

This info packet is loaded with hints/info to help you prepare for your trip. We suggest EVERYONE on the trip read it completely, at least once before the trip and again after packing.



# Trip Info Packet

## Full Canyon



What To Expect

2020



How To Get Ready

# Typical Day On The River

## Morning

As the sun peeks over the canyon walls, you'll hear a guide call "Coffee!" That's your cue to head to the kitchen and grab a cup of joe so you can start getting ready for the day. A short while later, guides will call you to breakfast. Breakfast menus include traditional favorites such as made-to-order omelets, pancakes, French toast, sausage and bacon. After breakfast, quickly finish packing up your campsite and personal gear and bring your bags to the rafts.



Once the guides have packed up the kitchen, everyone helps reload all the gear. Then you are off for a day of adventure on the Mighty Colorado River!

## On The River

As you start down the river, the serenity and beauty of the canyon captures you. The excitement builds as you anticipate running the first rapid of the day. Rain gear will likely be a good idea for early morning rafting. Your day consists of running rapids, listening to canyon interpretation from your guides and stopping for exploration of side canyons. Each guide has unique stories to tell about the canyon so make sure to switch rafts during your trip. A mid-day lunch stop typically includes a deli spread for sandwiches with quality meats and an array of fresh vegetables and cheese.



After lunch, the afternoon is filled with more rapids and spectacular scenery as you travel downstream. You may take a hike, or sometimes two, as there are many incredible places to enjoy in the canyon. Hikes are to a variety of destinations: a beautiful vista, a stream or waterfall, an archaeological site, or a sandy beach to toss a Frisbee and enjoy some leisure time.

## Camp

In the late afternoon you pull into camp for a relaxing evening by the river. The rafts are unloaded by the group "duffel line". Then you find your camp spot for the night - all camping gear is provided. You can set up a tent or sleep in the open air. The guides hustle to set up the kitchen and an important part of camp, the scenic bathroom area. Once your campsite is set up, you can enjoy sitting by the river or wander over to the kitchen for appetizers. Camp chairs are set near the kitchen area, so guests can chat and watch the river chefs do their magic. Soon a fresh and delicious riverside meal will be ready for your dining pleasure! Dinners might include fresh salads, grilled chicken, steak, fajitas, side dishes and desserts.



As the day winds down you can sit and watch a beautiful sunset, reflecting on the day, or join in a conversation with other passengers. At the end of the evening, head to your campsite for a restful sleep under a canopy of brilliant stars.

# Full Canyon Itinerary

## The day before the river trip begins

We recommend staying at the designated hotel in Flagstaff, AZ, as this is where you will be picked up early the morning of your trip. [Lodging information is available here.](#)

Multiple shuttles depart daily from Sky Harbor Airport (PHX) in Phoenix for the 3-hour ride to Flagstaff. Contact Arizona Shuttle (800-888-2749 or [www.arizonashuttle.com](http://www.arizonashuttle.com)) for a schedule, rates and to book. Additionally, Flagstaff Pulliam Airport (FLG) offers daily direct flights to and from Phoenix. Rental cars are also available in Phoenix.

## The morning of the river trip

A complimentary breakfast will be available for every river trip passenger at the designated hotel. Get breakfast and then meet back in the main lobby by the check-in area by 6:00 a.m. It is important you are packed and ready to go so we can leave **promptly**. You should be wearing river-ready clothes and have only your river gear with you. All passengers will board our shuttle for a 2.5-hour ride to the launch point, Lees Ferry. The guides will give an orientation at the launch point and you will repack your gear into your provided dry bags. You will be heading down the mighty Colorado River by mid-morning.

## On the river

You will be traveling 225 river miles on your journey through the Grand Canyon. Each day, you will experience whitewater rapids and various side-canyon hikes.

## The final day

The river portion of your trip will end in the morning at Diamond Creek, river mile 225. You will ride on a Hualapai bus for about an hour along a rough dirt road to the main highway in Peach Springs, AZ, where an air-conditioned shuttle will be waiting to return you to the designated hotel in Flagstaff. Estimated arrival time in Flagstaff is around 2:00 p.m.



