

## **THE SOUTH FORK AMERICAN RIVER**

**Meeting Location:** Just off Highway 49 between Placerville and Auburn

**Class:** 2-3    **Length:** 9, 13 or 21 mile runs in 1/2 - 2 Days    **Available:** April – Oct    **Elevation:** 930 ft

**The South Fork American River** is the most popular California whitewater rafting river in the West. It is exciting and lots of fun, with many memorable rapids. The river flows through the green and gold foothills of California's Gold Rush Country and it has served as an introduction to California rafting for countless beginners. It is exciting enough though to lure many back year after year. The South Fork American River is suitable for nearly everyone, including families (kids from 7-8 yrs), corporate and youth groups. All trips meet at our camp in the Coloma/Lotus area and will start with an orientation & safety talk. Life jackets will be fitted and paddling instruction is given. Each raft will be manned by a professional, skilled river guide.

**Gorge 'Lower' raft trip:** we meet at 10:30 am and put-in at the Hwy 49 Bridge for a 13 mile rafting adventure. The pace is fairly gentle to start, with some Class 2 rapids to warm up on before lunch. After this, we enter the steep granite canyon known as the 'Gorge' and the rapids occur frequently, with Fowler's Rock, the Class 3+ Satan's Cesspool, Bouncing Rock, Hospital Bar and numerous milder but fun rapids. Our trip ends at Folsom Lake where you are served with cold drinks and we return the group to the meeting location, usually by 5:00 p.m. The Gorge is **also available as a ½ day, 9 mile express run, from 1:00 – 5:00 pm**, which starts after lunch.

**Chili Bar 'Upper' raft trip:** we meet at 8:30 am and transport your group to the top of the South Fork American River near Placerville. The rafting action begins quickly with Meatgrinder rapid and continues for the next 5+ miles with Racehorse Bend, Triple Threat, the Class 3+ Troublemaker and others. The river slows after this and we stop for lunch at the Marshal Gold Discovery State Historic Park. We continue on rafting down to our camp, usually arriving around 2:30 pm. This trip is **also available as a ½ day express run from 8:30 am – 1:00 pm**, with no stops and no lunch.

**21 mile 'Whole River' raft trip:** The entire South Fork American River is usually run in 2 days, but a long 1 day option is offered. It includes both the Upper & Lower sections and meets at 8:30 am, lunch is served at camp and it ends at approx. 5:00 - 5:30 pm. Great run during spring high flows.

**2 day rafting trip:** The 2 day trip covers more than 21 miles and includes camping and 4 meals (camping equipment not included). We meet you on the first morning after breakfast, usually at 10:30 am. The river can be run 'top to bottom', but normally we run the lower 'Gorge' on the first day and the Chili Bar run on the 2<sup>nd</sup> day. This allows us to meet you a little later on the first day and allows for an earlier departure time on the second day. This may be important if you have to travel any distance to get to the river.

**In the evening,** you will have time to set-up camp, swim, play volleyball, check out the photos, or simply relax with a cold drink while your guides prepare your meal. Dinner will normally be served around 7:30 pm and appetizers are available, usually vegetables & dips; cheese & crackers; and chips & salsa. A cooler of drinks and a moderate amount of wine are also provided. The main course will normally consist of barbecued chicken and/or tri-tip steak, baked potatoes, mixed salad, corn and garlic bread. However much is consumed; everyone still finds room for dessert, which may be baked in the Dutch oven. After dinner, relax around the camp fire.



