



Twice Named
"Colorado Company of the Year"!

River: Arkansas River

Trip: 2- Day Whitewater Raft Trip. Class III-IV. 35 miles.

Meeting Place: Wilderness Aware Headquarters, in Johnson Village near Buena Vista, CO.

Times: Meeting time is 8:00am, trips depart daily at 9:00am. Get back to the office at about 4pm. River times outlined below are approximate.

Closest Major Airports: Colorado Springs (COS) – 2 hours, Denver (DIA) – 3 hours.

Meals Provided: Continental Breakfast, delicious smorgasbord lunches along the river, a hearty dinner, dessert and a full breakfast at camp.

Season: May - Labor Day

Itinerary: Combine two of the Arkansas' best whitewater sections into a great 2-day trip and experience the fun of self-contained overnight camping by the river. This trip has it all – exciting whitewater, spectacular views of Colorado's tallest mountain range, and a feeling of getting away from the daily grind. Having specialized in running multi-day rafting trips since 1976, Wilderness Aware has run more overnight trips on the Arkansas than any other outfitter. This experience gives us the competitive edge when it comes to organizing your adventure. The Arkansas offers some of the most continuous whitewater in the West.

Day 1- 8:00 am: Before the trip you will meet at our 7200 sq. foot facility right along the banks of the Arkansas River. Enjoy a free continental breakfast after checking-in with our office staff for a pre-trip briefing. Your guides will be available to help pack your gear (camp clothing, sleeping bag and pad) in a water-tight overnight bag. Everyone gets their very own souvenir insulated coffee mug to keep after the trip. