



**MIDDLE FORK  
RIVER EXPEDITIONS**

## MIDDLE FORK OF THE SALMON RIVER- IDAHO

The Middle Fork of the Salmon River is the premier wilderness rafting trip in the US. It's gin clear water flows 100 miles of Wild and Scenic free-flowing river winding through the largest roadless wilderness area in the US, slicing through a canyon that is deeper than the Grand Canyon. It has half a dozen natural hot springs, blue ribbon trout fishing, and more than 100+ rapids grade I-III (IV in June). The Middle Fork of the Salmon is an unspoiled, remote and pristine wilderness much as it was 100 years ago or more. Named by National Geographic as one of the top 3 river trips in the world, the Middle Fork will provide you with the vacation of a lifetime.

Our mission at MFRE is to allow river travellers the opportunity to unplug from modern society and reconnect to oneself, family, and friends through nature's lens. This adventure allows you to have a digital detox from technology and reconnect to a more simple and fulfilling pace of life. There is no Wi-Fi in the wilderness, but we promise you will find a much deeper connection.

Our equipment is specially designed for wilderness whitewater rafting, and offers mild and wild rides (oar boats, paddle boats and inflatable kayaks). Our river guides are seasoned professionals, licensed by the state of Idaho, and are First Aid and Swiftwater Rescue Certified. They are expert river runners, magnificent cooks, great storytellers, and knowledgeable, helpful outdoorsmen and friends.

Join Middle Fork River Expeditions for a magical wilderness river vacation this summer!

**Please note – Starting in 2023 this trip begins in Stanley, Idaho and ends in Salmon, Idaho.** You either need to shuttle your vehicle from Stanley to Salmon (~\$150) or fly from Salmon to Boise (~\$250/person) at the end of the trip. Logistics details are below.

### ITINERARY

☞ Please ***arrive in Stanley, Idaho the night before the trip begins***. Stanley is a 45-minute flight, a 3-hour drive from Boise or a 1-hour drive from Sun Valley. We have a pre-trip orientation at the MFRE warehouse at ***8:30pm the evening before the trip begins***. The MFRE warehouse is located ~¼ mile West on Hwy 21 from the Mountain Village Resort on the left hand side of the street right after the Triangle C Cabins. There are three MFRE wooden oars at the driveway entrance. Please have dinner before the meeting. The next morning we depart at 8:30am from the Mountain Village Resort. Be sure you have your vehicle shuttle reservation in place from Stanley to Salmon well ahead of time **preferably** the moment after confirming a booking with MFRE.

You are responsible for booking a hotel room for the night before the trip in Stanley. For rooms we have priority pre-season bookings at the Mountain Village Lodge (800) 843-5475 from Oct 15 until Dec 31, after which they open to the public. Please mention you are with MFRE when you book prior to Dec 31 otherwise they will not allow you to book. The Triangle C Cabins (208-774-2266) have clean cabins and are great for families. Another good choice is the Sawtooth Hotel (208-721-2459). You can go to the Stanley Chamber of Commerce website for more options but please note lodging is limited so book right away. [www.stanleycc.org](http://www.stanleycc.org)

Middle Fork River Expeditions, Box 70, Stanley, ID 83278  
800-801-5146 ~ [www.idahorivers.com](http://www.idahorivers.com) ~ [middlefork@idahorivers.com](mailto:middlefork@idahorivers.com)

*(Overnight in Stanley is not included- You must book hotel)*

### **DAYS 1 ~ 3**

We meet the first morning at 8:30am at the Mountain Village Resort and depart for a 1½ hour bus ride to the river. Upon launching our rafts at Boundary Creek, 6000 feet above sea level, you'll enter an enchanted forest of fir and spruce which infuse the high mountain air with pine. Sparkling clear waters careen through boulder-choked rapids with names such as Sulpher Slide, The Chutes, Velvet Falls, Powerhouse, Pistol Creek and Tappan Falls. Pit stops at mountain hot springs and pioneer homesteads provide the perfect balance to the on-river excitement. Evenings find us eating gourmet river meals, relaxing by the campfire, playing horseshoes or bocce, listening to the river and watching for shooting stars!

