

Whitewater Rafting Clinic

May Trip

About the Location:

The Deschutes River is famous for whitewater rafting, and features exciting class III rapids between stretches of relaxing, peaceful waters. Since 1855, much of the upper Deschutes has served as the border to the Warm Springs Indian Reservation, the largest reservation in the state and home to the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, on whose traditional lands you'll be rafting and camping. We'll be rafting on a clear and cool river through a desert canyon with sage-covered hillsides and layers of exposed basalt. This river corridor provides habitat to a variety of raptors and waterfowl, as well as river otters, bighorn sheep, and deer. The Deschutes offers a great setting for rafting, where you can enjoy fun and challenging whitewater, peaceful floating, and typically dry and sunny weather!



What to Expect:

On the first day of this trip, we will drive about 2.5 hours, then launch our rafts and start teaching you how to maneuver a raft and a crew of paddlers down the river! During this intro clinic you will learn technical guiding skills, how to read whitewater, river safety, and rescue skills (including raft flipping and swimming). If you've ever wanted to be a raft guide, or just see what it's like, this is the trip for you! This trip takes place on the Maupin section of the Deschutes River, and features rapids including Wapinitia, Box Car, and Oak Springs. Although everyone wears a Personal Flotation Device (PFD, also called a lifejacket), you should know how to swim and be comfortable in the water.

We will set up a basecamp at a riverside campground with pit toilets for the duration of this clinic. We'll work together to prepare meals, manage rafting equipment, and perform camp tasks. For sleeping accommodations, we provide your choice of either single person tents, or shared tent space (tent sharing is available if you're signing up with your "pod"). You can even choose one of College Outdoors' single person bivy sacks, which allow you to stay cozy and dry while sleeping out under the stars. We practice minimum-impact camping techniques such as packing out all litter and food waste, not using soap in the river, and being courteous towards other visitors. We'll go over these practices.

New to Rafting or Camping?

No problem! This trip is designed for beginners and perfect for any adventurous spirit who wants to learn new skills, bond with a small-group of peers, and experience the joys of "river life"!

What will we eat?

We eat well in the backcountry! Some examples of typical meals include: curry, burritos, mac & cheese, and we love our snacks! This trip can accommodate most dietary restrictions and allergies, as long as you let us know about them ahead of time in the online Health & Diet Questionnaire. We'll bring potable water in jugs from campus.

What if I don't have outdoor clothing or equipment?

No problem! Check out our packing lists (located on your trip page) for a description of the essential and optional gear for your trip. We provide all the group gear such as tents, stoves, and water filters. If you don't have your own outdoor clothing or personal equipment, we provide what you'll need for **free**, as long as you *request the equipment ahead of time* using the online form found on our website.

What are the policies?

Participants on College Outdoors trips are expected to follow all [Lewis & Clark College conduct policies](#). All trips are tobacco, drug, and alcohol free, including vaping, medical cannabis, and tobacco products. Nicotine patches and gum are permitted. College Outdoors has specific policies and procedures to mitigate risks on trips, which are outlined in the [policy brochure](#) and will be explained by your trip leaders. These policies include: Respecting others, food sanitation practices, requiring the use of Personal Floatation Devices (PFDs, sometimes referred to as lifejackets), requiring close-toed shoes, staying 6ft away from cliff edges, and practicing "leave no trace" in the outdoors. Policy violations may result in disciplinary action and/or removal from trips.

You are welcome to join a trip with your best friends or significant other, we just ask that you refrain from "cliques" or other social behavior that may make others feel excluded. This will help us build a fun, inclusive community for everyone on the trip, and you might even make some new best friends!

What are the risks?

The most common injury on this trip is sunburn not applying enough sunscreen. Other possible injuries include blisters on hands from paddling, blisters on feet from new hiking boots, cuts resulting from walking barefoot or use of pocket knives, burns from handling pots on a stove without hot pads or gloves, and spilling boiling water. *These are all preventable with a little caution and common sense.*

Swift water and rapids present hazards, and the river is a force to respect. Participants should be comfortable swimming and are required to wear lifejackets at all times when on the water. Trip leaders will cover river safety issues at the beginning of the trip, and repeat them as needed. Participants will learn how to paddle rafts and what to do in case they fall out.

Stinging insects and other allergens can be present this time of the year, and *people with the potential for severe reactions to allergens must plan to bring their own anaphylaxis kits (EpiPen)*. [Learn more about possible risks here](#). Please note that our trips will often visit remote areas and medical help could be hours away. Our trip leaders generally carry cell phones, and in some cases, satellite phones, but service is not always available in rural or rugged, remote areas. Trip leaders are trained as Wilderness First Responders.

What about Covid-19?

We expect that we will still be managing the Covid-19 situation in May 2021, so we are planning all May Trips to follow Oregon's guidelines for Phase 1 of reopening. Visit our website for up to date plans, protocols, and expectations: https://www.lclark.edu/programs/college_outdoors/covid-19-mitigation-for-may-trips/

More questions? Just ask! We LOVE to talk about trips!