



Sun-Kissed Adventures:
***Your Summer
Passport***

visitidaho.org



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The Sweetest Slice of Summer

Summer is the season of memories—and in Idaho, making lifelong memories is easy. As the years go by, scents, sounds and tastes bring a moment of nostalgia that leave us reminiscing on summers past.

Whether you're experiencing violet-stained fingertips from picking juicy huckleberries, cool water splashing on your skin from whitewater rafting, a cool night's breeze while stargazing or the vibrant taste of locally made wine and cider, summer in the Gem State is bursting with moments to ignite your senses and make memories worth reminiscing on.

For more summer inspiration, visit visitidaho.org/summer-in-idaho.



Rivers & Rapids

Whitewater Rafting

Idaho is home to the most navigable miles of whitewater in the Lower 48 states, so it's no surprise that whitewater rafting is one of the Gem State's top summer activities. Not only does whitewater rafting allow you to form a powerful connection with nature, it's also a moment to soak up Idaho's scenic beauty and revel in some heart-pumping fun.

Whether you want to embark on a relaxing float or splash your way through wild rapids, this guide will help you learn about Idaho's breathtaking rivers.

Rapid Classifications



CLASS I: Fast-moving water with occasional light surface movement. Few obstructions.



CLASS II: Rapids with small waves, mostly clear and open passages, but some maneuvering may be required.



CLASS III: Numerous and irregular waves. Maneuvering is required through clear but sometimes narrow passages.



CLASS IV: Turbulent water. Strong, long rapids and high waves. Skilled and persistent maneuvering is required.



CLASS V: Long stretches of powerful and tumultuous rapids and obstructions requiring skilled maneuvering. Steep gradients, big drops and violent currents.



North & North Central Rivers

MIDDLE FORK OF THE CLEARWATER RIVER

One of the first rivers to be designated as Wild and Scenic by Congress in 1968, the Middle Fork of the Clearwater River is ideal for those seeking a tamer, single-day rafting trip with several Class I and II rapids. This stretch of river is best traveled from July through September, making it the perfect adventure to cool off on a hot summer day.

LOWER SALMON RIVER

For first-time rafters, the Lower Salmon presents an easygoing yet exciting three- to four-day experience through steep and majestic canyon walls. Enjoy relatively warm water (best in July and August), plenty of mellow pools for swimming and lounging, white sandy beaches and roller-coaster-style Class III rapids.

LOCHSA RIVER

With continuous Class III to IV rapids, the Lochsa River is perfect for adrenaline seekers looking for a full day of adventure on one wild river. The Lochsa is fueled by spring runoff and is navigable during high water, making May through July the prime time for this trip.

SNAKE RIVER

Idaho's rugged beauty is on full display in Hells Canyon, North America's deepest river gorge. (Yes—it's deeper than the Grand Canyon!) Navigate thrilling Class III to IV rapids, then keep an eye out for soaring eagles, mountain goats scrambling up the cliffsides and ancient petroglyphs. From May through October, trips run three to five days.

Central Rivers

UPPER MAIN SALMON RIVER

The Upper Main Salmon River offers a memorable whitewater rafting introduction for beginners while keeping it fun for repeat adventurers. You'll experience the rowdiest water in June, so try a trip in July or August for a less bumpy (but no less exciting) journey.

MAIN SALMON RIVER

The legendary Main Salmon River (aka the "River of No Return") is the longest free-flowing river in the Lower 48 and offers a remote wilderness rafting and fishing experience. With big Class III and IV rapids, refreshing river pools for swimming and expansive beach areas, all ages and activity levels will enjoy this trip.

MIDDLE FORK OF THE SALMON RIVER

The Middle Fork of the Salmon River is the crème de la crème of whitewater experiences. Opt for a six-day trip through continuous Class III and IV rapids while spending your nights soaking in riverside hot springs and camping along the banks. June offers rowdier rapids, while July and August are more consistent.



Southwest Rivers

MAIN PAYETTE RIVER

Located just north of Boise, the Main Payette is an easy half-day trip (about three hours on the water) and perfect for first-timers and seasoned paddlers. All levels will enjoy the approachable Class I and II rapids along this fun, leisurely run between May and September.

UPPER NORTH FORK OF THE PAYETTE

Commonly known as the Cabarton, the Upper North Fork of the Payette is packed with stunning views, rolling waves interspersed with Class I-III rapids and potential wildlife sightings. An optimal blend of whitewater rafting and relaxed floating trips on the Cabarton run from May through September.

SOUTH FORK OF THE PAYETTE

Considered one of the most challenging and revered rafting trips around, the South Fork of the Payette is better suited for adventurers who feel comfortable with heavy paddling through Class III and IV rapids. This advanced stretch of river requires helmets, and there is no shortage of expert guides to happily maneuver you through the whitewater (plan on being wet by the end of the day).

This list includes just some of the electrifying rivers offered in the state, but it is not a complete list. For more rafting and kayaking adventures, visit visitidaho.org/things-to-do/rafting-kayaking.