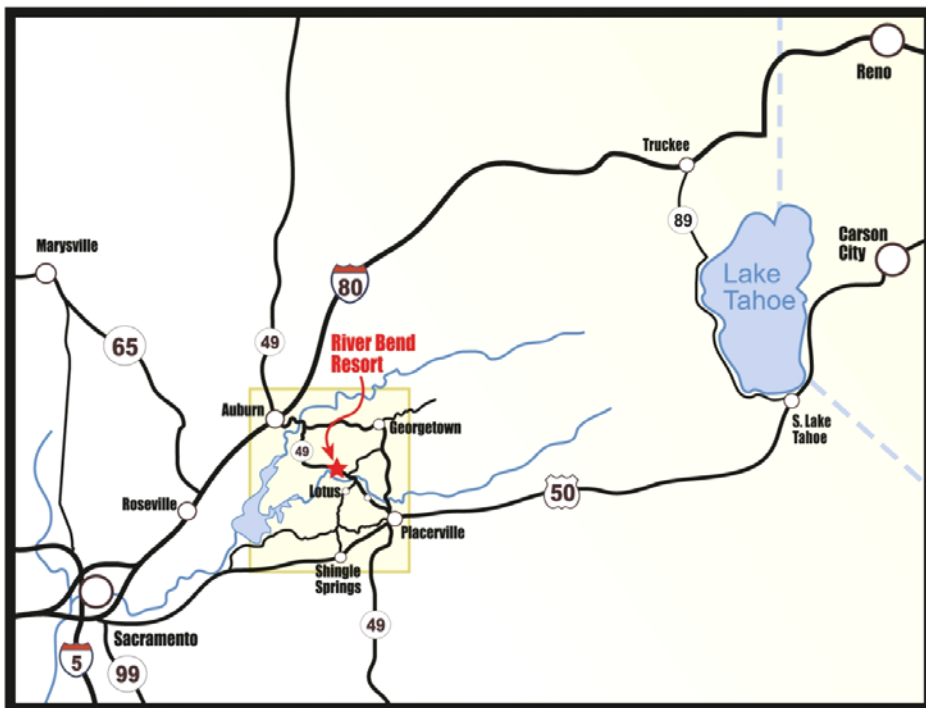
**Next morning**, you will wake to the aroma of coffee brewing and while the guides prepare breakfast, personal camping gear can be packed. Breakfast will normally be served around 8:00 am and consists of either pancakes or eggs and hash browns with sausage or bacon, fresh fruit, pastries, orange juice, milk, tea and coffee. We will usually depart from camp around 9:00 am for our put-in on the 'Chili Bar' run. You will again be served lunch and greeted with ice cold drinks back at camp, before departing from your whitewater adventure.

**To extend your stay:** camping can be arranged before or after any of our South Fork American River trips. If you think you might be ready for **some more excitement**, consider the [Middle Fork American](#), or in the spring, the [North Fork American River](#) or [North Fork Yuba River](#).

**Our lunches** usually consist of a deli-style spread with a selection of breads, meats and cheeses, or a pitta sandwich. Tomatoes, avocados, lettuce, sprouts, chips and salsa, fresh fruit, cookies, vegetables & dip are included. We are glad to accommodate any special dietary needs.

**Professional photographer's** film at several major rapids on the South Fork American river and the action shots are usually ready to view in nearby Coloma (or in camp if you are staying overnight). Ask your guide for a coupon and **order your South Fork American River photos before you leave Coloma**, as they are not available online.

**NOTICE:** Water flows in the South Fork American River result from releases from hydroelectric facilities located upstream. Such water releases are not subject to the control of El Dorado County or commercial rafting companies operating under permit from the County of El Dorado.



**Distances/times for travel:**

- 20 mins/12 miles N. of Placerville
- 25 mins/15 miles S. of Auburn
- 1 hr/53 miles E. of Sacramento
- 45 mins/31 miles E of Roseville
- 35 mins/25 miles E of Folsom
- 1.5 hrs/83 miles N. of Stockton
- 2 hrs/102 miles SE of Chico
- <2 hours/105 miles NE of Napa
- 1.75 hrs/72 miles W of S. Lake Tahoe
- 1.5 hrs/82 miles SW of Truckee
- <2 hrs/114 miles SW. of Reno
- 2.25 hrs/134 miles NE of San Francisco
- 2.75 hrs/164 miles NE of San Jose
- 3.5 hrs/154 miles NW of Yosemite Village

Please allow extra time during busy holiday periods

***Tributary Whitewater Tours LLC***

PO Box 728  
Weimar, CA 95736  
Toll Free: 800/672-3846  
Local/Int'l: 530/346-6812

rafting@whitewatertours.com  
[www.whitewatertours.com](http://www.whitewatertours.com)



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