

MIDDLE FORK WILDERNESS OUTFITTERS

728 Piva Rd.
Challis, ID 83226
(800) 726-0575
mfwo@idahorapids.com



Getting There

Your adventure on the Middle Fork of the Salmon River will start at the picturesque town of Stanley, Idaho. To reach Stanley, many of our guests begin by flying to Idaho's capital city of Boise, which is served by several major airlines.

From Boise, you can choose to fly, schedule a shuttle or drive to Stanley. Flights to Stanley are available on [Gem Air](#) (208) 756-7382 756 *Salmon/McCall Air* (208) 756-6211 or (800) 992-6559. Should you choose to drive, you can pre-arrange to have your car shuttled from Stanley to our end-destination in Salmon, Idaho, through [Caldwell Transportation](#) or call them at (208) 342-1900.

The cost for shuttle service is \$100.00 per vehicle (subject to change) which must be paid to the shuttle company directly. It is best to make advance arrangements. You will leave your keys and shuttle paperwork in the *Caldwell Transportation* box in the front lobby of the Mountain Village Lodge, which is where we meet the morning we launch. Caldwell Transportation will drive and park your car at the Salmon, Idaho, airport and leave your keys at the *Salmon Air* desk. (This airport is where we bring you after leaving the river.) You can expect to be in Salmon at about 3 p.m. on the take-out date of your trip.

Ground transportation is provided from Stanley to the launch point and to the Salmon airport after the trip. If you'll be returning to Boise by air, most of our guests enjoy taking a pre-arranged 60-minute scenic flight. The flight normally arrives in Boise around 5:00 p.m. We are happy to help make all of your additional travel arrangements if desired.

SIDE NOTE: Occasionally, water levels require us to launch our trips from Indian Creek Campground. This is beyond our control and, unfortunately, necessitates an added flight from Stanley or Boise to Indian Creek. The cost of this flight is not included in the trip fare. You will be notified in advance if this flight becomes necessary, arrange the flight for you and ask that you pay by check, VISA or MasterCard to the selected flight company.

Lodging

You will need overnight lodging in Stanley, Idaho, the night before your river trip because you are required to attend a rafter orientation meeting on the evening prior to our morning launch. Depending on the time of your return flight or how late in the day you want to drive home, you may also need overnight lodging in Salmon, Idaho, where our trip ends.

For example: If your river trip is scheduled from July 16 through July 21, you would need to arrange overnight lodging in Stanley for July 15 in order to attend our orientation meeting. And if you are unable to schedule an evening flight out of Salmon on the last day of the trip (or you don't want to drive late at night), you would need to book overnight lodging for the last day, in this case, July 21.

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For Stanley and Salmon lodging options, please see the links on our Trip Planning Resources page. When making lodging arrangements, please keep in mind that, on the morning of our launch, we will depart from Mountain Village Lodge in Stanley.

If you still have questions, notify us of your travel arrangements ahead of time, and we'll gladly help you plan out all the details.

Trip Orientation

On the evening before your downriver excursion, you will need to join us for a trip orientation meeting in Stanley, Idaho, at 5:00 p.m. (typically at River 1 on Highway 75). This is a group meeting where you will also have the opportunity to connect with fellow travelers. We will discuss river safety, low impact camping and river procedures that must be followed for the duration of the trip. At this time, you will be provided with two waterproof duffels for your personal gear along with instructions on how to pack. Right after the meeting, you'll also be able to purchase souvenir T-shirts, hats, cookbooks, maps and books on the Middle Fork which we will make available.

Equipment & Packing

If you're worried about what to bring, don't. As you will see below, Middle Fork Wilderness Outfitters has all the camping essentials and more covered. Below that, we've also provided a complete list of items you should bring so you'll not come overpacked and still have everything you need.

