

All-Outdoors

WHITEWATER RAFTING

GUIDE TO CALIFORNIA RIVERS



www.AOrafting.com

EASY-BEGINNER • CLASS I-II



Lower Middle Fork American • page 5
 Float trip with gentle, easy rapids.
 Perfect for young children & timid adults.

BEGINNER • CLASS III



South Fork American • page 7
 California's most popular river trip.
 Great for first-timers, families and groups.

INTERMEDIATE • CLASS III-IV



Middle Fork American • page 9
 Scenic 2000-foot deep wilderness canyon with a taste of Class IV whitewater.



Merced • page 11
 Excellent introduction to Class IV rafting located near Yosemite National Park.

INTERMEDIATE-ADVANCED • CLASS IV+



Tuolumne • page 13
 Designated "National Wild & Scenic River."
 One of California's best multi-day trips.



North Fork Stanislaus • page 15
 Small, springtime stream with lots of rapids in a beautiful high-alpine setting.



Kaweah • page 17
 Non-stop action for experienced rafters, in the spring. Near Sequoia National Park.



North Fork American River • page 19
 Big, challenging drops through a narrow rock gorge. Runs in spring.

ADVANCED • CLASS V



California Salmon • page 21
 Springtime run in a rock-walled gorge with difficult whitewater.



Cherry Creek/Upper Tuolumne • page 23
 Considered the most difficult commercial rafting trip in the U.S.



SEAN ARBABI

The Armstrongs, as they appeared in *Sunset Magazine*, where they were chosen "Best of the West."

Welcome to the All-Outdoors Guide to California Rivers

THANK YOU FOR YOUR INTEREST in rafting California rivers. Like a menu at a fine restaurant, California has many great selections from which to choose. We designed this guide to help you decide which river trip is best suited to your unique needs and desires. Our hope is that after reading about each river, you'll have a clear notion of the fun that awaits you on these wonderful runs.

As one of the first original outfitters in California, All-Outdoors has been rafting people down rivers for more than 40 years. Our long history and hard-earned experience is what inspires and qualifies us to write this "Guide to California Rivers." After leading more than 20,000 trips and more than 200,000 people down these runs, we have certainly come to know each river intimately!

When you raft with All-Outdoors, you'll be rafting with one of the largest, oldest, and most experienced rafting companies in California. *Sunset Magazine* recognized this and named us "Best of the West." Our staff of more than 175 professional guides, exceptional fleet of rafts, and large and prestigious permits ensure you'll have the best rafting experience available.

So take a few minutes to read this guide and let your imagination soar. We'll see you on a California river soon.

George Armstrong Family

The Armstrong Family

California, a Rafter's Paradise

CALIFORNIA HAS ONE OF THE THE HIGHEST concentrations of navigable whitewater rivers in the world. It is hard to find another place on earth with access to such a large and varied number of waterways on which to raft. The high elevation of the state's longest mountain range, the Sierra Nevada, helps create a vast river system. Winter storms moving east across the Pacific Ocean hit California first, leaving a significant amount of rain and snow.

As the rivers drain west through scenic canyons, whitewater runs are born. People from all walks of life come to be refreshed, invigorated, and amazed by what many call a *rafter's paradise*. Whether you are planning a trip with family, friends or co-workers, California has a river for you to discover and enjoy.

Cal-Salmon

North Fork American
Middle Fork American
Lower Middle Fork American

South Fork American

Sacramento

North Fork Stanislaus

Cherry Creek

Tuolumne

Merced

Lake
Tahoe

Yosemite
National Park

Kings Canyon
& Sequoia
National Parks

Kaweah

San Francisco

Los Angeles

All-Outdoors Guide to California Rivers is also available online and includes trip options, details, costs, discounts, virtual river tours, real-time river flows, space availability, reservations, photo galleries, and much more. This award-winning, dynamic site is updated regularly and is an easy way to get informed and stay in touch with California rafting. Go to www.AOrafting.com

Scale of River Difficulty

IT IS IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND the difficulty ratings of rivers prior to taking part in a rafting trip. If difficulty ratings are ignored, individuals may end up on a river not suitable for their abilities or expectations. Groups need to choose rivers that are appropriate for every person in their party, not just the strongest member. All participants should be able to swim.



EASY-BEGINNER • CLASS I-II

Class I - Mainly slow-moving flat water with some small waves. Passages are clear and have few if any obstacles. Gradient is very mild (1-10 ft. per mi.). "Swimming" Class I water is relatively easy.

Class II - Rapids may have waves from one- to two-feet high and passages that are mostly clear with some obstacles. Gradient is mild (10-20 ft. per mi). Falling out of the raft can result in a "swim" that may be uncomfortable.

Class I-II rapids are appropriate for young child and apprehensive adults and in some cases can be attempted without a professional guide.



BEGINNER • CLASS III

Rapids have waves three- to four-feet high, passages can be clear and wide or narrow with obstacles. Gradient is usually 20-30 ft. per mile. Knowledgeable and capable guide required for facilitating expert maneuvering. "Swimming" outside the raft can be difficult.

Most people feel comfortable yet pleasantly challenged on Class III rivers. These rivers serve as a great introduction to the sport of whitewater rafting.



INTERMEDIATE • CLASS III-IV

Rapids can be long and contain waves and drops four- to five-feet high and occasionally higher. Difficult maneuvering is often required between and around obstacles. Current is swift and the gradient is somewhat steep (30-40 ft. per mile). Unintentionally falling into the river may result in a strenuous "swim" back to the raft or through the rapid to the next calm section.

Athletic, adventurous first-timers can participate if conditions are appropriate, but previous experience is preferred and helpful.



INTERMEDIATE-ADVANCED • CLASS IV+

Rapids are abrupt, long, and can be close together. They contain waves and drops four- to six-feet high and occasionally higher. Difficult maneuvering is required between and around obstacles. Current is swift and the gradient is steep (40-70 ft. per mile). Unintentionally falling into the river will most likely result in a strenuous "swim" back to the raft or through the rapid.

Previous experience is highly recommended.



ADVANCED • CLASS V

Rapids are violent and powerful with waves and drops five- to eight-feet high. Passages are often narrow and complicated by twists and turns. Split- second maneuvering around obstacles is required to avoid capsizing or "swimming." Current is strong and gradient is extremely steep (40-200 ft per mile). "Swimming" can be very difficult and strenuous.

Individuals experiencing these rivers should have ample Class IV & IV+ experience, and need to be athletic, aggressive, and excellent swimmers.

Class VI - Unrunnable: Rapids are too difficult to navigate safely on a regular basis. Chances of injury or death are significant. If attempted with success, luck deserves the largest portion of credit.