**Due to the remote nature of this trip, weather and other factors, we cannot guarantee our arrival time. We strongly advise passengers to spend the night in Flagstaff at the end of their trip and to depart for home the next morning.**

# What We Provide

- custom made rafts and experienced guides
- Coast Guard approved whitewater personal flotation device (PFD)
- meals - prepared by guides and snacks on the rafts
- kitchen facilities, dishware and mug for each person
- [camping toilet facilities](#), toilet paper and supplies
- beverages - unlimited water, assorted soda and electrolyte mix
- first-aid kit
- sleeping bag, sheet and small pillow
- cot for motor trips, sleeping pad for oar trips
- two-person tent and ground tarp, sharing not required
- large dry bag for the provided sleeping gear and your duffel bag
- personal daytime dry bag (accessible at all times) - 7" diameter and 14" tall when sealed
- camp chairs
- community dry bag for hiking shoes (accessible before side hikes)

# THE FORECAST

## Mother Nature

Weather can vary greatly, but the following chart shows average temperatures and precipitation amounts. Humidity is usually very low, making the high temperatures less uncomfortable. River water temperatures average a cold 50-55°F all year long.

No matter the season, you will probably wear your rain gear while running rapids, especially in the morning, on cloudy days and on early/late season trips.

- April and May tend to be sunny with possible late-winter storms. Be prepared for cooler weather!
- June through mid-July is typically quite hot and sunny.
- Mid-July through mid-September is hot and mostly sunny with a strong chance of afternoon thunderstorms.
- Mid-September through October is usually warm and sunny with a chance of an early-winter storm. Be prepared for cooler weather!

### How to check

Take a look at our [weather blog](#) for links to weather forecasts in the canyon and tips on how to pack accordingly.

	MARCH	APRIL	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUG.	SEPT.	OCT.
Average High	71	82	92	101	106	103	97	84
Average Low	48	56	63	72	78	75	69	58
Average Precipitation	.79	.47	.36	.30	.84	1.40	.97	.65

# Packing List - Full Canyon

## Special Note:

You must limit your gear to 25 lbs; most need far less. Alcohol does NOT count toward this limit. DO NOT bring hard-sided luggage or suitcases on the river.

## Required

- Soft-sided duffel or gym bag, about 24"x12"x12"
- [Nalgene-style water bottle](#), at least 1 liter, with a carabiner to hook to the raft
- [Waterproof rain jacket with hood and rain pants](#) – a poncho is not effective
- River shoes, see footwear section on next page

## Suggested Clothing

- 3-4 shirts: 1 for every few days, quick-dry material
- At least 1 [long-sleeved shirt for sun protection](#)
- Clothes for camp/sleeping. Camp skirt/dress is a comfy choice for women
- 1-2 swimsuits: 2-piece for women is easier, or sports bra and quick-dry shorts.
- 2-3 pairs of shorts: quick-dry material
- Fleece jacket/sweatshirt
- 1 pair long pants: for sun protection, lightweight and quick-dry material
- Underwear
- Socks: several pairs for sun protection and to prevent/heal blisters, not cotton
- Bandana and/or [sarong](#): for dipping in the river to keep cool and for sun protection
- Hiking or tennis/athletic shoes
- [Hat with retention strap and good brim](#)
- If trip is April/May or September/October, see Early/Late Season Clothes section

## Optional Extra Items

- Alcohol, see Beverages Section
- [Belknap Grand Canyon River Guide book](#): highly recommended by past guests
- Book, playing cards, small musical instrument (call for guitar info if you want to bring one), Frisbee, gloves, small pillowcase, fishing gear, etc.

Check out our [packing video](#) for additional tips.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

## Suggested Personal Items

- Small synthetic towel
- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Biodegradable soap and shampoo like Dr. Bronner's, Camp Suds or Mrs. Meyer's bar soap
- Deodorant
- 2-3 Ziploc bags: gallon size for storing wet items/toiletries and keeping things dry
- Headlamp or flashlight with fresh batteries
- Fanny pack or small backpack: for hands-free hiking
- Medications and/or personal first-aid items
- Prescription glasses or daily contacts. Backup glasses or eye drops are recommended
- Sunglasses with [retention strap](#): may be wise to bring a spare pair
- Insect repellent: small size
- Chapstick with SPF
- Sunscreen: large size or more than one; be prepared for very strong sun
- Body moisturizer: large size for dry air
- Personal & feminine hygiene products (remember to pack for the unexpected)
- Baby wipes for easy bathing
- [2 carabiners](#): handy for clipping day bags and water bottles to raft
- Kleenex in small packs
- Camera with a case, a lot of memory storage, spare batteries and a USB or wall charger unit (may want a waterproof camera)
- Cash or blank check for gratuities at the end of the trip. Common gratuity is 8-10% of total trip cost.
- Pared-down wallet with ID, credit/debit card, and health insurance card

Read the following pages for further explanations of items.