**\*Please note** - If water levels are low (usually by late July depending on snowpack) we may fly in 5 and 9 seater airplanes to a lower put-in point called Indian Creek, which is an amazing flight and a great way to start your adventure and offers a great perspective of where you are in the wilderness. The flight is an additional ~\$150/person (we will send a payment link by e-mail before your trip) and the lower put-in point makes it a 75-mile river trip. Guests always say the flight into the river is one of the highlights of the trip. It also allows more time for all the cool spots without having to get up super early or need to make it to camp before dark so we can't stop. Also not getting stuck on the upper 25 miles because of heavy rafts is a plus too.

### **DAYS 4 ~ 5**

As we drop in elevation, the river widens, lodgepole fades into vistas of ponderosa pine studded mountains and we enter Impassible Canyon, where no trails can be cut as the sheer walls go up over 3,000 feet. This section of river is deeper than Grand Canyon. We will navigate fun rapids such as Haystack, Bernard, Earthquake Rock, Jack Creek, Cutthroat Cove, Redside and Weber. Between rapids, you'll drift quietly over deep pools of transparent water, home to native cutthroat and rainbow trout. Hikes to Waterfall Creek and Veil Falls are highlights for many of our guests.

### **DAY 6**

The last day has some of the best and biggest rapids of the trip, including Rubber and Cramer Creek Rapids, which make a great whitewater crescendo finale for the week. We arrive at the take-out point at Cache Bar around 10am where you will find changing rooms and outhouses to change into dry clothing for the ride to Salmon. We drive by bus to Salmon, arriving around 1-2pm for flights out of Salmon at 3pm, or to be dropped off at your car at the Stagecoach Inn for the evening or if you have reserved a car shuttle. We will provide sack lunches for the ride and also stop along the way at North Fork for a bathroom break. Please contact the Stagecoach Inn (208-756-2919) directly for rooms for this night. The best rooms are on the riverside of the hotel and a little more expensive but well worth it.

*(Overnight in Salmon is not included- You must book)*

**DATES and PRICING** (please visit and book a for date on the MFRE website. The website also has current pricing & "live" availability.

### **What's Included**

- ◆ ground transportation by school bus from Stanley to the river put-in point on Day 1
- ◆ ground transportation by school bus from the river take-out point to Salmon in a school bus Day 6.
- ◆ meals from lunch Day 1 to lunch Day 6.

- ◆ expert leadership with seasoned professional river guides who are Wilderness First Aid and Swiftwater Rescue certified.
- ◆ all camping equipment including 4-man tents for 1 or 2 people, large rectangular 20F sleeping bag, 2" sleeping pad.
- ◆ optional splash gear tops and bottoms (with velcro wrist gaskets), farmer john wetsuits, and waterproof socks and gloves (if needed in June/early July) or Sept.
- ◆ 3 dry bags: one for camp clothing, one for sleeping kit (pillow & sleeping bag) and one small dry bag for items to have access to during the day like sunscreen, rain gear, camera etc.
- ◆ all commissary equipment for meals and camp, including chairs.
- ◆ all rafting equipment (life jackets, helmets, paddles etc.)
- ◆ all water craft including oar boats, paddle raft and one-man inflatable kayaks
- ◆ MFRE mug to use and take home after trip.

### **What's Not Included?**

Flights to/from Boise, Idaho; Flight or Rental Car from Boise to Stanley; Vehicle shuttle from Stanley to Salmon (~\$150); Motel in Stanley for night before the trip; Motel in Salmon the night the trip ends; Flight from Salmon/Boise after the trip; flight into Indian Creek if needed (~\$150/person); required travel insurance; tipping the guides (10-20%+ of trip cost) depending on level of satisfaction.

### **Payments**

Deposit: \$500.00 per person, required for confirmed reservation.

Final payment: Due March 15 of the year of your trip. Please note that *Final Payment is due by check so please send by March 1 to MFRE, PO Box 17, Fairfax, CA 94978*. If you wish to pay by credit card please let the office know, and there is a 3% charge for this. If we have not received your final payment by check by March 15, we will call you for your credit card and apply the 3% credit card fee.

### **Cancellation Policy**

Deposits are refundable (minus \$150.00 service charge per person) if written notice is received before March 15 of the year you are booked. After March 15 your monies are nonrefundable. Charter group deposits are non-refundable. If Middle Fork River Expeditions must cancel a trip due to water levels, weather conditions, wildfires or any other circumstances, your trip will be refunded or re-scheduled for the an available date the next summer.

