

MIDDLE FORK OF THE SALMON RIVER 6-Day

The Middle Fork of the Salmon River is the premier wilderness rafting trip in the US. It's gin clear water flows 100 miles of Wild and Scenic free-flowing river, through the largest roadless wilderness area in the US and in a canyon that is deeper than the Grand Canyon. It has half a dozen natural hot springs throughout the canyon, blue ribbon trout fishing, and more than 100+ rapids grade I-III (IV in June). The Middle Fork of the Salmon is an unspoiled, remote and pristine wilderness much as it was 100 years ago or more. Named by National Geographic as one of the top 3 river trips in the world, the Middle Fork will provide you with a vacation of a lifetime. AWARD-WINNING RIVER ADVENTURES SINCE 1953

ITINERARY

Please arrive in Stanley, Idaho the night before the trip begins. Stanley is a 45-minute flight or 3-hour drive from Boise or a 1-hour drive from Sun Valley. We have a pre-trip orientation at the MFRE Warehouse at 8:30 pm the evening before the trip begins. The MFRE warehouse is located next door to the Triangle C Cabins on Highway 21 in Stanley. We will get acquainted; answers questions, and have a one-hour orientation to show you how to pack the waterproof gear bags we provide for your personal gear. For rooms we recommend the Triangle C Cabins (208-774-2266) that has clean cabins good for families for the evening before your trip and on Day 6 of your trip. We also have priority pre-season bookings at the Mountain Village Lodge (800) 843-5475 from Oct 1 until Dec 31, after which they open to the public. Please mention you are with MFRE when you book prior to Dec 31 otherwise they will not allow you to book. Another good choice is the Sawtooth Hotel (208-721-2459). (Overnight in Stanley is not included)

DAY 1-3 - We meet this morning at 8am at the MFRE warehouse and depart 1-½ hours by bus to the river. You can leave your car parked at the MFRE warehouse in Stanley during the trip. Upon launching our rafts at Boundary Creek, 6000 feet above sea level, you'll enter an enchanted forest of fir and spruce that scents the high mountain air. Sparkling clear waters careen through boulder-choked rapids with names such as Sulphur Slide, The Chutes, Velvet Falls, Powerhouse, Pistol Creek and Tappan Falls. Stops at mountain hot springs and pioneer homesteads provide the perfect balance to the on-river excitement. Evenings find us eating gourmet river meals relaxing by the campfire, playing horseshoes and listening to the river and watching for shooting stars! *Please note - If water levels are low (usually early August depending on snowpack) we may fly in 5 and 9 seater airplanes to a lower put-in point at Indian Creek, which is an amazing flight and a great way to start your adventure. The flight is an additional ~\$130/person (we will take credit card info or checks at orientation if needed) and the lower put-in point makes it a 75-mile river trip. Guests always say the flight into the river is one of the highlights of the trip. It also allows more time for hiking and exploring the canyon, and not have to get out of the rafts and push off of rocks on the upper section.

DAYS 4- 5 - As we drop in elevation, the river widens and the spruce forest opens to vistas of pine-studded mountains and we enter Impassable Canyon, where no trails can be cut as the sheer walls go up over 3,000 feet. This section of river is deeper than Grand Canyon. We will navigate fun whitewater such as Haystack, Bernard, Earthquake Rock, Jack Creek, Cutthroat Cove, Redside and Weber rapids. Between rapids, you'll drift quietly over deep pools of transparent water, home to native cutthroat and rainbow trout. Hikes underneath Waterfall Creek and up to Veil Falls are highlights for many of our guests.