How Rivers and Rapids are Rated

Rivers and rapids are rated on a scale of Class I (Easy) to Class VI (Unrunnable). Rivers receive a general rating based on their most difficult rapid. Several factors determine the scale of difficulty for a river or rapid: water flow and temperature, obstacles such as rocks and trees, vertical drop in elevation per mile of river (gradient), and the consequences of a person falling out of the raft unintentionally and "swimming" in the rapids while wearing a lifejacket.

Gradient is a fixed measurement and is important to take note of and to understand. Steeper gradient usually means faster current, more rapids and a greater level of difficulty.

Throughout this guide, difficulty ratings assume "normal" conditions.

For more updated information at the time of your trip, please call 1-800-247-2387 or visit www.A0rafting.com

RIGHT: The upper section of the South Fork American, California's most popular whitewater river, in the splendor of springtime.



Lower Middle Fork American

THE LOWER MIDDLE FORK AMERICAN is the perfect river for people with small children or anyone who feels apprehensive about rafting. This stretch of the Middle Fork welcomes all with its gentle Class II rapids and calm, relaxing pools. You'll have many opportunities to lounge on the boats and swim in peaceful pools as you wind through the gold country of the Sierra Nevada foothills. Tall oak trees line the banks, as do wild blackberry bushes bursting with juicy fruit waiting to be picked. Stopping to explore along the shoreline adds adventure to this special family trip.



A river is a wondrous thing to the eyes of a child.

LOWER MIDDLE FORK AMERICAN

SEASON: APRIL THROUGH OCTOBER

USUAL MINIMUM AGE: 5

TRIP OPTIONS: ½-DAY, 1-DAY

MILES: 7, 7

LOCATION: 3 MILES NORTHEAST OF AUBURN
AND 35 MILES NORTHEAST OF SACRAMENTO

GRADIENT: 17 FEET PER MILE

On our Half-Day and 1-Day trips, we use oar-rafts so you may hang on or paddle as much as you wish. Oar-rafts have a professional guide that controls the raft using oars. During the day you will also have the opportunity to paddle in your own one- or two-person inflatable kayak without a guide. The kayakers are a fun way to explore the river canyon on a more personal level. You'll feel each rapid more intensely; you'll see each current more intimately. The two-person kayakers allow parents the unique opportunity to have a one-on-one rafting experience with their kids. This is a beautiful, fun, and forgiving river and is therefore the perfect place to attempt a self-guided adventure like kayaking. The oar-rafts and guides are never too far away to give any needed assistance to those in a kayak.

The Lower Middle Fork American season runs from April through October. Trips usually begin in early afternoon to catch optimal river flows.

For more information about the Lower Middle Fork American and the surrounding area, go to: www.AOrafting.com.





The mild riffles of the Lower Middle Fork American are a great place to introduce young children to the joys of rafting and the natural world.



Oar rafts and inflatable kayaks are used on the Lower Middle Fork.



South Fork American

THE SOUTH FORK AMERICAN RIVER has something for everyone. It is the most popular introductory whitewater river in California, yet it also satisfies experienced rafters with its numerous Class III rapids. Tucked away in the Sierra foothills, the South Fork American is located just 40 miles east of Sacramento. This river offers diversity...classic scenery, narrow rocky gorges, calm pools, and over 50 rapids! Whitewater rafting on the South Fork draws people to the same Coloma Valley where James Marshall discovered gold in 1848.

This river has the widest selection of trip options in this Guidebook, and is divided into two sections, an Upper run and a Lower run. Both are unique and rewarding. The South Fork is a dam-controlled river with reliable water flows all season long.

One-Day Trips

One-Day Upper "Chili Bar" trips start in the depths of a steep, forested canyon. Rafters have just enough time to warm-up before facing the longest rapid on the river, *Meatgrinder!* The whitewater excitement keeps your attention until the last big challenge...a wild S-turn ride down a twisted chute known as *Trouble Maker Rapid*. After a scrumptious lunch, the river mellows to a peaceful float through the Coloma Valley where our trip ends.

One-Day Lower "Gorge" trips begin in the Lotus/Coloma area, with plenty of Class I and II warm-up rapids before the river drops out of the valley. After lunch, rocky canyon walls close in from both sides as the more demanding Class III whitewater of the "Gorge" begins. Challenges such as *Fowler's Rock*, *Satan's Cesspool*, *Hospital Bar*, and *Recovery Room* rapids carry rafts swiftly toward Folsom Lake, the trip's end.

Two-Day Trips

South Fork 2-Day Car Access Camp trips raft the Upper Section the first day, and the Lower Section the second day. Guests enjoy a more leisurely pace, spending the evening at our beautiful, convenient riverside camp with hot showers, flush toilets, and car access. Modern facilities and hearty camp meals provide a most comfortable stay.

South/Middle Fork 2-Day Combo trips allow you to run two rivers in two days. The first day will be spent enjoying the Class III rapids on the Upper "Chili Bar" section of the South Fork American River. At night you have dinner and stay with us at our car-access river camp on the South Fork with warm showers and flush toilets. The next day you'll wake up early to a quick, healthy breakfast and drive to the Middle Fork of the American (50 minutes away) to challenge yourself with Class IV whitewater. You'll crash through intense rapids, testing your newfound skills. At your trip's end, you'll feel the exhilaration of having conquered two rivers, traveled through two canyons, and floated a total of 27 miles!

Half-Day Trips

Half-Day trips are for those watching their budget and time. These faster trips last approximately five to six hours, including shuttle. Lunch is not included. Half-Day trips on the Upper section take place in the morning, and Half-day trips on the Lower in the afternoon.

To learn more about the South Fork American River go to: www.AOrafting.com.

SOUTH FORK AMERICAN

SEASON: APRIL THROUGH OCTOBER

USUAL MINIMUM AGE: 8

TRIP OPTIONS: ½-DAY 1-DAY, 2-DAYS

MILES: 10, 11, 21

LOCATION: 8 MILES NORTH OF PLACERVILLE AND 40 MILES EAST OF SACRAMENTO

GRADIENT: 25 FEET PER MILE



John Marshall discovered gold on the South Fork American in 1848, sparking the California Gold Rush.



LEFT: Happy crew forward paddling through *Satan's Cesspool*, one of the exciting Class III rapids on the Lower Section of the South Fork American.

The South Fork has over 50 rapids for both beginner and veteran rafters to enjoy.



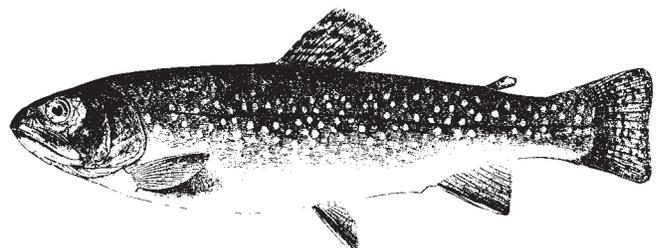


The Middle Fork of the American River. A beautiful wilderness area...an excellent place to go and get away from the daily grind.



