSED OUTFITTER REQUIRED FOR UNGUIDED TRIPS.

PUT-IN	PARADISE GUARD STATION NEAR DARBY, MT	TAKEOUT	SELWAY FALLS NEAR LOWELL
	SEASON..... Jun-Aug RATING..... Class 4		MILES..... 50 TRIP LENGTH..... 5-7 days

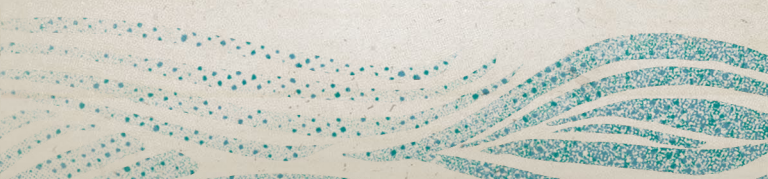




Snake River Day Trips

The Snake River, as it cuts a crescent-shaped path across southern Idaho, features several dynamite scenic floating sections, as well as action-packed whitewater. The South Fork of the Snake River is a gorgeous day trip in Swan Valley with outstanding trout fishing. Near Twin Falls, two sections of the Snake, the Class 4+ Murtaugh and Class 3 Milner, are great float trips when water is available. Scenic floats below Shoshone Falls and in the Hagerman area are available all summer long. Guided trips are available on all stretches of the Snake River and Middle Snake River areas near Twin Falls.

PUT-IN	SWAN VALLEY; HAGERMAN; TWIN FALLS AREA	TAKEOUT	HEISE; BLISS; TWIN FALLS AREA
SEASON.....	May-Aug	MILES.....	6-20
RATING.....	Class 1-4+	TRIP LENGTH.....	1 day



GNARLY CLASS 5 RIVERS

World-class boaters flock to Idaho in the spring and summer to test their skills on some of the most challenging Class 4+ to Class 5 whitewater trips in the nation. The end of the North Fork of the Payette River, with 15 miles of continuous Class 5 rapids, is considered to be one of the toughest rivers to tackle top to bottom in one day. The South Fork of the Clearwater is considered a close cousin to the North Fork, with equally gnarly Class 5 drops, but with a much shorter season. The South Fork of the Salmon, a little-known Class 4+ gem, is a favorite among locals for 2-day trips.

NO GUIDED TRIPS ARE AVAILABLE ON ANY OF THESE STREAMS AND ARE CONSIDERED "SPECTATER-VIEWING" OR "EXPERT ONLY."

PUT-IN	N. FORK OF PAYETTE SMITH'S FERRY	TAKEOUT	BANKS
PUT-IN	S. FORK CLEARWATER NEAR ELK CITY	TAKEOUT	KOOSKIA
PUT-IN	S. FORK SALMON NEAR YELLOW PINE	TAKEOUT	MACKAY BAR
SEASON..... Apr-Sept		MILES..... 5-40	
RATING..... Class 4+-5		TRIP LENGTH..... 1-2 days	



INFORMATION & RESOURCES

- Find an outfitter at raftidaho.org or ioga.org
- Find lodging at visitidaho.org
- Apply for a permit at www.fs.usda.gov/scnf

THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE HAS ONE APPLICATION FORM FOR ALL FOUR RIVERS IN IDAHO WHERE A PERMIT IS REQUIRED: SELWAY RIVER, MIDDLE FORK SALMON RIVER, HELLS CANYON OR MAIN SALMON RIVER. APPLICATIONS ARE DUE BY JAN 31 EACH YEAR, AND THE PERMIT WINNERS WILL BE NOTIFIED BY LATE FEBRUARY OR EARLY MARCH. PEOPLE WHO UTILIZE THE SERVICES OF AN OUTFITTER ON A PERMITTED RIVER DO NOT NEED A PERMIT OF THEIR OWN.

EUROPEAN RATING SCALE

CLASS 1 – Flatwater with no obstacles

CLASS 2 – Small waves and riffles; easy navigation


CLASS 3 – Large waves with clear navigation channel; can swamp a canoe

CLASS 4 – Technically challenging rapids with multiple maneuvers required

CLASS 5 – Extremely violent rapids with multiple hazards and high chance of boat-flips

CLASS 6 – Unrunnable waterfall

NO MATTER THE CLASS, ALL MOVING WATER PRESENTS SOME RISK. ALWAYS WEAR A LIFE VEST AND REMEMBER TO RAFT RESPONSIBLY. ALSO CONSIDER USING ONE OF THE MANY AVAILABLE & EXPERIENCED OUTFITTERS WHEN ENJOYING IDAHO'S RIVERS.





RAFT IDAHO

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