### **Travel to Stanley, Idaho**

There is commercial air service to Boise, Idaho, then you have 3 options to get to Stanley.

- 1) Rent a car and drive (131 miles or 3 hours) Followed by Shuttle to Salmon.
- 2) Van Shuttle Charter Service with Sawtooth Transportation (131 miles or 3 hours)- ~\$750/van
- 3) Fly (45 minutes) with small 5 and 9-seater airplanes . This will necessitate and open jaw ticket Boise to Stanley and Salmon to Boise on Day 6.

**Drive:** Rental cars – www.rentalcars.com has great prices. Cost around \$300/week.

**Shuttle:** Sawtooth Transportation- (208) 869-2536. ~\$750 Boise to Stanley in 15 passenger van.

**Fly:** Sawtooth Flying Services-(208) 634-7774. Or Gem Air at 208-756-7382 ~\$225 Boise/Stanley per person round-trip. Boise/Stanley and Salmon/Boise flights are ~\$500/person. Please call in advance to reserve these flights.

**Sun Valley Option:** Another option is flying into Sun Valley (Hailey Airport) and take a taxi (~\$150/van one-way) to Stanley, which is ~1 ½ hours north. It costs more to fly to Hailey than Boise but more convenient. Wood River Taxi in Hailey- 208-788-TAXI.

### **Travel at the End of the Trip**

**For Day 6 logistics, you will need to either shuttle your car from Stanley to Salmon or arrange a flight from Salmon to Boise.** We arrive at the take-out around

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10am on Day 6. We depart for Salmon by 11am and arrive by 1-2pm. We have guests make a sack lunch this morning to have with them along the way. We will first stop at North Fork, Idaho after 1.5 hours and drop guests to their cars that are headed to Montana. We will continue on for 30 minutes to Salmon and stop at the Stagecoach Inn to drop people at their cars.

Contact the Stagecoach Inn (208-756-2919) direct for rooms for this night.

Our last stop will be the Salmon Airport for guests with flights out to Boise. Extra luggage will either stay in your vehicle which is shuttled, or if you are flying to Stanley- your extra luggage can be placed in our truck that meets us at the take-out.

**Flight from Salmon to Boise:** Please arrange your flight to depart at 3pm and do not make your flights out of Boise homeward before 6pm. To arrange a flight from Salmon to Boise or Salmon to Stanley contact Sawtooth Flying Service at 208-634-7774 or Gem Air at 208-756-7382. Cost is around \$250/person Salmon to Boise.

**Vehicle Shuttle:** To arrange vehicle shuttle from the Mountain Village Resort overflow parking lot in Stanley (they charge \$5/day to keep your vehicle there- do for 2 days as it can take a couple days for the shuttle company to pick up) to Stagecoach Inn Parking lot please arrange with River Shuttles at [www.rivershuttles.com/shuttle-reservation](http://www.rivershuttles.com/shuttle-reservation). There is a drop box for your vehicle key and registration at the Mountain Village Resort. Please place one key in envelope and one key in your personal belongings or note on form you just have one key and to leave key accordingly in a specified area or vehicle (front tire, gas cap etc.). If you are travelling to Montana after the trip you can shuttle your vehicle to North Fork, Idaho to save an hour driving time. Please see travel notes at end of itinerary for more details and how to book these arrangements. Again, you need to shuttle your vehicle from the Mountain Village Resort in Stanley to the Stagecoach Inn in Salmon to meet you at the end of the trip. Go to [www.rivershuttles.com/shuttle-reservation](http://www.rivershuttles.com/shuttle-reservation) to make a reservation. Please follow instructions on the form.

## WHAT TO EXPECT

### Expert Leaders

Middle Fork River Expeditions attracts gifted guides for whom leading trips is their passion. Middle Fork River Expeditions guides will positively elevate your experience by being educators, companions, and the best of friends. Most MFRE guides have 10 or more years experience as guides, all are First Aid and Swiftwater Rescue Certified, and are licensed by the Idaho Outfitters and Guides Licensing Board.

### Rapids

Middle Fork rapids are rated 1 to 3 (4 in June) on a scale of 1 to 6. In our state-of-the-art white-water rafts, you'll run 100+ rapids with the aid of experienced, professional, licensed guides. River Requirements: Minimum age is 12 in June, and 6 in July to September. Please note, all participants must be able to swim and be in good physical shape.