# Packing List Explained

The packing list was created from decades of Grand Canyon rafting experience to cover varying weather conditions, please follow it (even a fleece in summer!). It is better to have and not need, than need and not have. For those of you flying to the area, we suggest carrying absolute river necessities in a carry-on bag. It is tough to get things together if luggage is lost by the airline.

## Rain Gear:

It is important to have a quality [rain jacket with a hood and rain pants](#). Because the river is very cold year-round, you'll use rain gear as a splash guard from the rapids. Even on the hottest days, guests often wear rain gear in the morning while going through rapids in the shade of the canyon walls. Make sure your rain gear is waterproof, not just water resistant. Rain gear with the ability to cinch at the neck and wrists works well. A poncho is not effective. **Do NOT go on your river trip without rain gear!**

## Footwear:

Many surfaces encountered on and off the rafts are very slippery. Shoes should have good tread, arch support and should attach to your foot securely. It is important that your shoes are comfortable and broken-in. You should bring 1 pair of river sandals/shoes, 1 pair of hiking shoes and maybe a pair of light flip flops for camp. As most side hikes are in or around water, you will be hiking in your river shoes frequently. They should be a structured sandal with a heel strap or a supportive amphibious shoe with good tread. Teva, Chaco, Keen and Merrell make [excellent river sandals/shoes](#). "Aqua socks" are not a good option. For longer dry hikes, bring an athletic/tennis or hiking shoe. Stuff a pair of socks in your hiking shoes and store them in our waterproof community shoe bag that will be accessible during the day. You'll also want to bring a couple pairs of non-cotton socks that you could wear with your river shoes to help prevent blisters and sore spots from the abrasive sand and straps rubbing on your feet. If you run cold or are on an oar trip, you might consider bringing neoprene booties/socks.



## Clothes:

You will put your gear in our waterproof bags when you get to the river. Keep your clothes to a minimum and know that lighter colors may be permanently stained from the river and sand. Quick drying clothing is highly recommended. Many of our guides wear long-sleeved shirts all day, every day, for sun protection. If it is overcast, it will turn chilly, so pack a fleece jacket/sweatshirt to wear under your rain gear, no matter the time of year.

You do not need a change of clothes for every day; [many people wear the same outfit for several days](#). Most people tend to overpack and bring too many changes of clothing.



## Early/Late Season Clothes:

If your trip is in the early or late season (April/May or September/October), you will need to bring some additional warm clothing in case we encounter an unexpected winter storm. If this occurs, these warm layers will be very important.

In addition to your lightweight river clothes, we recommend bringing a pair of fleece/warm pants and a few other small items like a warm hat and gloves, warm socks, neoprene socks/booties and long underwear.

The layered clothing approach works well if it gets cold: long underwear followed by fleece pants, fleece/warm jacket and then good quality rain gear as the last layer. With the addition of hat and gloves, you should be prepared for any weather surprises. We strongly suggest you bring these items and be happy if you don't have to use them!

## Personal Items:

You should bring your pared-down wallet and car keys with you on the raft trip. These items should be stored in a Ziploc bag in the bottom of your bag. Do not bring expensive jewelry, watches, electronics or other valuables with you on the river trip.

## Gratuities:

It is customary, upon receiving a satisfactory experience, to tip the river guides. It is an acknowledgement of a job well done and is greatly appreciated by the crew members. A common tip is 8-10% of the total river trip cost. You may leave cash or a check (bring a blank one to fill out on the river) with the trip leader, who will distribute it evenly among the crew. Please come prepared as you will not be able to tip with a credit/debit card.





## Cameras/Videos:

Bring LOTS of memory and batteries for your camera even though we have a system to charge batteries. The on-river charger only has a few ports and is shared by all guests so please use it sparingly. Please don't ask the guides to charge electronics other than cameras. You must bring your USB or wall plug-in cord to use the charger. All cameras should have straps. We recommend keeping your camera in a case even while in your day dry bag. We have found that the fine Grand Canyon sand is as much of a danger to your camera as the water. Most cameras will fit into your day dry bag (7" x14" sealed). If you are careful, your camera should be fine but, if you try to take photos/video while in rapids, you will probably ruin it. We suggest bringing a [waterproof camera](#).

*Most personal homeowners' insurance policies will not cover lost or damaged cameras on your river trip. If you bring items of value, it is your responsibility to provide your own insurance coverage. Grand Canyon Whitewater is not responsible for damage to or loss of personal items during river trips.*

## Beverages:

We provide water, a mix of diet and regular soda and electrolyte mix. As drinking water is not chilled, we recommend that you bring a hard plastic Nalgene-style water bottle so you can chill the water in the river. Insulated water bottles do not allow you to do this.