What WE will provide:

- Gourmet dutch oven meals.
- Unlimited drinking water.
- 1 large tent for 2 people for optimum room and comfort. Private tents provided on request.
- 1 deluxe Thermo-Rest self-inflating sleeping pad per person.
- Comfortable cots for sleeping
- 1 freshly cleaned sleeping bag, fleece blanket and small pillow per person. You may bring your own sleeping bag if you prefer; however, it must fit into a 10"x 20" dry bag that we supply. We will automatically supply you with a sleeping bag unless you notify us that you are bringing your own.
- Dining utensils, souvenir cups and water bottles.
- 2 waterproof bags: one for your clothing and overnight gear, one day bag. See "How to Pack" below for bag sizes and packing recommendations.
- 1 Coast Guard approved Type V life jacket of the highest quality (please do not bring your own PFD unless it is a Type V)

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- Wet suits will be provided on June trips and whenever weather demands. Feel free to bring your own for fit and comfort. Exceptionally large or small sizes may not be available. We will bring a selection of wetsuits on the river throughout July and August for those of you using inflatable kayaks.
- Dining tables and comfortable chairs (set up along with your tent by our gear boat crew)
- An extensive first-aid kit in every boat. Our fully equipped guides are trained in first aid, CPR and all aspects of river rescue and emergency procedures.

What YOU need to provide:

- Hats (for warmth and blocking sun)
- Quick-dry clothing for river use (2+ pairs of nylon shorts and/or swimsuit, 1-2 short- and long-sleeve shirts, 1 pair of lightweight pants.
- **Good rain gear (jacket and pants) Important!**
- River shoes (river type sandals with heel strap or tennis shoes)
- Camp shoes (lightweight hiking boots or tennis shoes)
- Long underwear (polypropylene top and bottom)
- Warm jacket (pile or polar fleece)
- Camp clothes (1-2 long pants or sweat pants, 1-2 short- and long-sleeve T-shirts, 1 sweatshirt or any type of warm top)
- Underwear and socks (include at least 1 pair of wool or neoprene socks for chilly days)
- Gloves (wool or polypropylene for camp and optional neoprene for rafting)
- Personal toiletry items, small towel, washcloth and moisturizing lotion (Shampoos and soaps are not allowed in the river but you can use them above the high water mark-our guides will happily point out the high water mark. Biodegradable shampoos are not allowed in the river)
- Travel pack of handi-wipes or sanitizing gel
- Sunscreen, Chapstick
- Sunglasses with strap (spare pair recommended)
- Small flashlight and batteries ("head-lamp" type flashlight is very handy).
- Camera
- Special medications, prescriptions (bring two containers)
- Extra contacts or glasses
- Your musical instrument!
- A good book
- Personal wine, beer, liquors and soft drinks

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Optional

- Wet suit and or neoprene socks (if you want your own)
- Small day-pack or Hydration pack for hikes
- “Funky” costume for our last night together
- Pillow case (our camp pillows are small. You can put our camp pillow plus some soft clothing into a pillowcase to make a comfy pillow.)
- Disposable water proof camera for river shots plus ziplock bags for other small cameras to be kept in your day bag
- Solar shower (we will fill and heat it in the sun for you during the day)
- Sarong is a nice addition

You may not use all of the gear on this list but we recommend bringing it all so you are prepared and comfortable. Keep in mind, especially when packing clothing, that you can expect warm days (60 to 90’s) and cool evenings (40-60’s) on the river. However, mountain weather can change rapidly. It can snow in July or be intensely hot. The weather is impossible to predict. So be prepared. If you have questions about or need to purchase any of this gear, check out our website for merchandise information or: www.rivertraveler.com.

How to Pack:

We provide two waterproof pack bags for your gear at the orientation meeting on the night before launch. The smaller day bag is for items such as a rain suit, sunscreen, camera and anything you might need during the day. The larger bag is for your clothing and personal items. (In order to keep clothing organized, you may find it easier to pack your things in smaller, soft duffels or several stuff-type sacks that can slip right into this bigger gear bag.) Your sleeping bag, small pillow and blanket will be packed in a separate bag and will be there waiting for you at your first nights camp.

The larger bags travel in our gear boat which is loaded in the morning and goes ahead of the main group so we can set up camp; therefore, all the bags it carries will be unavailable to you until late afternoon. Try to limit your gear to our suggested pack list as raft space is limited. Also, given the environment; pack to be comfortable rather than fashionable. Leave the designer clothing and valuables at home.

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What to Wear:

We recommend that you layer your river clothes on most days so you can adjust for comfort as the day warms or the weather changes. On a typical day, you would wear a swimsuit or nylon shorts, a “quick dry” short-sleeve top (or long-sleeve for sun protection), and a fleece top for mornings when it is cooler. Your fleece top can be put into your “day” bag after it warms up.