DAY 6 - The last day has some of the best and biggest rapids of the trip, including Rubber and Cramer Creek Rapids, which is a great whitewater crescendo finale for the week. We arrive at the take-out point at Cache Bar around 10am and drive by bus 1 hour for a picnic lunch at the North Fork Country Store. After lunch, we drive 3 hours to Stanley, arriving between 4-6pm. You can leave your car parked at the MFRE warehouse in Stanley during the trip. 99% of guests stay in Stanley this evening. After a hot shower at your hotel, enjoy Stanley for a nice dinner on your own at the Sawtooth Hotel or the Casino Club or drive 10 minutes to Red Fish Lake Lodge. The next morning drive home or to Boise for flights after 12:30pm. For those departing towards Montana after the trip you may want to have your vehicle shuttled (River Shuttles- (208) 756-4188) to North Fork Store, as this will save your 5 hours driving. (Overnight in Stanley is not included)

What's Included

- ◆ ground transportation by school bus from Stanley to the river and back to Stanley in a luxury motorcoach after the trip.
- ◆ meals from lunch Day 1 to lunch Day 6.
- ◆ expert leadership with seasoned professional river guides who are Wilderness First Aid and Swiftwater Rescue certified.
- ◆ all camping equipment including 4-man tents for 1 or 2 people, large rectangular 20F sleeping bag, 2" sleeping pad, splash gear tops and bottoms, farmer john wetsuits, and waterproof socks and neoprene gloves (if needed in June/early July).
- ◆ 3 dry bags: one for camp clothing, one for sleeping kit (pillow & sleeping bag) and one small dry bag for items to have access to during the day like sunscreen, rain gear, camera etc.
- ◆ all commissary equipment for meals and camp.
- ◆ all rafting equipment (life jackets, helmets, paddles etc.)
- ◆ all water craft including oar boats, paddle raft, inflatable kayaks and inflatable stand up paddle board.
- ◆ MFRE mug to use and take home after trip.

What's Not?

Flights to/from Stanley, Idaho; Motel in Stanley for night before the trip and night the trip ends; flight into Indian Creek if needed (~\$130/person); travel insurance (we strongly recommend); optional tipping to guides (10-15%+ of trip cost) depending on level of satisfaction.

Payments

Deposit: \$500.00 per person, required for confirmed reservation.

Balance: Is due on May 1.

Cancellation Policy

Deposits are refundable (less \$150.00 service charge per person) if written notice is received before May

1. After May 1 your monies are nonrefundable. If Middle Fork River Expeditions must cancel a trip due to water levels, weather conditions, wildfires or any other circumstances, your trip will be refunded or re-scheduled for the same date the next summer. Custom trips and groups of ten or more have a separate payment and cancellation policy with final payment due Feb 1.

Travel to Stanley, Idaho

There is commercial air service to Boise, Idaho. Then you have 3 options to get to Stanley.

- 1) Rent a car and drive (131 miles or 3 hours)
- 2) Shuttle Service with Caldwell Transportation (131 miles or 3 hours)
- 3) Fly (45 minutes) with small 5 and 9-seater airplanes

Drive: Rental cars - Budget, Payless, Alamo, Hertz, Avis. Cost around \$300/week.

Shuttle: Caldwell Transportation- 800-727-9925- departs at 4pm from Boise airport and 7am from Stanley. Reservation must be made 48 hours in advance. Cost is \$85/one way or \$165 roundtrip.

Fly: Sawtooth Flying Services- 800-798-6105 or 208-342-7888. ~\$335 Boise/Stanley per person roundtrip. Please call in advance to reserve these flights.

Sun Valley Option: Another option is flying into Sun Valley (Hailey Airport) and take a taxi (~\$150/van

one-way) to Stanley, which is ~1 ½ hours north. It costs more to fly to Hailey than Boise but more convenient. Wood River Taxi in Hailey- 208-788-TAXI.

Orientation

Plan to arrive in Stanley, Idaho by early evening the day before your trip for our 8:30pm meeting at the MFRE warehouse, located ¼ mile west on hwy 21 from the Mountain Village Resort on the left hand side of the street, between the Triangle C Cabins. There are three MFRE wooden oars at the driveway entrance. We will get acquainted and answers questions, and have a 1-hour orientation to show you how to pack the 3 waterproof bags we provide for your personal gear. Please have dinner before the meeting. The next morning we depart at 8am. You can leave your car parked at the MFRE warehouse during the trip. Valuables are best left in the trunk of your car.

WHAT TO EXPECT

Expert Leaders – Middle Fork River Expeditions attracts gifted guides for whom leading trips is their passion. Middle Fork River Expeditions guides positively elevate your experience by being educators, companions, and the best of friends. Most MFRE guides have 10 or more years experience on rivers and all are First Aid Certified and licensed by the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board.