Idaho's Tasty State Fruit

Foraging for Huckleberries

Idaho may be known for its spectacular spuds, but the Gem State is also home to huckleberries—deep purple little berries that are a harmonious blend of sweet and tart. Arguably the taste of summer, huckleberries can be found in a wide variety of locally made treats across the state, including ice cream, pies, jams and more.



Illustration by: Emily Rush

Before You Forage

Huckleberries are one of the slowest-growing perennial shrubs and can take up to 10–15 years to mature and grow healthy. While foraging, be conscious of this and respect the growth the berries have gone through to become as tasty as they are (don't pick too many!). Please note that it is illegal to pick huckleberries with the intent to sell.

What Do They Look Like?

Huckleberry bushes have dark green leaves with thin stems. The berries themselves are small in size, and colors vary from deep red to purple to blue-black.



Illustration by: Emily Rush

Where to Find Them

Look for brushy, old clearcuts and burned or heavily logged areas in mid- to high-elevation forest areas—especially on steep slopes. Coeur d'Alene National Forest, Priest Lake, Payette National Forest and Teton Valley are some of the best places to pick huckleberries.

Best Time to Forage

Huckleberry season is typically mid-June through August, depending on elevation.

Bear in Mind

Remember that bears like berries, too! Make noise or use a bear whistle as you venture through berry patches—this will let bears know that you're in the area and will aid in preventing an unexpected encounter. Carrying a can of bear spray is a good safety measure as well—make sure that it's quickly and easily accessible.

Let's Get Pickin': How to Harvest

In order to not overpick and affect the health of the bush, pick each berry by hand and bring a small bucket or basket to hold your berries. Remember to never clip or break branches and never try to remove the entire plant.



Illustration by: Emily Rush



Get Hooked

Fishing in the Gem State

Known for its blue-ribbon trout fishing streams, shimmering lakes and expansive reservoirs, Idaho is an angler's paradise. During the summer months, the early bird gets the worm—so be prepared to get up early and soak up some stellar sunrises.

Free Fishing Day

Sponsored by Idaho Fish and Game, Idaho Free Fishing Day takes place every second Saturday in June and is a great opportunity for those who've never been fishing and want to test the waters—no fishing license required.



Northern Idaho

Westslope cutthroat trout can be found in several northern Idaho rivers, like the North Fork of the Clearwater River, and in some notable creeks near the Dworshak Dam.

Central Idaho

Bull trout prefer cold-water rivers, which means during the summer, you'll want to venture to upper-elevation streams. Although elusive, bull trout can be found in the Salmon River and the South Fork of the Boise River.



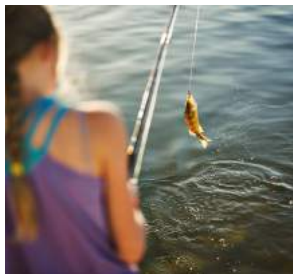
Eastern

Known for snatching dry flies off the surface of the water, Yellowstone cutthroat trout can be found in the Upper Snake River sometimes as early as May.



Southeast

Unlike other cutthroat trout species, Bonneville's prime season is July through September in the Bear River Watershed.



Southwest

March through June offers the greatest opportunity to fish for redband trout, a subspecies of rainbow trout that are aggressive feeders (though wary of predators). You can find them in the Snake River from the Idaho–Oregon border upstream to Shoshone Falls.



Ready to drop a line? Learn more about Gem State fishing at visitidaho.org/things-to-do/fishing.



Hello, Summer Sips

Wine & Cider Month in June

Cloud Wine

Idaho's cool climate, fertile volcanic soils and regional diversity allow vineyards to produce a variety of unique wines that you simply can't find anywhere else.

Snake River Valley AVA

Spread across the ancient Lake Idaho, the Snake River Valley American Viticultural Area (AVA) is Idaho's largest wine region. Its aged volcanic sediment has created fertile, well-draining soil, perfect for grape-growing.

Lewis-Clark Valley AVA

Dubbed the "banana belt" of the inland Pacific Northwest for its consistently warm climate, this wine region runs along the steep canyons of the Clearwater and mid-Snake Rivers.

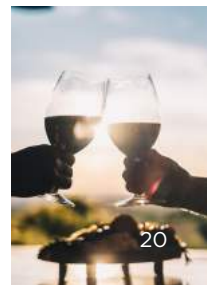
Eagle Foothills AVA

Located within the Snake River Valley AVA, the Eagle Foothills AVA is the only wine region completely in Idaho. As the name suggests, this grape-growing takes place in the foothills, which aids in sunlight reception, cold air drainage and frost and wind protection.

Idaho Wines Fly Free

Learn how to check your first case of Idaho wines at no additional cost at visitidaho.org/idaho-wines-fly-free.

Ready to explore Idaho's wine country? Start planning your getaway at visitidaho.org/things-to-do/wineries-wine-tours.





How 'Bout Them Apples?

