



COURSE DESCRIPTION

ADULT WHITEWATER RAFTING EXPEDITION – 7 DAYS

In General – You hear “ALL FORWARD!” shouted above the roar of the rapids by the captain of your raft (that could be you). Next thing you know, you’re digging your paddle blade in deep to meet some of the biggest and best whitewater of the West. You’re in for an unforgettable experience. You don’t need to have previous rafting experience to fully embrace this extraordinary expedition which combines beautiful environments and exciting activities. On the river, you will learn both the basics and the fine points of managing a paddle raft through some of the best whitewater in the West, as well as camping underneath the pristine night skies of Southern Utah while caring for the landscape you’re moving through. You will paddle a raft, descending through a canyon reminiscent of the Grand Canyon filled with both calm and wild water, taking in the exquisite natural beauty, and often stop to explore many awe-inspiring viewpoints.



Your instructors are highly-qualified river runners and dedicated educators. They will serve as teachers, trainers, and mentors as you learn the skills required for wilderness travel. Through daily discussions, they will also help you and your group to discover the larger lessons to be uncovered in these activities. You will discover much about yourself: how you adapt to change and deal with challenge, how you work with others, and the ever-present community traveling along with you.

Wilderness travel is demanding. This course may have very challenging aspects; you should be aware of what you’re getting into and excited about tackling the challenges. It can literally take every waking moment to get from point A to point B. From getting up early to pack your dry bags and cook breakfast, to paddling a raft for miles in windy conditions or through turbulent rapids, traveling in the wilderness can be hard. Past veterans agree that arriving physically fit and mentally prepared to take on challenges will enhance your experience and ability to do well on course, ultimately allowing you to take full advantage of your expedition.

The Colorado Outward Bound School (COBS) is indeed a school, though it will likely look radically different from schools you have attended in the past. Our “classrooms” are beautifully inspiring and rather than memorization for tests, our curriculum focuses on skills for the wilderness and most importantly for our students’ everyday lives when they return home. Through challenge and adventure in a supportive environment your instructors will use teachable moments, experiential learning, and time for reflection to create progressions of skills and responsibilities. Many traditional schools may teach to specific mathematical or linguistic hard skills, but in addition to teaching whitewater rafting, backpacking, climbing, and canyoneering, COBS aims to develop the character of each student; building resilient, optimistic, compassionate, self-reliant, and resourceful leaders. We explore, role model, highlight the merits of, and encourage examples of our values:

- Tenacity in Pursuit
- Readiness for Sensible Self Denial
- Indefatigable Spirit
- Enterprising Curiosity
- Compassion



COURSE AREA

Cataract Canyon of the Colorado River

One of the most rugged and beautiful canyons in the West, Cataract Canyon takes you through the heart of Canyonlands National Park. You will learn how to guide a whitewater raft as you float past natural wonders and ancient ruins to the confluence of the Colorado and Green Rivers while preparing for what awaits downstream. The Colorado River roars through 29 exciting rapids that rate with those of the Grand Canyon in power and difficulty, including the famous Mile Long Rapids and “the Big Drops.” In the nearby canyons, fantastic rock shapes carved by the whimsical forces of nature await you as your group ventures off-river to jaw-dropping views.



COURSE ACTIVITIES

Each course is as unique as the individuals who form the community. Your course itinerary may vary depending on weather and the skill levels of your group.

Rafting – While on the river, each day is spent learning to recognize and navigate various obstacles and hazards in the river, and how to anticipate the forces of the current from far enough upstream. You and your companions will work to become a team, coordinating your spacing, and paddle strokes. You will have an opportunity to be the captain of your crew and put to use what you’ve learned as you maneuver your raft through Class II – IV rapids. Interspersed between the rapids are flat-water sections where there is a current, but no whitewater. At times, you will take advantage of this calm water to hone your skills and enjoy the view. Time in a raft is ideal for getting to know each other and form boat pride, laughing your way downriver as you relax into the graceful simplicity of river life.



In places, the canyon rims rise thousands of feet above, enclosing you in a remote world of rushing water, delicate ecosystems, and unbelievable beauty. During your course, your instructors will introduce you to the most important elements of the river life: reading whitewater currents, paddling, whitewater captaining, geology of the canyon, environmental stewardship, outdoor cooking, first aid, natural history of the river canyons, and of course, those beautiful star-studded night skies.



Day Hiking – As you travel down the river, you will stop along the way to explore side trails, canyons, and historic or geologic points of interest. These hikes will take you through rough terrain to incredible, remote places that are only accessible from the river. You may witness blazing sunrises or find yourself leaping into crystal clear creeks. The hikes are always well worth the effort to see ancient artifacts as well as stunning natural beauty.

SAMPLE ITINERARY

The following is an example of what your 6-day itinerary **may** look like. Your actual course plan will vary according to weather, student skills and abilities, and instructor preferences.

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| Day 1 | Course Start, River Launch |
| Day 2-6 | Whitewater Rafting, day hikes, possible mini-solo |
| Day 7 | Course end and transportation home |