The Middle Fork flows through a runnable 90' river tunnel! Years ago, miners blasted this passage to divert and dry up a mile of river bed for prospecting.

A healthy population of Rainbow and German Brown Trout are supported by the clean cool water of the Middle Fork.





Middle Fork American

THE MIDDLE FORK OF THE AMERICAN is a true wilderness river. In the solitude of this beautiful 2000-foot deep rugged canyon are numerous Class III and some technical Class IV rapids. The Middle Fork is a good follow-up trip to the less demanding South Fork, and is appropriate for active, athletic individuals and adventurous first-timers.

The Middle Fork offers unique scenery and great whitewater. Early in the trip, the entire river flows through a narrow, steep Class IV chasm called *Tunnel Chute* and is followed by a runnable rock tunnel 90-feet in length! Along the run, challenging rapids are encountered such as *Last Chance*, *Lettuce Hole* and *Kanaka*. A calmer section toward the middle of the day nicely complements the whitewater excitement. Here, the swiftly moving current allows passengers to relax and appreciate the Middle Fork's scenery. Remarkably clear water swirls above glistening gravel beds and hovering trout, while thickly forested canyon walls rise high overhead. Historic gravel tailings and fern-covered mine shafts remind rafters of California's Gold Rush. Tumbling sidecreeks create cascading waterfalls and smoothly sculpted pools in which to swim.

Toward the end of the trip lies awe-inspiring *Ruck-a-Chucky Falls*. A mandatory walk around this unrunnable 30-foot waterfall allows a first-hand look at nature's beauty and power. After re-boarding the rafts, trips enter an impressive greenstone gorge filled with technical Class IV rapids. This grand finale holds some of the most demanding whitewater of the trip. *Cleavage*, *Parallel Parking* and *Catapult* are a few of the steep, thrilling drops that end each adventure.

Trip options on the Middle Fork include 16-mile, 1- and 2-Day paddle raft trips and 23-mile 3-Day trips. The 1-Day trips move at a fast pace and don't allow time to enjoy off-river attractions. Both 2- and 3-Day trips afford an opportunity to venture into hidden side canyons, swim in warm pools, kayak, and relax at beautiful wilderness beach camps only accessible by raft.

The Middle Fork is dam controlled, running April through October. Anyone considering a Middle Fork trip must be aware that all participants should be in good physical condition.

For more information and images of the Middle Fork American and the surrounding area, go to: www.ARafting.com.



MIDDLE FORK AMERICAN
SEASON: APRIL THROUGH OCTOBER
USUAL MINIMUM AGE: 12
TRIP OPTIONS: 1-DAY, 2-DAYS, 3-DAYS
MILES: 16, 16, 23
LOCATION: 17 MILES NORTHEAST OF AUBURN AND 50 MILES NORTHEAST OF SACRAMENTO
GRADIENT: 40 FEET PER MILE



Tunnel Chute Rapid is one of California's most famous rapids.

Merced

THE MERCED IS AN IDEAL “INTERMEDIATE” RUN for those ready to graduate from a “Beginner” river. Adventurous, athletic first-timers can also enjoy this run. The Merced tumbles over Yosemite’s Nevada and Vernal Falls, meanders through the Valley, and builds into a river of pure whitewater fun. The section we raft is below the Park, and is characterized by a steep gradient, sweeping bends, and few obstacles to hinder a raft’s momentum. With long straightforward rapids and big rolling waves, “forward paddle!” is the predominant command. With its fun rapids, and proximity to Yosemite, this river brings rafters back annually.



MERCED
SEASON: APRIL THROUGH MID-JULY
USUAL MINIMUM AGE: 12
TRIP OPTIONS: 1-DAY, 2-DAYS
MILES: 16, 26
LOCATION: 10 MILES EAST OF MARIPOSA AND 4 MILES WEST OF YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK
GRADIENT: 34 FEET PER MILE

The Merced’s clear waters wind through a grassy, mid-Sierra canyon dotted with oak and Gray Pine. People on early spring trips are treated to hillsides decorated in golden poppies, purple lupine, and wild iris. Since there are no dams constructed above this stretch of river, trips take place when the Sierra snowpack melts, normally April through mid-July. For the biggest waves and longest rapids plan a trip during April or May, the months of peak runoff. Although the flow lessens over the course of the season, the steep gradient of this river keeps the pace brisk. You are able to cover an impressive 16 miles in one action-packed day! Waves crash over the bow of rafts over and over again in rapids like *Percolator*, *Ned’s Gulch*, *Split Rock*, and *Corner Pocket*.

Normally 1-Day trips run the upper 16 miles. This lively section starts off fast for the first six miles, slows down in the middle section, and speeds up again during the final miles. It is a favorite run of many whitewater enthusiasts.

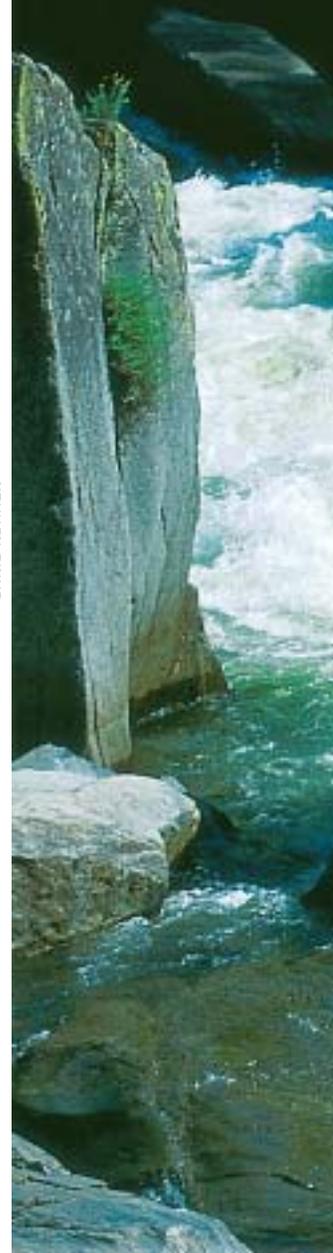
Those on a 2-Day trip also experience the whitewater thrills of the upper section on their first day. When the water level is medium or high we take on the upper section again on the second day, and may add the more challenging *Red Bud* section as well. During lower flows we continue downstream from camp and do the lower 10-mile section with Class IV *Quarter Mile Rapid*. The lower also contains a mandatory portage around 25-foot *North Fork Falls*. Both 2-Day itinerary possibilities result in an invigorating second day and create one of the longest All-Outdoors 2-Day trips available. Overnight guests enjoy plenty of relaxation at one of the Merced’s beautiful overnight wilderness camps.

Because of its exceptional qualities, a segment of the Merced was awarded National Wild & Scenic status in 1987 by the US Congress and will remain protected for future generations to enjoy.

