

KERN RIVER OUTFITTERS

Sequoia National Forest

Upper Kern “Thunder Run”

The Upper Kern River has some of California’s best whitewater rafting. The most exciting and challenging section of the Upper Kern is known as the Thunder Run. Screaming Right Turn, Sock-‘em-Dog, and Squashed Paddler are but a few of the rapids you’ll find on this Class V stretch of river. Due to the difficult nature of these rapids, we suggest this trip for people with prior rafting experience. Before we get into the details of this outrageous day of whitewater, there are a few things you should know about how the Thunder Run works.

Most Class V rivers have a relatively narrow “window” of runnable water levels, and the Thunder Run is no exception. This means that when the river is too high or too low, we may need to modify our trip and run other stretches of the river other than the Thunder Run. Although we do our best to schedule these trips to coincide with traditional optimal flows, Mother Nature does not always cooperate. It may be necessary to change the structure of the trip with little or no prior notice. Please see the “**Performance**” section of these notes for specific details.

After registering at our Rafting Center in Wofford Heights, we board our bus and drive to the nearby town of Kernville. We stop there to review safety issues relevant to running a river as difficult as the Thunder Run, and to evaluate the ability of our guests to deal with situations we might encounter. Guests will be asked to take our “Class V Paddler’s Evaluation”. This test will include basic swimming and safety exercises with a focus on stamina. After the test we’ll re-board our bus and head for the river. **Guests who do not pass the Paddler’s Evaluation will be returned to our Rafting Center and issued a full refund of trip fees paid to Kern River Outfitters.**

MEETING TIME AND PLACE: 8:30 AM AT OUR RAFTING CENTER IN WOFFORD HEIGHTS. OUR PHONE NUMBER THERE IS 1-760-376-1455. RESERVATIONS OFFICE 1-800-323-4234.

DIRECTIONS

From Southern California, leave the Los Angeles Basin by Interstate 5 North. Descend the Grapevine Grade and take Highway 99 North to Bakersfield. Take the Lake Isabella / Highway 178 East exit and follow 178 up to the town of Lake Isabella. At Lake Isabella, take Highway 155 North towards Kernville. Wofford Heights is mid-way between Lake Isabella and Kernville. **Our temporary Rafting Center for 2010 is located at 6643 Wofford Heights Blvd (at the intersection of Woodland Drive).**

Park your car at the back of the building and register inside. Although our parking lot is on private property, it is near a busy road. Do not leave valuables in your vehicle and make sure it is securely locked. No overnight camping is allowed at our parking area.

ACCOMMODATIONS IN THE AREA

There are numerous campgrounds on Route 155 by Lake Isabella and along the river north of Kernville. For motels, we recommend:

The Kern Lodge
67 Valley View
Kernville, CA 93238
1-800-924-8817

Kernville Inn
11042 Kernville Rd
Kernville, CA 93238
1-877-393-7900

Falling Waters River Resort
15729 Sierra Way
Kernville, CA 93238
1-888-376-2242

WHAT TO BRING

River attire is casual. Sneakers are a must. Plan to get wet and bring a change of clothing. We recommend:

- Sneakers, or river shoes/sandals with ankle strap with wool socks or wetsuit booties.
- windbreaker
- sun block
- lip balm
- wool or fleece sweater
- visor or hat
- sunglasses
- strap to secure sunglasses
- water bottle
- swimsuit or shorts

Please do not bring radios, firearms, pets, or valuables. Sun-sensitive persons should bring a hat and lightweight long-sleeve shirt. On certain early season trips when water and weather conditions dictate, we may require all passengers to wear wetsuits. If needed, wetsuits can be rented at our Wofford Heights Rafting Center the morning of your trip.

LUNCH

We take a break early in the afternoon for a delicious, riverside, deli-style lunch.

AGE LIMITS

The minimum age on our Thunder Run trips is fourteen years old. This age limit is in place for the safety of your child, the safety of our other guests, and our guides.

ALCOHOL

Please do not bring alcohol on your trip.

EQUIPMENT

We furnish rugged inflatable rafts, 12 to 16 feet in length. We provide life vests, first aid, and safety supplies. Do not bring your own lifevest. Our lifevests are approved for rafting and we require that they be worn by guests. On most trips, the majority of passengers ride in paddleboats. A paddleboat is piloted by a guide, assisted by four to six passengers.

