

## Owyhee River Oregon's Grand Canyon

### Isolated and Awesome

Tucked away in the empty southeastern corner of Oregon is a seldom-traveled desert canyon with exceptional scenery, isolated wilderness and dramatic colorful gorges teeming with many species of birds and other wildlife. There are just enough moderate rapids to deliver a good dose of fun and excitement without taking away from the scenery and the endless opportunities for hiking. Hot springs take the chill out of the often-fickle weather in April and May. Inviting sandy beaches surrounded by quiet un-crowded desert solitude create a premier camping experience.

### A Geologist's Playground and a Birder's Paradise

The general geologic history revealed by the Owyhee consists of alternating layers of shallow lake basins and flood plains and volcanic debris ranging from ash to lava. The wildly contrasting red, brown and black layers of Chalk Basin make for great hiking and excellent photography. Fossils preserved here include plants, fish and large and small mammals from 5 to 15 million years ago. Variety is the key with the river traversing fractures and faults caused by massive earthquakes, and cutting dramatic gorges through pink and gray rhyolitic lava, columnar basalt, inter-canyon lava flows, fluvial deposits and volcanic ash flows. There's always something interesting around the next corner.

While otter, mule deer and big horn sheep are often spotted on the Owyhee many folks come strictly for the Birding. During the rafting season migratory birds including grebes, cormorants, cranes and curlews are common. Raptors are everywhere and wrens, meadowlarks, sparrows and flycatchers entertain at camp.

### New to Rafting or Camping?

Those that are new to the river or are first-time campers will be well taken care of. Many of our guests are first-timers and with 24 years of experience, we've learned how to take extremely good care of them. Our campsites along the river are rustic and beautiful. We bring everything we need with us on the rafts for a camp and kitchen each day. All you need are your personal items, a tent, sleeping bag and pad and we have quality equipment available for rent should you need it. Our guides are carefully selected for their "people skills", well trained, very safety conscious, patient and happy to

assist you in setting up your tent and getting settled in. Don't worry about kitchen duties or loading rafts – that's our job! The guides prepare fresh meals while you relax and enjoy hors d'oeuvres. We'll teach you how to be comfortable in the outdoors, answer all your questions and take care of all the details both on and off the water.

### Trip Options

We offer a 5-Day/4-Night camping trip beginning at Rome, Oregon and ending at Leslie Gulch on Lake Owyhee. As a free-flowing desert river (no dams to control water flow) the Owyhee is our most fickle in terms of predictability. In an average season we run trips from Mid-April through the end of May. Some years the whole season is in doubt. We usually have a good indication by February of how the season will look. If your trip is questionable we will keep you informed on a regular basis, making every effort, within the bounds of prudence and safety, to insure your trip runs or at least to develop an alternative trip that you may join if you wish.

### What's included?

**Full days on the river:** Beginning in the morning on the first day and ending in the late afternoon each day. Hikes,

fun and a riverside lunch break up the rafting.

**Experienced guides:** All of our guides are trained extensively in the art of river-running, rescue and customer service and possess their own unique qualities and talents that add "something special" to each trip.

**All rafting and safety equipment:** rafts and related equipment, dry bags and boxes, lifejackets, kitchen, dining and toilet equipment, splash tops and pants for cooler weather and wetsuits (if needed) for those interested in inflatable kayaking.

**All Meals:** Beginning with lunch the first day through lunch the last day prepared fresh daily. Our meals are balanced and plentiful. We are happy to accommodate food restrictions and allergies or make special plans for birthdays, anniversaries or any special occasion.



## Itinerary

### Day 1

Our journey begins as we meet our trip leader and fellow travelers at the BLM Park and launch site in Rome, Oregon. After a short orientation, river bags are issued and instruction given on how to pack your gear. A safety orientation follows, lifejackets are fitted and with the group organized into paddle-raft crews, individual kayakers and oar boat riders we're out on the river for the first of five amazing days. After a few miles of easy floating through the Rome Valley we enter the first of many gorges. After a riverside lunch, easy whitewater and stunning vistas bring us to our first scenic camp along the river where you'll have time to hike while our guides prepare a delicious evening meal.

### Day 2

Varied canyons, spectacular hiking at Chalk Basin, several exciting rapids and a short hike to an old homestead with a gripping tale of cattle rustlers and a classic western shoot-out, characterize the day. With a little luck we'll camp at Rye Grass where a soak in the hot springs after dinner under the stars provides a welcome end to the day.



### Days 3 & 4

A hot and hearty breakfast will send us on our way, giving us energy for the deepest (and liveliest) part of the canyon and some spectacular scenery. Be on the lookout for Bighorn Sheep and keep your camera handy as we approach the dramatic formations of Green Dragon Canyon. Floating beneath canyon walls towering 1000 ft overhead on each side is an experience not soon forgotten. A hike to mysterious 8000-year-old petroglyphs and another possible hot springs camp make these two days the most memorable.

### Day 5

A leisurely half-day float through Sentinel Canyon brings us to the head of Lake Owyhee. After lunch we motor across the upper end of the lake, on the lookout for Western Grebes and Pelicans. The spectacular ash deposit formations of Leslie Gulch mark our take-out. We've arranged transportation back to Rome After a traditional trip-ending HT toast you'll enjoy a scenic drive through the oddly twisted formations of the Gulch

on your return to Rome. You will undoubtedly be planning your next journey into Owyhee country.

## We are Committed to the Environment



We have proven that social and environmental responsibilities go hand and hand with successful business. Environmental responsibility is an

ethic everyone in our company lives and teaches. We recycle all that we can and use recycled products wherever possible. We are proud supporters of organizations like American Rivers, High Desert Museum and The Nature Conservancy. We believe that locally and nationally we do make a difference.

## MEETING INSTRUCTIONS

Meet the morning of your trip at 8 a.m. (**Pacific Time**) at the Bureau of Land Management boat landing just east of the Owyhee River at the Hwy 95 Bridge at Rome, Oregon. There is a short and well-marked gravel access road to the launch and it is visible from the highway. Driving times: From Bend, 4.5 HRS; From Portland, 8 HRS; From Boise, 2 HRS.

## TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION

If flying, make connections to Boise. From Boise you can rent a car or arrange shuttle service to Rome or Jordan Valley through our office. We provide return transportation by van from our take-out at Leslie Gulch to Rome where your vehicle awaits. For those wishing to depart to Boise or points north, we can arrange to have your vehicle shuttled to the take-out for an additional fee. If you choose this option, we recommend filling up in Burn's Junction if coming from the West or Jordan Valley if coming from the East. Also, please bring an extra set of keys.

## ACCOMMODATIONS

### CAMPING:

You may camp at the Rome put-in. Primitive, water and toilets available (or) Crystal Crane Hot Springs. 541-493-2312. Rustic cabins and tent/RV sites available. Private and public hot pools. 30 miles SE of Burns on Hwy 78 and 80 miles from Rome.

### MOTELS:

JORDON VALLEY – Sahara Motel (541) 586-2500  
ROME – Rome Cafe, (541) 586-2294, Modest Cabins  
BURNS – Best Inn, (541) 573-5295 (or) Silver Spur, (541) 573-2077  
ONTARIO – Best Western (541) 889-2600 (or) Holiday Inn (541) 889-8621

**Please note: This trip operates on Pacific Time.**

## WHAT TO BRING

### Weather Conditions

Part of the beauty of the Owyhee Canyon is that it is such a varied and dynamic environment. This free-flowing desert river provides a narrow window for traveling the canyon, and during this time weather conditions can vary drastically from a sunny 85 degrees to a cold and windy 38 degrees. While most trips have good weather overall, it is imperative that you be prepared for any conditions. Please pay close attention to the packing list as well as "Spring and Fall Weather" info. While we provide tarps and additional rafting gear to make you comfortable on and off the river, being adequately equipped with the appropriate clothing can make the difference between an enjoyable trip and one that is less enjoyable.

accommodations or give packing suggestions. Please pack fishing poles in unbreakable cases. Participants are required to fill out a trip registration form and ASSUMPTION OF RISK form prior to joining the trip. Parent or legal guardians must sign for minor children. These forms will be sent along with additional information when you make your reservation. Please pay careful attention to our reservation and cancellation policies.

<p><b>RIVER WEAR</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Visor, Cap, or Sun Hat</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Sunglasses (w/strap)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> T-Shirt and shorts or bathing suit</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Rafting Shoes: Sandals w/heel strap, sneakers or wetsuit booties.</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Personal water container</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Lip Balm</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Sunscreen (Waterproof)</li></ul> <p><b>On Cooler Days Add:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Polypropylene long johns (top &amp; bottom)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Pile or Fleece Jacket</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Wool or Polypro Sox</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Rain/Wind Jacket and Pants</li></ul> <p><b>On Very Hot Days Add:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Lightweight long sleeve shirt and pants (or) apply sunscreen often.</li></ul> <p><b><i>Dressing in layers will allow easy adjustment to changing conditions.</i></b> <b><i>AVOID COTTON!</i></b></p>	<p><b>CAMP ITEMS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> T-Shirt and Shorts</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Jeans/ pants</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Sweatshirt or light jacket</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Socks &amp; Underwear</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Dry Tennis Shoes or light hiking boots</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Small Towel</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Toiletry Items</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Flashlight</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Tent</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Ground Cloth</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Sleeping bag (20 degrees)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Compact sleeping pad</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> One Article of Attire for "Dress-up" Night. <i>Be as creative and crazy as you want to be!</i></li></ul> <p><b><i>Quality tents, sleeping bags and pads are available for rent. Please contact our office for details. Sleeping bags are professionally laundered prior to each trip.</i></b></p>	<p><b>OPTIONAL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Camera and Film</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Fishing Gear and License</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> BYOB (No Glass Please)</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Small Day-Pack for hiking</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Binoculars</li></ul> <p><b>Owyhee River Additions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li><input type="checkbox"/> Pile or Polar fleece Pants</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Heavier Jacket/Vest for Camp</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Warm Gloves &amp; Hat</li><li><input type="checkbox"/> Quality Rain Gear</li></ul> <p><b><i>Ouzel will have a supply of splash tops and pants for use in the rafts on cool days. If conditions require, wetsuits will be available for those wishing to kayak.</i></b></p>
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Each guest is given a waterproof dry-bag large enough for a sleeping bag and all of your personal belongings. In addition, each raft carries smaller dry-bags and hard waterproof cases for items that you wish to have access to during the day. All tents are packed separately so you'll never have to pack a wet tent with your clothing. If you have special photography equipment or any other unusual items please contact our office as far ahead as possible and we will try to make

**Call Today to Arrange Your River Journey**

**1-888-987-2457**

Or email us at:

[raft@hiddentrails.com](mailto:raft@hiddentrails.com)