For more information and images of the Merced and the surrounding area, go to: www.AOrafting.com.



Acorns provided the main food source for the Native Americans who lived along the Merced before the arrival of the settlers. Ancient grinding holes are still visible in the rocks along its banks.



CHRIS RUNNER





Paddle crew finishes *Split Rock* rapid and prepares for Class IV *Corner Pocket* just 30 yards downstream!

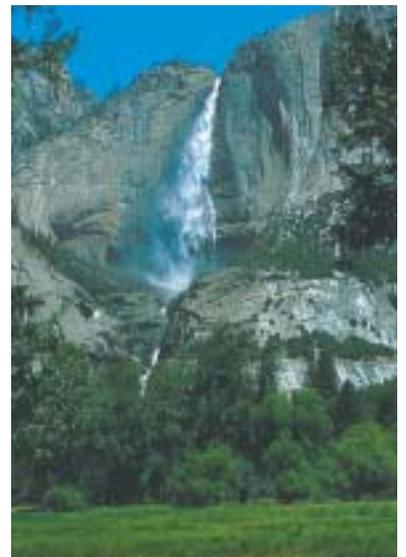
BELOW: The Class IV section of the Merced is only a few miles from Yosemite.



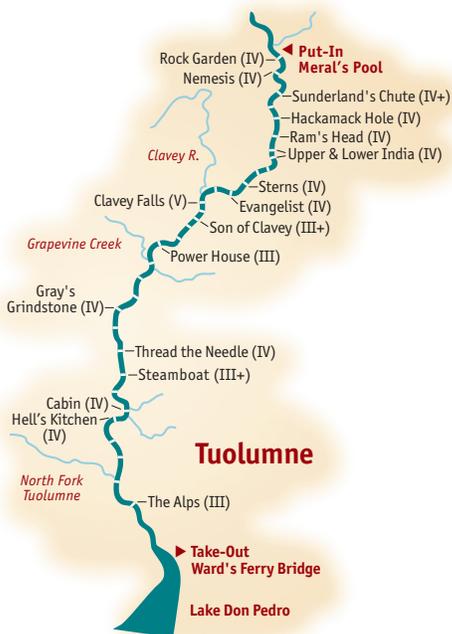
Class IV *Ned's Gulch* is typical of the Merced: a few maneuvers and a lot of "forward paddling" into big waves!



The California Quail and other species of wildlife find the Merced Canyon an attractive habitat.



Tuolumne



LOCATED JUST OUTSIDE YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK, the Tuolumne River provides one of the finest all-around river experiences in the country. Spectacular scenery, thrilling Class IV rapids, great side hikes leading to deep swimming pools, and beautiful white-sand beaches are hidden inside an 18-mile stretch of pristine canyon. Golden eagles, mountain quail, rainbow trout and water ouzels provide a sampling of Sierra wildlife. No signs of modern development interrupt the splendor of this remarkable place. In recognition of the Tuolumne's value, Congress has given the river National Wild and Scenic protection. The Tuolumne is a perfect river for those wishing to graduate to Class IV rafting in a wilderness setting.

The whitewater fun begins immediately with *Rock Garden* and *Nemesis*. Long, technical boulder slaloms, tight chutes, and steep drops are characteristic of the entire run. *Sunderland's Chute*, *Ram's Head*, and *Evangelist* provide a solid Class IV warm-up for the Tuolumne's most famous rapid...Class V *Clavey Falls!* Rapids such as *Gray's Grindstone*, *Cabin*, and *Hell's Kitchen* continue to test the skills of each crew.

Springtime on the Tuolumne brings lush green mountainsides and whitewater at its very best. Continuous rapids and swift currents during high water make it important that each participant has ample rafting experience. Summer and fall trips are ideal for lounging in warm swimming holes and experiencing the Tuolumne's renowned trout fishing. During these later months, the Tuolumne's rapids become a less vigorous Class IV challenge and can be attempted by athletic first-timers.



An oar-paddle combination raft dropping into Clavey Hole.

The Tuolumne is dam-controlled, running April through September. 1-, 2-, and 3-Day trips in all-paddle rafts and oar-paddle combination rafts are available. Due to the length of the run, 1-Day trips have no time for added adventures on shore. On the other hand, 2- and 3-Day trips are an excellent way to fully experience the canyon. You will visit historic mining relics, take short hikes along tributary streams to water-slides and deep pools, and still have time to relax in the Tuolumne's spacious river camps. White sand beaches shaded by green willows and towering oaks provide the finest riverside camping. Overnight trips are Lewis and Clark expedition-style, with gear rafts carrying all provisions.

Strict government regulations limit the size of trips to just 20 people and the total number of commercial trips to two departures per day. Such regulations help preserve the high quality of this public resource and ensure solitude along this uncrowded wilderness run.

For more information and images of the Tuolumne and the surrounding area, go to: www.AOrafting.com.



TUOLUMNE

SEASON: APRIL THROUGH SEPTEMBER

USUAL MINIMUM AGE: 14

TRIP OPTIONS: 1-DAY, 2-DAYS, 3-DAYS

MILES: 18, 18, 18

LOCATION: 8 MI. EAST OF GROVELAND AND 20 MILES WEST OF YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK

GRADIENT: 40 FEET PER MILE



The National Wild & Scenic Tuolumne hides some of the best camping in all of California. Can you find the happy rafters at the remote river camp in the large photo on the next page?



North Fork Stanislaus

THE NORTH STANISLAUS RIVER IS A WELL-KEPT SECRET. Only a few outfitters have been given government permission to operate river trips on this high-Sierra run. Trips start in Stanislaus National Forest, at just over 4,000 feet, which is an unusually high elevation for rivers rafted in California. This run has spectacular alpine scenery — thick forests of pine and fir, mixed with old oak, maple, dogwood, incense cedar, and wild azalea. It is one of the most beautiful settings of any rafting trip in this Guidebook. The ancient Giant Sequoia Redwoods nearby add spice to this already flavorful place.

CHRIS HALL

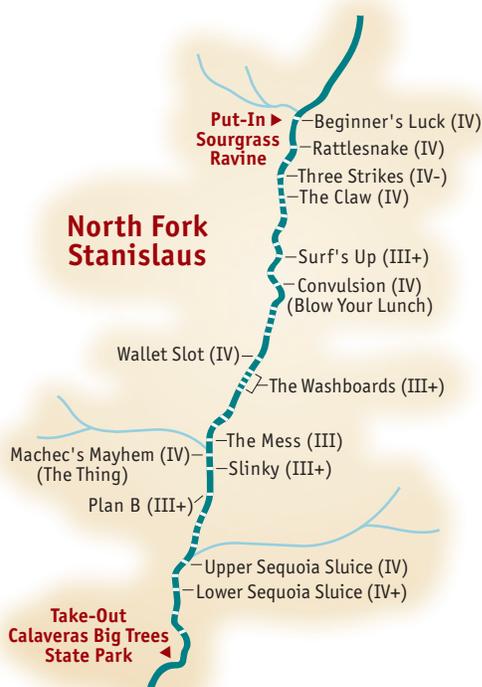


The North Stan flows through Calaveras Big Trees State Park where Giant Sequoia Redwoods thrive and amaze.