*Alcohol does NOT count toward your 25-pound duffel/gear weight limit and should be left outside your duffel bag.*

If you only drink a certain brand (fruit juices, mixers, tonic, preferred soda, etc.), you may want to bring an additional supply as some choices run out. We do not supply alcoholic beverages. If you would like beer, wine or liquor on your trip, you can purchase alcohol in Flagstaff, AZ and bring it with you on the shuttle to the launch point.

All beer must be in cans, not glass. Wine should be in boxes. Liquor in a glass bottle is acceptable, but plastic is preferred. Wine and liquor will be stowed by guides during the day and available in the evenings. Beer will be kept cool by the river and available during the day. Ice may be available in the evenings for cocktails.

## Maps/Books:

You can purchase educational books, including a waterproof Belknap Grand Canyon River Guide, by calling our office or through [our online store](#). These books are highly recommended and fun to have on the trip. The guidebook describes the history, geology, archaeology and natural history of the canyon and has a detailed mile-by-mile map of the Colorado River. Many people use this like a journal to record their trip campsites, hikes and unique events so they can remember details after the trip.

# Here's The Lowdown

## Fishing:

You may bring a small, collapsible fishing rod. You can fish from the shore but not while the raft is underway. [You would be fishing mainly for trout](#). A license must be [purchased online](#) prior to the trip.

## Lodging, Parking, Luggage Storage:

Find this info on your trip's [lodging web page](#).

## Camp Life:

An important aspect of staying healthy while on-river is hydration. The arid environment requires that you drink more water and eat more salty snacks to maintain proper electrolyte balance. We provide unlimited water, hearty meals, plentiful snacks and electrolyte powders.

Being a desert environment, mosquitoes and flying insects are not a big problem. Snakes and scorpions are rarely seen. If you do happen to spot any, give them space and notify a guide. You can reduce the possibility of an encounter with a critter even further by shaking out your shoes and PFD in the morning before putting them on, as well as waiting until you are heading to bed to roll out your sleeping bag.

## Hygiene:

Because we're like a big, close family throughout the river trip, keeping clean is an important factor in staying healthy. Guides will show you the hand-wash system on-river and remind everyone to use it frequently. Soap is allowed only in the main river channel. Bathing in the cold water isn't always appealing, so baby wipes are an easy alternative. You might also find that using your provided mug helps when bathing so you don't have to spend as



much time immersed in the cold water. While soaps are not allowed in or near the side streams, rinsing in the warmer, clearer water is always refreshing and helps to keep you clean. We do NOT recommend bringing solar showers because they are difficult to store and very difficult to use on the river.

During the day, [all urine must go directly into the river](#) - that means squatting/standing near the river's edge or wading in. There will be pit stops during the day, but if you have to go between stops, tell the guide before it's an emergency so they have time to find a good place to pull over. If you need to poop during the day, the guides have a portable toilet system. Don't be shy to ask for it if you need it. In camp, the guides will set up a camp toilet for solid waste while urine continues to go into the river. At night, we provide handy pee buckets

Please find more information on [our blog](#) and [FAQs page](#).

so you don't have to find your way to the river in the dark. In the morning, dump your pee bucket directly into the river. The guides will explain the details of the sanitation and bathroom procedures in greater detail during on-river orientation.

Ladies, if you might be on your period while on your river trip, it's helpful to plan ahead and pack for the unexpected. If you will be using tampons, bring a '[Go With Your Flow Pack](#)' or several Ziploc bags and plenty of baby wipes. Make sure you keep these supplies handy during the day, in your provided day dry bag. When you change during the day, you can wrap the trash in a baby wipe, put that in a Ziploc and dispose of it in the boat trash system or into the hygiene disposal at the camp toilet. As you will get wet a lot on your river trip, using pads is not the best option.

## Medical and Dietary Considerations:

If you or someone in your group has any physical, medical or mental conditions, dietary restrictions or allergies, **please notify our office as soon as possible**. You will also need to list this information on your registration form. Because of the remote nature of the trip, it is important to understand that access to professional medical care may take several hours or even overnight.

Although we can often make modifications for customers who have allergies, we want you to understand that we cannot guarantee 100% safeguard from exposure to your allergen.

Because of the remoteness of the Grand Canyon, we strongly encourage customers to talk to a doctor and take all necessary medical precautions to prepare for the possibility of exposure. Please be sure to bring your required medications, including epi-pens, on the trip.