Rapids – Middle Fork rapids are rated 1 to 3 (4 in June) on a scale of 1 to 6. In our state-of-the-art whitewater rafts, you'll run 100+ rapids with the aid of experienced, professional, licensed guides. River Requirements: Minimum age is 12 in June, and 6 in July to September. Please note, all participants must be able to swim and be in good physical shape.

River Craft Options – MFRE provides oar raft, paddle raft and inflatable kayak options on most trips. Guests rotate into the particular craft based on what they feel like doing that day and also what difficulty the section of river is etc. The guides are very good at ascertaining what section of river is good for certain people so please listen to their instructions. Most guests ride in our oar powered rafts which is driven by the guide. For the more adventurous we run a paddle raft, no experience required as your guide steers at the stern while you and other guests paddle up front. When water levels permit (usually July thru Sept only) you can try out our single inflatable kayaks. We usually bring 3-4 inflatable kayaks on trips starting on the June 29 launch date.

River Requirements: Minimum age is 12 in May/June, and 6 in July and August. Please note, all participants must be able to swim and be in good physical shape.

Hiking & Hot Springs There is plenty of time and numerous opportunities to hike and visit hot springs during your trip. All hikes during the day can be done in your river shoes and not hiking boots. The Middle Fork Trail runs 80 miles along the Middle Fork, so there is always the option to hike or run along the trail from most campsites and hiking boots can be used from camp for these hikes. There are half a dozen hot springs in the river corridor and we camp at or near at least one during our trip. Time and logistics permitting we hike to waterfalls, scenic grottos, native Shoshone Sheepstealer pictographs, or historic hermit cabins in a given day.

Fishing – The Middle Fork is a premier fishing experience for advanced or novice anglers. MFRE provides instruction with 2 company fly rods and numerous flies for those who would like to learn the art of fly-fishing. The Middle Fork is a fisherman's paradise; a blue ribbon fishery and all fish are natives – Cutthroat Trout, Rainbows and Dolly Varden. Special fishing regulations protect the Middle Fork and help restore the fish population – (catch-and-release, no live bait, single barbless hooks.) An Idaho State fishing license is required and may be purchased in Stanley, Idaho before the trip at the Mountain Village Mercantile. The best fishing shop in Stanley is the Stanley Fly Shop (208-721-7151) and you can purchase licenses, flies and all your fishing needs in one professional shop. Kids 14 and under can fish with no license as long as they are fishing with an adult who has a license. To get your license in advance, go to <https://id.outdoorcentral.us/>. You do not need a license for Day 6 as we will have an early morning and many rapids so not ideal for fishing, so just get the license for Days 1-5. We will send you a recommended fly fishing tackle list a couple of weeks before the trip or you can request one anytime.

Camping – This is one of the best parts of the trip, to be lulled to sleep by the sound of the river. We provide all camping gear for you, including a large rectangular sleeping bag, 2" Paco Sleeping pad, small camp pillow and 4-man tents (for 1 or 2 people only). Guests are expected to set up their own tent but guides are always available to help single travellers' or guests that need help. In the evening, we have chairs to relax in for meals and around the campfire. We bring along a wilderness porta-potty and place it in a private place with stunning views. We practice Leave No Trace camping ethics, so you are sure to learn a lot about this on the trip and be able to take some of these new skills home with you.

Bathing and Swimming – The Middle Fork is a very pristine river and there is no bathing allowed in the river and all bathing must be done above the high water mark, at least 100 feet from any water source and with biodegradable soap. We have collapsible buckets that you can fill with hot spring water after soaking and can lather up away from the hot spring and have a friend gently pour it on your head. There are some great swimming holes and rock jumps on the river that are always optional. No diving is allowed and life jackets must be worn at all times when swimming. As this is a free flowing snowmelt river drainage, the water temperature is too cold in June (40-50F) for swimming, refreshing in July (60-70F), and comfortable in August (70+F).