The steep gradient of the North Stanislaus (70' per mile) and the large number of rocks in the river create a rafting experience that is as intense and captivating as its scenery. Less than a minute from put-in lies *Beginners Luck*, a stair-stepping, four-stage 15-foot Class IV drop that will jolt you awake and prepare you for what awaits downstream. *Rattlesnake*, *The Claw*, *Convulsion*, *Wallet Slot*, and *Machec's Mayhem* are twisting, turning rapids that require deft maneuvering at high speeds. A day of back-to-back whitewater ends with a series of big drops in Calaveras Big Trees State Park called *Upper and Lower Sequoia Sluice*.

Although this run is short (5 miles), it is always satisfying because of the amazing scenery, large number of rapids, and the intense, technical paddling required for successful passage. The river runs best in springtime, mid-April through May, and requires an athletic and adventurous crew.

For more information and images of the North Fork Stanislaus, go to: www.AOrafting.com.



NORTH FORK STANISLAUS

SEASON: APRIL THROUGH MAY

USUAL MINIMUM AGE: 15

TRIP OPTIONS: 1-DAY

MILES: 5

LOCATION: 4 MILES EAST OF ARNOLD AND

75 MILES EAST OF STOCKTON

GRADIENT: 70 FEET PER MILE



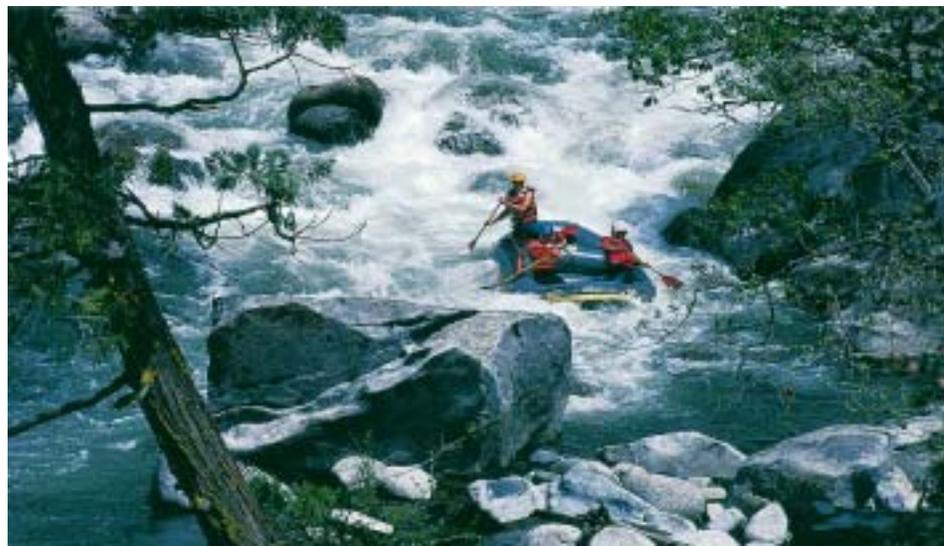
Centrally located, the North Fork Stanislaus is only a few hours from Sacramento and the San Francisco Bay Area.



Paddle crew in the first rapid on the North Stanislaus, Class IV *Beginner's Luck*. BELOW: Polished granite, alpine scenery, and continuous technical rapids on the North Stan.