### River Craft Options

MFRE provides oar raft, paddle raft and inflatable kayak options on most trips. Guests rotate into the particular craft based on what they feel like doing that day and also what difficulty the section of river is etc. The guides are very good at ascertaining what section of river is good for each individual so please listen to their instructions. Most guests ride in our oar powered rafts which are driven by the guides. For the more adventurous types, we run a paddle raft, no experience required as your guide steers at the stern while you and other guests paddle up front. When water levels permit (usually June 29 thru Sept only) you can try out our one-person inflatable kayaks. We usually bring 3-4 inflatable kayaks on all trips starting on the June 29 launch date.

### Hiking & Hot Springs

There is plenty of time and numerous opportunities to hike and visit hot springs during your trip. All hikes during the day can be done in your river shoes and not hiking boots. The Middle Fork Trail runs 80 miles along the Middle Fork, so there is always the option to hike or run along the

trail from most campsites and hiking boots can be used from camp. There are half a dozen hot springs in the river corridor and we camp at or near at least one during our trip. Time and logistics permitting we hike to waterfalls, scenic grottos, native Shoshone Sheepeater pictographs, or historic hermit cabins any given day.

## **Fishing**

The Middle Fork is a premier fishing experience for advanced or novice anglers. MFRE provides instruction with 2 company fly rods and numerous flies for those who would like to learn the art of fly-fishing. The Middle Fork is a fisherman's paradise; a blue ribbon fishery and all fish are natives - Cutthroat Trout, Rainbows and Dolly Varden. Special fishing regulations protect the Middle Fork fishery and help restore and maintain healthy fish populations - (catch-and-release, no live bait, single barbless hooks.) An Idaho State fishing license is required and may be purchased in Stanley, Idaho before the trip at the Mountain Village Mercantile. The best fishing shop in Stanley is the Stanley Fly Shop (208-721-7151) and you can purchase licenses, flies and all your fishing needs in one professional shop. Kids 14 and under can fish with no license as long as they are fishing with an adult who has a license. To get your license in advance, go to <https://id.outdoorcentral.us/>. You do not need a license for Day 6 as we will have an early morning and many rapids so not ideal for fishing, so just get the license for Days 1-5. A detailed fishing tackle list is available on our website at: [www.idahorivers.com/activities/](http://www.idahorivers.com/activities/)

## **Camping**

One of the best parts of the trip is to be lulled to sleep by the sound of the river. We provide all camping gear for you, including a large rectangular sleeping bag, 2" Paco Sleeping pad, small camp pillow and 4-man tents (for 1 or 2 people only). Guests are expected to set up their own tent but guides are always available to help single travellers' or guests that need help. In the evening, we'll have chairs to relax in for meals and around the campfire. We bring along a wilderness porta-potty and place it in a private place with stunning views. This system has a regular toilet seat for comfort and ease. We practice Leave No Trace camping ethics, so you are sure to learn a lot about this on the trip and be able to take some of these new skills home with you.

## **Bathing and Swimming**

The Middle Fork is a very pristine river and there is no soap (including biodegradable) allowed in the river and all bathing with soap must be done above the high water mark, at least 100 feet from any water source and with biodegradable soap. We have collapsible buckets that you can fill with hot spring water after soaking and can lather up away from the hot spring and have a friend gently pour it on your head. There are some great swimming holes and rock jumps on the river that are always optional. No diving is allowed and life jackets must be worn at all times when swimming. As this is a free flowing snowmelt river drainage, the water temperature is too cold in June (45-60F) for swimming, refreshing in July (60-70F), and comfortable in August (70+F).

## **Food**

We provide healthy and delicious meals, accompanied with lots of salads, fresh fruits and vegetables. You can view our menu online here: [www.idahorivers.com/activities/](http://www.idahorivers.com/activities/). We also use as much organic produce/products as is available in central Idaho. Our goal is to have you eat healthy meals so that you feel good and refreshed during the day with lots of energy for fun in this remote wilderness setting. Vegetarians, Gluten Free and Paleo diets welcome and meat eaters alike. There are also always snacks available during the day. Our past guests rave about our menu and dutch oven delights!

## **Drinks**

We provide drinking water at all times. Each raft has a water cooler and we provide electrolyte crystals during lunch and at camp.