Food – We provide healthy and delicious meals, accompanied with lots of salads, fresh fruits and vegetables. We also use as much organic produce/products as is available in central Idaho. Our goal is to have you eat healthy meals so that you feel good and refreshed during the day with lots of energy for fun in this remote wilderness setting. Vegetarians, Gluten Free and Paleo diets welcome and meat eaters alike. There are also always snacks available during the day. Our past guests rave about our menu and dutch oven delights!

Drinks – We offer drinking water at all times as each raft has a water cooler and electrolyte crystals are available during lunch. For evening we provide soda such as Coke, Diet Coke, Izzie, LACroix, and San Pellegrino. We provide limited (1-2 glasses/guest) red and white wine in the evenings. We do not provide beer and you are free to bring some, just make sure beer is in cans only. For those who want more than a couple of glasses of wine at night, you can bring more wine if you wish and glass is ok. Hard liquor can be brought in glass as well. You can purchase beer/wine/liquor at The North Fork Store on Day 1 on the drive to the put-in point.

Idaho weather can be variable and vigorous. So come prepared with warm and cold weather clothing. There is no such thing as bad weather if you bring the right clothing. Synthetics are best for layering and keeping you warm in all weather conditions. Weather during the daytime is 70-90F and evenings 40- 60F. The easiest way to think of river trip clothing is having both daytime “river” clothes which are synthetic and dry camp clothes which are cotton and more comfortable. The daytime clothes will be wet and your camp clothes will be dry. Have a back up set for both and you will be very well prepared. Below is our recommended clothing and equipment list. If you bring what’s on the list you will be all set for the trip. If it rains at camp we set up large tarps so everyone stays dry and have a roaring fire to keep warm if it’s chilly. During the day, the oar rafts have large umbrellas that can be used in addition to your splash gear.

We Supply

- Large rectangular freshly washed sleeping bag (rated 20F)
- 2" thick "Paco" sleeping pad
- Pillow (this is a camp pillow- 10" x 12", so if you want a full sized pillow please bring it).
- Splash gear (jacket and pants) for daytime- *For Middle Fork only*
- 3 Dry Bags (1 for sleep kit, 1 for evening gear, 1 small for daytime gear)
- Kelty Gunnison 4.1 tents (4 man tents for 1-2 people)
- Farmer John wetsuit (when needed in June and early July)
- Waterproof socks and neoprene gloves (for June and early July trips only or if cold sensitive)
- Life Jacket (Type V)
- Helmets (for inflatable kayaks, paddle raft and stand up paddle board only)
- All water craft and commissary equipment, including camp chairs
- MFRE coffee mug— a gift for you to take home

You Bring

- Sarong or quick dry towel (good for sun, drying off or changing clothes)
- Water bottle with carabiner
- Personal toiletry items
- Biodegradable soap (no bathing within 100 feet of any water source is allowed)
- Sunscreen lotion and chapstick
- Sunglasses with retainer
- Sun hat (baseball hat ok, but larger full brim better with chin strap is better)
- Bathing suit
- Socks — 4 pair (2 cotton for camp, 2 synthetic for hiking)
- T-shirts — 3 (two cotton for evenings and one synthetic for daytime)
- Long sleeved shirts — 2 (one cotton for evenings and one synthetic SPF sun shirt for daytime)
- Long pants — 1 (jeans for evening)
- Shorts — 2 (one cotton for evenings and one synthetic for daytime)
- Underwear — assorted (cotton for evening and silk/synthetic for daytime)
- Rain jacket (we provide splash gear tops and bottoms on *Middle Fork only* for daytime but nice to have a dry rain jacket at camp)
- Medium weight fleece or sweater
- Shoes — dry shoes for camp (lightweight hiking boots or tennis shoes)
- Shoes — river shoes (Tekstra or Keens with toe coverage is best but Teva's will work too)
- Camera and spare battery
- Headlamp (better than flashlight for getting into dry bags at night!)

Optional

- Ziploc bags — handy for small items or to isolate wet articles from rest of gear
- Olay face wipes or other brand for cleaning face
- Fishing fly rod in sturdy hard case
- Fishing license (only if you are fishing)
- Shoes- flip flop sandals (for drying out feet at camp)
- Full sized pillow

** May/June & Sept/Oct trips- bring a ski hat, camp gloves, 1 pair of synthetic long john top and bottoms, and fleece type pants.