GEDRGE ARMSTRONG LEFT: HOLLAND WARDWELL



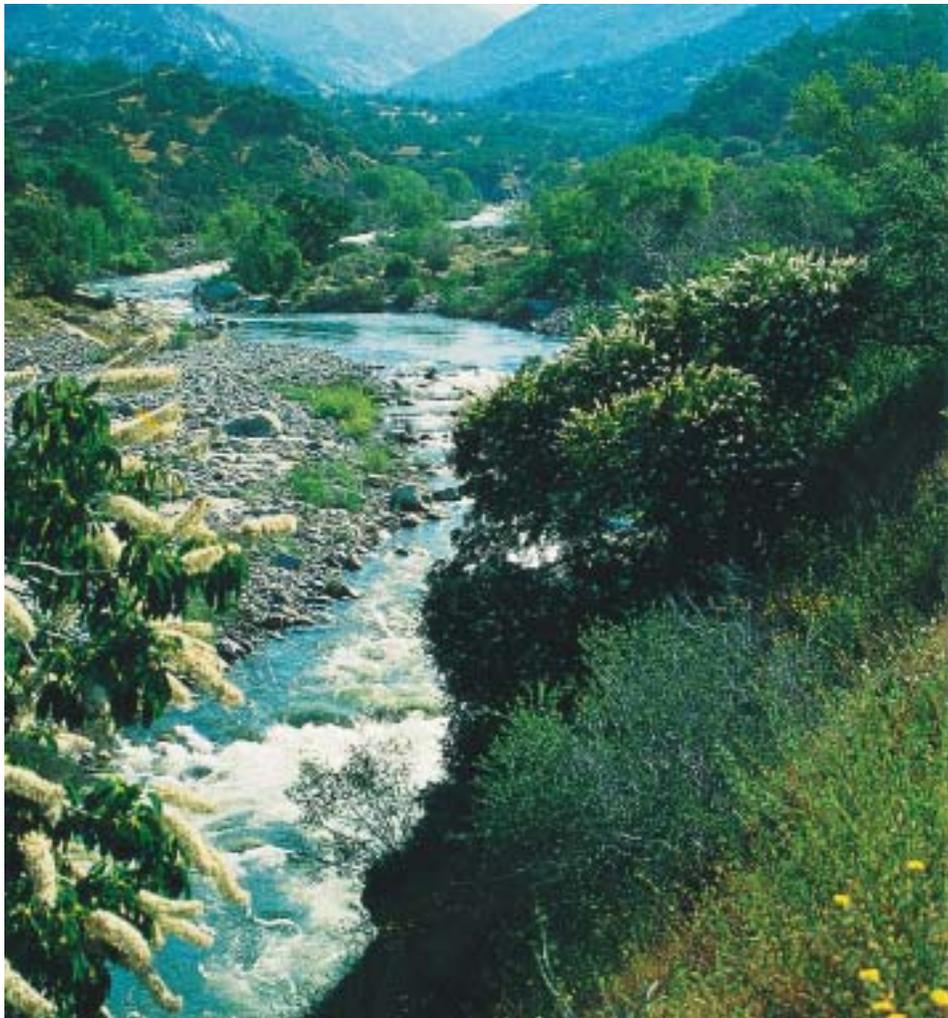


Kaweah

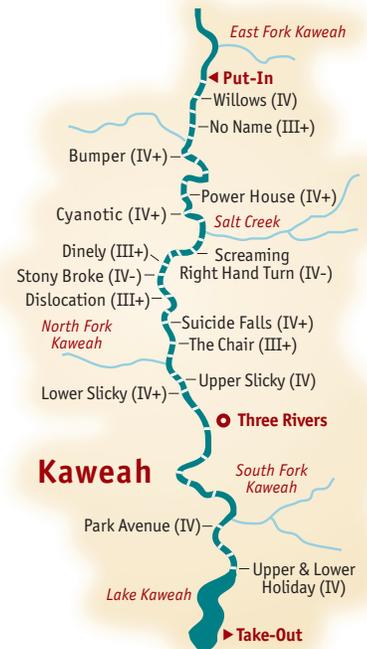
THIS CLASS IV+ RIVER HAS ITS HEADWATERS in the 13,000-foot peaks of Kings Canyon and Sequoia National Parks. These majestic snow-capped mountains form a scenic alpine backdrop to this continuous Intermediate-Advanced river. "Rapid-fire excitement" best describes this thrilling and keenly satisfying run. Previous rafting experience is highly recommended, as there is no time to learn to paddle!

The river starts out like a runaway locomotive and is relentless as it heads for Lake Kaweah, 9 miles downstream. In fast succession the current immediately draws you into one rapid after another, until you begin to ask, "How long can this last?" *Bumper*, *Power House*, *Cyanotic*, and *Suicide Falls* are only a few of the many Class IV+ rapids that make this run an intense high-speed race to the finish. Simply staying in the raft while paddling through the drops can be a challenge! The Kaweah put-in is located only a few miles from Sequoia Na-

tional Park and very close to beautiful Kings Canyon. Snowmelt determines the season, which usually starts in April and lasts through June. Years of heavy snowpack result in later flows and excellent rafting conditions into summer. On 2-Day trips you run the challenging 9-mile section each day and stay at a local hotel for the evening or a car-access riverside camp with showers. **For more information and images of the Kaweah and the surrounding area, go to our web site: www.AOrafting.com.**



The Kaweah has many difficult and demanding rapids.



KAWEAH

SEASON: APRIL THROUGH JUNE
USUAL MINIMUM AGE: 15
TRIP OPTIONS: 1-DAY, 2-DAYS
MILES: 9, 18
LOCATION: 2 MI. WEST OF SEQUOIA NATIONAL PARK AND 70 MI. SOUTHEAST OF FRESNO
GRADIENT: 50 FEET PER MILE



◀ Paddle crews in the fast, rapid-filled Kaweah, with Sequoia National Park in the background.



The North Fork of the American is runnable by rafts for a limited time in the spring of each year. Plan ahead to enjoy this unique and satisfying run.

Paddlers love the challenge of this invigorating river.

Wildflowers are often enjoyed on California springtime trips.



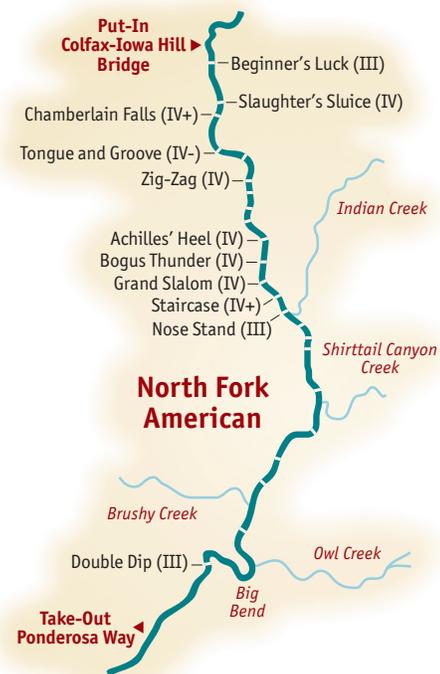
North Fork American

THE NORTH FORK AMERICAN IS THE MOST DIFFICULT of the three forks of the American River. Its proximity to the Interstate 80-Lake Tahoe corridor makes for a convenient trip from Sacramento or the San Francisco Bay Area. Every North Fork adventure gets off to a quick start with 4 miles of intense Class IV rapids. Giant boulders scattered throughout a steep, narrow canyon create a technical, challenging slalom. Previous experience on Class III rivers is advised.

The “heart-in-the-throat” excitement begins immediately as you enter Chamberlain Falls Gorge. *Slaughter’s Sluice*, the first rapid, is a long series of pinball maneuvers that culminates at the infamous seven-foot *Chamberlain Falls*! *Zig-Zag*, *Achilles Heel*, *Bogus Thunder*, and *Staircase* require intricate moves to negotiate. The scenery of this gorge is amazing...lush foliage extends from high on the ridges down to the whitewashed riverside cliffs while water splashes from tiny side canyons to join the incredibly clear North Fork. The second half of the run mellows to Class II-III rapids, allowing time to enjoy the canyon scenery.

The North Fork depends on snowmelt for its flows, so April and May are the best months to run this river.

For more information and images of the North Fork American and the surrounding area, go to: www.AOrafting.com.



NORTH FORK AMERICAN
SEASON: APRIL THROUGH MAY
USUAL MINIMUM AGE: 15
TRIP OPTIONS: 1-DAY
MILES: 9
LOCATION: 20 MI. NORTHEAST OF AUBURN
GRADIENT: 34 FEET PER MILE

Raft pushes through and over 7' Chamberlain Falls (Class IV+), one of the first rapids on the North Fork American.



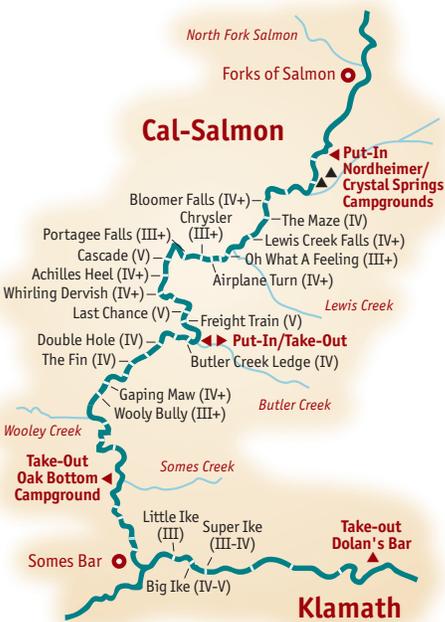
California Salmon

THE “CAL-SALMON” IS ONE OF CALIFORNIA’S best and most difficult spring runs. Experienced rafters eagerly travel to the northern corner of the state for this river’s Class V whitewater and temperate rain-forest scenery. The river plunges through a narrow, steep-walled gorge with stunning cliffs, waterfalls, and unimaginable rapids. The outstanding qualities of the California Salmon prompted Congress to include this river in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.