Multi-day river trips are active, outdoor adventures and can be challenging for some people. Extreme weather, cold river water and other factors add to the intensity. For a list of additional potential risk factors, please see your acknowledgement of risk form. If you have essential prescription medication, it is advisable to split your medication into two waterproof containers ahead of time so you can keep half and give half to the trip leader for backup storage. Be sure to clearly label all containers. If you have any questions regarding your ability to participate in this trip, please consult your doctor and call our office so that we may help answer your questions.

## Physical Preparation For Your River Trip:

To get the most enjoyment out of your trip, you'll want to be in good physical condition. Each day on the river includes several essential activities including climbing on and off the rafts multiple times daily (roughly 2-foot step up/down) and being exposed to extreme weather and temperatures. At camp, we ask everyone (with no medical restrictions) to assist with loading and unloading the boats via [a duffel line](#). Gear bags, camping and cooking equipment, and buckets of water are passed up the line to make camp an enjoyable place to spend each evening. You are responsible for navigating sandy/rocky beaches while carrying your personal bags and provided camping gear to a place where you can set up your own camp area.

As this is a whitewater trip, you need to be able to be an active participant in your own rescue in case you end up in the river. Your multi-day river trip also provides you with a unique opportunity to explore places deep within the Grand Canyon. These [side hikes](#) are highlights for most guests. Secluded beaches, narrow slot canyons, ancient ruins/pictographs and hidden waterfalls are just a few treasures that await you. Some of the hikes will require more effort than others. The guides will give you a brief overview of the hike to help you gauge if it's right for you. Most hikes are out and back, so you can tailor the hike to your needs by keeping up with the lead guide to see it all, going at a slower pace and doing only part of the hike, or choosing to remain at the rafts. If you think you'll opt out of several hikes, we recommend bringing a book, journal or sketch pad as some hikes can take several hours.



Remember, this is more than a vacation, it's an adventure! The more you put into it, the more you'll get out of it. Get active - go for a hike, take the stairs and get ready for a great trip!

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** These are basic physical fitness tips for all trips. Guests on our Hiker's Special trips and any trip that requires a hike in or out of the canyon need additional conditioning/training.

## Emergency Information:

If you need to contact us outside of regular office hours, call our office number and you will be directed to call one of our on-call staff. This is only for messages that CANNOT wait until normal business hours are resumed. Be aware that getting an emergency message to a guest on our river trips, even in the event of a death in the family, is likely not possible. It is important to discuss this with your family prior to your trip. Please give the office number to family members not going on the trip so they can reach us, if needed, while you are on the river.

## Liability:

Our experience through the years has shown that river rafting trips are fun vacations. You should recognize, however, that there is an element of risk in any adventure or activity associated with whitewater rafting and the outdoors. Check with your local agent concerning your insurance needs.

The Visitor's Acknowledgement of Risk form must be signed by each passenger 18 years and older. Minors must have a parent/legal guardian sign for them. Each spouse *must sign individually*; one cannot sign for the other.

It is important to understand our [rafting trip policies](#), a few of which are highlighted in the following section.



## Cancellation Policy

- Your deposit is refundable less a \$200 service charge per person if notification of cancellation is given to GCW 120 days or more prior to your trip departure date.
- 119 to 31 days prior to departure will forfeit the \$400 deposit.
- Cancellations within 30 days of departure will forfeit full fare.

This is a strict cancellation policy, so please purchase a travel protection plan. GCW will not transfer a reservation from one year to the next.

## Transportation Policy

Please confirm transportation is accurate on your invoice before final payment.

- Transportation change requests within 29 to 10 days of departure are subject to availability and may incur additional fees.
- Transportation changes cannot be made within 10 days of departure.

## Travel Protection

GCW highly recommends that you purchase a travel protection plan after making the initial deposit for your river trip. No one ever plans to cancel their Grand Canyon river trip. But, believe us, unpredictable situations arise like family illness/injury, flight delays, etc. Make sure your coverage includes all your travel dates, and not just your rafting trip dates. We suggest Travelex Insurance Services for U.S. residents; international guests, please research your insurance options. It is your responsibility to research and choose the policy that works for you.

Travelex Insurance Services (800) 228-9792 Use Reference Code **03-0146**



### Complete Your Forms!

Make sure your forms are done, please use the link in your confirmation email.



### Get Social

Make sure to log in to your trip's social site (link is in your confirmation email), where you can introduce yourself and get to know your tripmates!



### Get Excited

It's happening! We've got some awesome shirts, hats, stickers and books at our [online store](#) to get you pumped up for your trip.

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