We also provide (1/person/day) of non-sugary drinks like La Croix and Spindrift. If you would like more then this please bring whatever you like in cans only.

We provide limited (6 bottles total or 1-2 glasses/person) red and white wine in the evenings.

We provide one Margarita night for adults.

We do not provide beer and you are free to bring some, just make sure **beer is in cans only**. For those who want more than a couple of glasses of wine at night, you can bring more wine if you wish and glass is ok. Hard liquor can be brought in glass as well.

## **Weather**

Idaho weather can be variable and vigorous. So come prepared with **warm and cold weather** clothing. There is no such thing as bad weather if you bring the right clothing. Synthetics are best for layering and keeping you warm in all weather conditions. Weather during the daytime is 70-90F and evenings 40-60F. The easiest way to think of river trip clothing is having both daytime “river” clothes which are synthetic and dry camp clothes which are cotton and more comfortable. The daytime clothes will get wet while rafting and your camp clothes will be dry for camp. Have a back up set for both and you will be very well prepared. Most people agree they brought way too many things on the trip!

Below is our recommended clothing and equipment list. If you bring what’s on the list you will be all set for the trip. If it rains at camp we set up large tarps so everyone stays dry and have a roaring fire to keep warm if it’s chilly. During the day, the oar rafts have large umbrellas that can be used in addition to your splash gear.

## **MFRE Clothing and Equipment List**

### **We Supply**

- Large rectangular freshly washed sleeping bag (rated 30F)
- 2” thick “Paco” sleeping pad
- Pillow (this is a camp pillow- 10” x 12”, so if you want a full sized pillow please bring it).
- Splash gear (jacket and pants) for daytime- Find at Orientation
- 3 Dry Bags (1 for sleep kit, 1 for evening gear, 1 small for daytime gear)
- Kelty Gunnison 4.1 tents (4 man tents for 1-2 people)
- Farmer John wetsuit (when needed in June and early July)- Find at Orientation
- Waterproof socks and neoprene gloves (for June and early July trips only or if cold sensitive)- Find at Orientation
- Life Jacket (Type V)
- Helmets (for inflatable kayaks and paddle raft)
- All water craft and commissary equipment, including camp chairs
- MFRE coffee mug– a gift for you to take home

### **You Bring**

- Sarong or quick dry towel (good for sun, drying off or changing clothes)
- Water bottle with carabiner
- Personal toiletry items
- Biodegradable soap (no bathing within 100 feet of any water source is allowed)
- Sunscreen lotion and chapstick
- Sunglasses with retainer
- Sun hat (baseball hat ok, but larger full brim better with chin strap is better)
- Bathing suit (women bring a two piece swimsuit for ease of going pee)
- Women- Sun Dress for camp. It can be hot at night and this is nice and light.
- Socks - 4 pair (2 cotton for camp, 2 synthetic for hiking)

- T-shirts – 3 (two cotton for evenings and one synthetic for daytime)
- Long sleeved shirts – 2 (one cotton for evenings and one synthetic SPF sun shirt for daytime)
- Long pants – 1 (Can be synthetic or cotton or jeans)
- Shorts – 2 (one cotton for evenings and one synthetic for daytime)
- Underwear – assorted (cotton for evening and silk/synthetic for daytime)
- Rain jacket (we provide splash gear tops and bottoms for daytime but nice to have a dry rain jacket at camp)
- Medium weight fleece or sweater
- Shoes – dry shoes for camp (lightweight hiking boots or tennis shoes)
- Shoes – river shoes (with toe coverage is best) by Astral or other company
- Camera and spare battery
- Headlamp (better than flashlight for getting into dry bags at night!)

### **Optional**

- Ziploc bags - handy for small items or to isolate wet articles from rest of gear
  - Olay face wipes or other brand for cleaning face
  - Fishing fly rod in sturdy hard case
  - Fishing license (only if you are fishing- remember days 1-5 only)
  - Shoes- flip flop sandals (for drying out feet at camp)
  - Full sized pillow
  - Collapsible Pee Cup for evening if you tend to wake up at night as the river or high water line can be far away at night and at times walking over un-even terrain)
- \*\* May/June & Sept/Oct trips- bring ski type down jacket, ski hat, camp gloves, 1 pair of synthetic long john top and bottoms, and fleece type pants.