The Nordheimer Gorge run on the upper section of the river begins immediately with Class IV+ rapids like *Bloomer Falls*, *Lewis Creek Falls*, and *Airplane Turn*. The action increases at Class V *Cascade Rapid*, which is more waterfall than rapid, and continues its pace through the likes of *Achilles Heel*, *Whirling Dervish*, and *Last Chance*. The intensity peaks at *Freight Train*, a long rapid with massive holes and huge hydraulics. There is never a shortage of rapids on the Cal-Salmon!

After the Nordheimer section the river mellows slightly at Butler Creek, and flows through a magnificent canyon with small waterfalls sheeting over sheer granite cliffs into the Cal-Salmon. The highlight of this lower section is *Gaping Maw*, a long, powerful Class IV rapid that ends in a river-wide hole of frothing whitewater!

On 1-Day trips we raft the entire river in one long day, beginning at Nordheimer. On 2-Day trips we also raft the entire run the first day and then camp along the river at a car-access camp. The next day we do the invigorating Nordheimer section again before we take-out at Butler Creek. Trips are conducted in paddle-rafts or oar-paddle rafts, depending on water levels. The California Salmon is a great trip for those wanting to prepare for a trip on the even more challenging Cherry Creek Class V+ adventure!



CALIFORNIA SALMON

SEASON: APRIL THROUGH MID-JUNE

USUAL MINIMUM AGE: 15

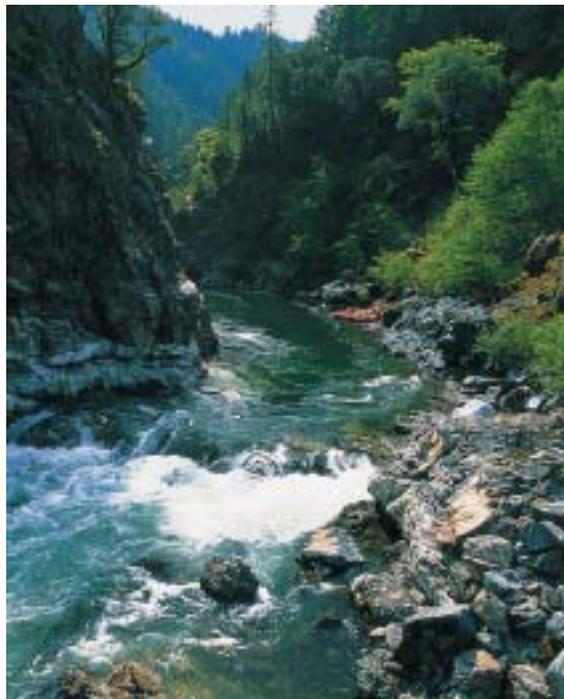
TRIP OPTIONS: 1-DAY, 2-DAYS

MILES: 12, 18

LOCATION: 100 MILES NORTHEAST OF EUREKA AND 150 MILES NORTHWEST OF REDDING

GRADIENT: 40 FEET PER MILE

The Cal-Salmon has great rapids and incredible scenery featuring rock walls and a temperate rainforest.





Hold on! The big drop at Cascade gives an indication of the power and difficulty of this run.



Native Americans who made their home on the Cal-Salmon and Klamath rivers, built canoes of redwood logs. They hollowed the log with fire, then scraped away the soft burned wood with a shell adz.



Both paddle rafts and oar-paddle combination rafts are used on Cal-Salmon trips.



Cherry Creek

CHERRY CREEK IS THE MOST DIFFICULT commercial river trip available in California and perhaps in the United States. With a phenomenal fifteen Class V to V+ rapids and many unnamed Class IV+ drops, this 9-mile run is not for the timid.

This is the ultimate in fast and furious whitewater. Significant Class IV and V paddling experience, adequate physical condition and swimming ability, and total participation is expected of each guest.

Trips focus on Class V education and teamwork. Guides and guests work together scouting rapids, discussing routes, and setting up safety systems. The evening before the trip, a Class V Training Session takes place, which includes videos and exercises to prepare for the next day's challenge.

The whitewater adventure starts immediately with Class IV "warm-up" rapids. Trips stop to practice swimming technique in the river before the Class V begins...huge rapids like *Corkscrew*, *Jawbone*, *Mushroom*, *Toadstool*, and *Unknown Soldier* make for an unforgettable morning of rafting. The river then speeds toward the infamous *Miracle Mile*, which drops 200 feet in a single mile and boasts back-to-back Class V challenges: *Smokey's Hole*, *Blind Faith*, *Gar's Lunch*, *Eulogy*, and *Coffin Rock*. Thundering *Lewis' Leap*, a Class V+ rapid, nearly defies passage! Before the trip ends we portage *Flat Rock* and *Lumsden Falls*, and run three more Class IV drops. At take-out participants are in a state of elation, having met the "Cherry Creek Challenge!"

For more information and images of the Cherry Creek and the surrounding area, go to: www.AOrafting.com.

SEASON: MID-JULY THROUGH SEPTEMBER
USUAL MINIMUM AGE: 18
TRIP OPTIONS: 1.5 DAYS **MILES:** 9
LOCATION: 15 MILES EAST OF GROVELAND AND 15 MI. WEST OF YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK
GRADIENT: 105 FEET PER MILE



The center section of *Mushroom* rapid (Class V+) on Cherry Creek. Can you see the submerged 14' raft these folks are sitting in?





More Experience.



An historic "basket boat" negotiates "Razorback" rapid, Main Stanislaus, Camp Nine run, 1963.

TYLER CHILDRESS

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Walnut Creek Ca 94596

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rivers@AOrafting.com
www.AOrafting.com

Extended Office Hours May 1-Sept 1
8am-7pm M-F & 8am-5pm S-S
Regular Hours 9am-5pm M-F

...More Rivers...More Fun!

River Trips and Reservations

Choosing a River Trip...

Choose a river that suits your experience level. Most first-timers start with a "Beginner" river (pg.5-8) before advancing to an "Intermediate" river (pg.9-20). Call our office for helpful advice. When planning a group trip, always consider the abilities of the least experienced member.

Who Can Participate...

From a lazy day of summer on the Class I-II Lower Middle Fork American, to the adrenaline rush on Class V+ Cherry Creek, this Guidebook offers a river trip to satisfy most everyone. Participants should be able to swim and feel comfortable in the water. Unfortunately, persons with a chest or torso size over 52" (life jacket maximum size) cannot take part in an All-Outdoors trip. People with special health considerations should call our office and consult their physician for recommendations.