Apples are Idaho's top fruit crop, producing 60 million pounds annually, so it's no surprise that Idaho is home to a bustling hard cider scene.

Made from fermented apple juice, the flavor profile of cider can vary wildly depending on what each cidemaker adds to the batch. From crisp and dry to sweet and smooth, there are flavors fit for every taste bud.



MERIWETHER CIDER HOUSE

Molly Leadbetter, owner of Meriwether Cider House, is Idaho's first and only pommelier in Idaho. (Think sommelier for wine, but for cider.) Bursting with juicy blackberry and a balance of tart apple, Meriwether's award-winning flagship cider, Blackberry Boom, is one of the cidery's most popular.



EDGE BREWING CO. & RESTAURANT

Owned and operated by avid beer enthusiasts and brewers, EDGE Brewing offers three ciders woven into their extensive beer list. If you prefer a fruity palette, opt for the Huckleberry or Peach cider—or, for something with a kick, try the Wildfire Cider, made with cinnamon.



HIGHPOINT CIDER

With an emphasis on low-sugar ciders, Highpoint's most popular cider is Tram-Line, a bright and citrusy cider crafted with dry Mosaic hops and fresh-pressed Rocky Mountain apples.



CEDAR DRAW CIDER

Summer Freckle, only available in the summer, is Cedar Draw's perfect blend of fresh strawberries and hand-squeezed lemon juice.



STACK ROCK CIDER HOUSE

Located on the Peaceful Belly Farm, Stack Rock Cider House also uses farm-to-table practices in its cider, just as it does at the farm's cafe. For something refreshing, try the Skinny Dipper, a basil- and lemon-infused cider.



CIDER SISTERS CIDER

Reminiscent of Spanish and French ciders, Cider Sisters' Lost Carboy is a small-batch cider that is tangy and clean, complemented by a light fizz and distinctive fruity notes.

Discover more cidery inspiration at visitidaho.org/things-to-do/cideries.



Summer Stargazing

Idaho's Dark Skies



Idaho is home to the first International Dark Sky Reserve in the U.S. and is among only 22 other reserves worldwide. More than 900,000 acres make up the Central Idaho Dark Sky Reserve, which is located in central Idaho and encompasses the cities of Sun Valley, Ketchum and Stanley.

Where to Stargaze

Heading north along the Sawtooth Scenic Byway, there are several recreation sites and campgrounds perfect for an evening of sky-watching. Adams Gulch Trailhead, Sawtooth National Recreation Area–North Fork Visitor Center, Baker Creek Pullout and Sunny Gulch Campground, just to name a few, all provide parking or camping space.

Should your adventures take you into the town of Stanley, Pioneer Park and the Stanley Museum are

good spots for in-town dark sky viewing. But, if you're searching for darker skies, head north along the Ponderosa Pine Scenic Byway to Stanley Lake Creek Day Use Site, Park Creek Overlook or Elk Creek Campground, all within the Sawtooth National Forest.

Knob Hill Park (overlooking downtown Ketchum), Atkinson Park and the Hemingway Memorial are all within the Ketchum and Sun Valley area and are great spots for a picnic under the stars.

The Perseid Meteor Shower

Want to wish upon a star this summer? From mid-July to late August, the Perseids will be showering the sky with shooting stars. However, your best opportunity to see the dazzling display will be during its peak—around the night of August 12 and before dawn on August 13.



The Open Road Is Calling

Idaho's Scenic Byways

Nothing says summer nostalgia like a road trip. Roll down the windows and discover charming towns, postcard-worthy views and plenty of adventure.

Purple Mountains Majesty

Teton Scenic Byway

Known as the "quiet side of the Tetons," the Teton Scenic Byway flaunts panoramic views of the Tetons and unending grassy fields. Whether you explore the terrain on horseback or via rail to trails, the views will be hard to beat.



Over the River & Through the Woods

St. Joe River Scenic Byway

Tracing the cottonwood-lined St. Joe River, the St. Joe River Scenic Byway is a picturesque haven for outdoor enthusiasts. Enjoy birdwatching, fishing, hiking and riverside picnicking.



Adventures, Sunny Side Up

Panhandle Historic Rivers Passage

As you follow the northern shore of the Pend Oreille River, take advantage of the river's gently flowing waters and swim, boat or paddle along this water trail.



The Road Less Traveled

Elk River Backcountry Byway

Cross Idaho's tallest bridge—the Dent Bridge, spanning the Dworshak Reservoir—and meander through the lush forests of the Clearwater Mountains as you approach the quaint community of Elk River.

Discover all of Idaho's 31 scenic byways by visiting visitidaho.org/things-to-do/scenic-byways.



Travel With Care

Beat the Heat

As you explore Idaho this summer, remember to stay hydrated, use sun protection and pack out all your trash. If you plan to camp, brush up on your fire safety and completely drown out your campfires. If it's too hot to touch, it's too hot to leave!

Learn more at visitidaho.org/travel-with-care.