You should also wear river sandals or tennis shoes that are comfortable when wet, a hat, sunglasses with a strap and plenty of sunscreen. Soon, we will be offering suitable river wear through our website at pro-discounts so be sure to inquire with us when scheduling your trip.

Water & Weather

We wish we could always guarantee the water levels and predict the weather. Regardless, our Middle Fork trips have always offered guests unforgettable moments due to the river’s magic and the good company they’ve shared. To make sure nothing stifles the fun, we try to ensure that you and other guests come well-prepared for all conditions. Most of your days on the river will be spent in shorts or swimsuits and short sleeves, but rain gear and extra layers should always be packed in your day bag for unpredictable mountain weather.

In general, water levels are highest in early June and, thus, offer the biggest, wildest whitewater of the year. Spring-type weather in June, however, can change rather quickly, from hot and sunny one day to chilly the next.

In late June and into July, the weather gets warmer and so does the water as river levels typically start to come down. It’s the time of year when the wildflowers bloom. An afternoon temperature in July might be 80 degrees with overnight lows 45-50 degrees.

From mid-July into August, the river warms up significantly and guests enjoy swimming and fishing in the crystal clear water. Then, in late August and September, our trips get a bit chilly in the mornings and evenings with warm days for great fishing.

High or low water levels and snow conditions can dictate that we launch from Indian Creek Campground or other wilderness launch points instead of Boundary Creek, our regular launch point. Only small airplanes access these wilderness airstrips. **Please note that if we must fly in to an alternative launch site, there will be an additional fee of approximately \$125.00 per person. Early August and later trips typically require flying to one of these airstrips.**

You will be notified in advance if this flight becomes necessary, arrange the flight for you and ask that you pay by check, VISA or MasterCard to Salmon/McCall Air.

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Trip Itinerary

Launch Day 1:

On the morning of your launch, we will depart by shuttle from the Mountain Village Lodge in Stanley. You will be notified of the time at the trip orientation meeting the evening before. We will “put in” either at Boundary Creek or Indian Creek Campground depending on water and weather conditions (see Water and Weather for more details).

If we depart from Boundary Creek, travel time is about 1½ hours from Stanley. We suggest eating breakfast prior to boarding the shuttle. If we launch from Indian Creek, it is a 25-minute flight to the airstrip and launch point. The boats will be loaded, you will be briefed on river safety, and we will get on our way down river—usually between 10 a.m. and 11 a.m.

Our camps are different on every trip, depending on the number of miles we are able to cover downriver. We’ll stop for lunch around noon and arrive in camp, typically between 4 p.m. and 6 p.m. Our large gear boat usually travels ahead of the group so camp is ready upon arrival with tents set up and appetizers underway. You are free to get settled and enjoy yourself while we prepare a gourmet dinner.

A Typical River Day:

Our guides rise early, usually around 5 a.m., to get coffee going. So if you are an early morning person, we’ll be ready! If not, stay snuggled in your tent till you hear a call for breakfast, usually served around 8 a.m. We break camp and are usually back on the water by 10 a.m. each day. And we always take time to stop and relax later for a delicious lunch.

During the day, you may choose to ride an oar boat for sightseeing, relaxing and fishing; paddle boats to paddle and maneuver through the rapids; or inflatable kayaks for tackling the river on your own. Each day consists of great whitewater, majestic scenery, wildlife viewing, fishing, swimming, hot spring soaks and stops for side hikes to historic, geographic or scenic highlights. (There is a trail that follows the course of the river so we always encourage hiking for anyone interested.)

Final Day 6:

The Middle Fork will keep you enthralled every mile. The character of the river and its canyon change from beginning to end. On our last day of rafting, we’ll enter the Impassable Canyon and run some of the trip’s biggest whitewater sandwiched between sheer granite walls. And finally, at the confluence with the Main Salmon, we’ll leave the Middle Fork behind by taking a moment to look back upstream at the spectacular canyon that has been “home” for the last six days. “Take-out” will be at either the confluence of the Middle Fork and the Main Salmon or at Cache Bar. There, lunch will be served, plus changing rooms and rest rooms will be available. Finally, we’ll shuttle you back to Salmon, Idaho, for your journey back home.