Making a Reservation

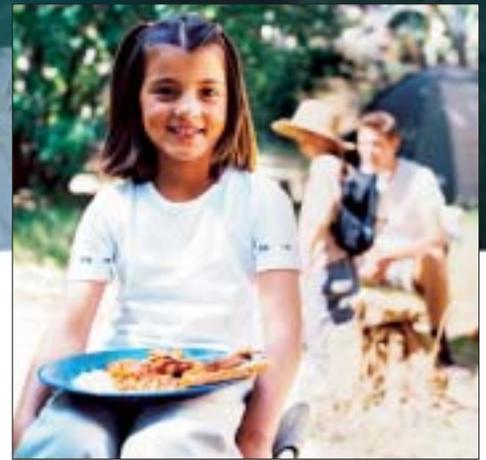
You can call our office at 1-800-24-RAFTS or go online at www.AOrafting.com to reserve space on the rafting trip and date you desire. Usually payment is due at the time of your reservation.

We Provide...

All-Outdoors provides professional instruction preceding your trip, a Coast Guard approved life jacket, professional rafting equipment, a professional guide in each raft, river shuttles, and deluxe food from the first to last lunch.

You Bring...

You bring personal clothing for the trip. A sleeping bag, tent (if desired), and toiletry items are also needed for overnight trips. A detailed "What To Bring" list will be sent to you, or may be obtained online from our website. Transportation to and from the meeting place is your responsibility.



Delicious All-Outdoors River Cuisine

Our meals are prepared with a variety of wholesome, fresh ingredients, to provide a healthful and appetizing menu for our guests. Lunches on 1-Day trips consist of our spectacular build-it-yourself gourmet sandwich bar, along with fresh fruit, salsa and chips, beverage, and dessert. A typical 2-Day trip dinner includes hors d'oeuvres, fresh tossed salad, baked potato bar, camp french bread, chicken, steak, beverages, and a fresh baked dutch oven dessert. Breakfast varies from custom omelets, camp hash browns, and bacon, to fancy continental cuisine when time is limited. Each meal is a delight, served in a river setting with a natural ambience a restaurant can never match.

AOrafting.com...

Find this Guidebook & More!

Our award winning, comprehensive website is an invaluable tool for planning your first, second, and hundredth rafting trip. At your finger tips lies additional information like real-time river flows, space availability, reservations, trip options and details, costs, discounts, and extensive photo galleries. This dynamic site is updated regularly and is an easy way to get informed and keep in touch with California rafting. Start your river trip by going to www.AOrafting.com.

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Call 1-800-247-2387
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www.AOrafting.com**



All-Outdoors Whitewater Rafting • California River Comparison Chart

RAFTER	★LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY	NO.OF DAYS	RIVER MILES	GRADIENT VERTICAL DROP	SCENERY	+ SOLITUDE	USUAL MIN AGE	⚡ WETSUITS	DRY YEAR	RAFTING SEASON NORMAL	WET YEAR	DRIVING MI FROM SF	MI FROM SAC	MI FROM LA
EASY BEGINNER • CLASS I-II														
LOWER MIDDLE FORK AMERICAN*	I-II	½,1	7,7	17'/MI	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	5	APR-MAY	APR-SEP	APR-OCT	APR-OCT	125	35	420
<i>Great for young families and apprehensive adults</i>														
BEGINNER • CLASS III														
SOUTH FORK AMERICAN*	III	½,1,2	10,11,21	25'/MI	GOOD	FAIR	8	APR-MAY	APR-SEP	APR-OCT	APR-OCT	130	40	425
<i>Most popular whitewater river in California</i>														
INTERMEDIATE • CLASS III-IV														
MIDDLE FORK AMERICAN*	III-IV	1,2,3	16,16,23	40'/MI	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	12	APR-MAY	APR-SEP	APR-OCT	APR-OCT	140	50	435
<i>Remote, scenic 2000' deep canyon with a taste of Class IV whitewater</i>														
MERCED	III-IV	1,2	16,26	34'/MI	GOOD	FAIR	12	APR-MID. JUN	APR-JUN	APR-MID. JUL	APR-AUG	180	150	310
<i>Excellent introduction to Class IV whitewater; only a few minutes from Yosemite</i>														
INTERMEDIATE - ADVANCED • CLASS IV+														
TUOLUMNE*	IV+	1,2,3	18,18,18	40'/MI	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT	14	APR-JUN	APR-AUG	APR-SEP	APR-OCT	140	115	370
<i>Designated "Wild & Scenic" by Congress. Considered California's best multi-day trip</i>														
NORTH FORK STANISLAUS	IV+	1	5	70'/MI	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	15	APR-MAY	APR-MID. MAY	APR-MAY	APR-OCT	160	125	410
<i>Beautiful high-alpine setting with lots of whitewater action</i>														
KAWAHAH	IV+	1,2	9,18	50'/MI	GOOD	FAIR	15	APR-MID. JUN	APR-MAY	APR-JUN	APR-JUL	260	240	210
<i>One rapid after another, near Sequoia National Park</i>														
NORTH FORK AMERICAN	IV+	1	9	34'/MI	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	15	APR-MID. MAY	APR	APR-MAY	APR-JUN	150	55	420
<i>Springtime run through a narrow rock gorge with intense rapids</i>														
ADVANCED • CLASS V														
CALIFORNIA SALMON	V	1,2	12,18	40'/MI	EXCELLENT	VERY GOOD	15	ALWAYS	APR-MAY	APR-MID. JUN	APR-MID. JUL	395	320	680
<i>Sleep, rock-walled gorge in a temperate rainforest with very challenging whitewater</i>														
CHERRY CREEK*	V+	1½	9	105'/MI	EXCELLENT	EXCELLENT	18	ALWAYS	JUN-AUG	JUL-SEP	AUG-SEP	140	115	370
<i>Considered the most difficult commercially run whitewater river in the U.S.</i>														

*Dam release from upstream man-made reservoirs/fairly predictable flows

★Based on the International Scale of Difficulty (see page 3 inside this guidebook)

⚡While rivers with "excellent" ratings have solitude 7 days a week, the level of solitude on other rivers improves during early and late season, as well as midweek during the summer. Wetsuit requirements can vary so please call our office for details. Wetsuits may be rented directly from All-Outdoors at the meeting place the morning of your trip.

Supporting Our Rivers All-Outdoors belongs to a number of organizations dedicated to managing rivers for the public's use and preserving the precious few in California that remain free-flowing. We donate a portion of your trip fees to non-profit organizations such as Friends of the River, one of the top river preservation organizations in the country. If you wish to help or become a member of Friends of the River, call their office in Sacramento (916) 442-3155. Brochure Design: David Design • Jamestown, CA Photos by Lotus Photography - www.lotusphoto.biz unless noted.

All-Outdoors operates under the permits and approval of U.S. Forest Service, Calaveras Big Trees State Park, Auburn State Recreation Area, Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Notice: Water flows on 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 permits from the County of El Dorado. All-Outdoors is an equal opportunity service provider.

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