HELMETS

Safety helmets are available at no additional charge to guests joining us on any stretch of river that we run. Helmets are REQUIRED for all trips we run except the Lickety Split stretch on the Upper Kern. Clients expressly assume all risks associated with their refusal to use or properly use helmets.

GUIDES

Our guides are experienced, skilled whitewater boaters. They are knowledgeable about canyon ecology and natural history. Should the need arise they are trained to administer First Aid. Guides can also provide information on organizations that work to preserve and protect rivers and river canyons.

PHOTOS OF YOUR TRIP

Kern River Outfitters will be on the river to capture your day of fun and excitement. A skilled photographer will take snapshots of you and your group as you travel down the Kern River. CD's will be available for purchase at the conclusion of your trip containing all of the photos of your raft or, if you prefer, all of the photos taken of the entire trip.

RESPONSIBILITY

Trip participants should understand that river trips involve known and unknown risks. Kern River Outfitters assumes no responsibility for injuries, death, or loss/damage to client's property while on the river. All clients must sign a Release and Waiver Agreement expressly acknowledging these points. Kern River Outfitters assumes no responsibility for vehicles and/or the contents of vehicles parked during the trip. Because of the risks associated with river trips, including personal injury, death, property loss or damage, or financial loss in the event of trip cancellation, we urge all trip participants to supplement their own insurance with vacation insurance.

YOUR HEALTH

Our Kern River trips are fun, fast, and challenging. To participate, you should be in good health. You may also need to perform certain physical activities. These include: basic swimming, hiking in rugged or uneven terrain, climbing in and out of rafts, and assisting in your rescue, if that becomes necessary. Please let us know when you return your Release Agreement if you have any health or dietary restrictions. We will gladly accommodate reasonable dietary restrictions with advanced notice.

PERFORMANCE

It is sometimes necessary to cancel or modify a trip because of unusual circumstances beyond our control. **We accept Thunder Run reservations with the understanding that water conditions and participant abilities may dictate that the trip be modified. If this is the case, we will run our Class III-IV Upper Kern trip, in lieu of the Class V Thunder Run, on the same trip date. We will not reschedule your trip.** Under these circumstances, the difference between the price of the two trips will be refunded. Kern River Outfitters may make the decision to switch from a Thunder Run trip to an Upper Kern trip as late as the morning of the departure. We cannot be responsible for paying expenses other than refunding all or part of the fees paid to Kern River Outfitters. Determination of refunds (if any) will be made after reviewing trip details. Guides and other personnel employed by Kern River Outfitters are not authorized to make or promise trip refunds or trip credits. Such determinations can only be made by company officers.

CANCELLATIONS

If you must cancel your reservation, you may be eligible for a partial refund. Our cancellation policy is firm. We operate under stringent federal regulations which restrict the number of guests per trip and the number of trips per season. We incur substantial expenses before each trip departs. In the event of late cancellations, Kern River Outfitters cannot recover costs, nor can we make refunds. **Written** cancellation notice received more than 30 days prior to departure will result in a refund of trip fees less \$50 per person. **Cancellations within 30 days of a trip are nonrefundable.** If you must cancel at the last minute, and do not have vacation insurance, try to find a friend to take your place.

TIPPING

Guests sometimes ask whether gratuities are appropriate. If you enjoyed your trip, please feel free to leave a tip with the Trip Leader. Guests typically leave 10% - 15% of the trip cost. Gratuities will be shared among all the guides on the trip.

PERMITS

Our trips are conducted under a permit issued by the U.S. Forest Service, Sequoia National Forest. Our permit is your assurance that Kern River Outfitters is legally operating on the river. Our operations and facilities are operated on a nondiscriminatory basis.

RAFTING VACATIONS IN IDAHO & OREGON

Our sister company, Idaho & Oregon River Journeys, offers 6 day trips down the Middle Fork and Main Salmon rivers in Idaho and 4 day trips on the Rogue River in Southern Oregon. For more information on our Idaho and Oregon trips visit www.IdahoRiverJourneys.com or www.RogueRiverTrips.com.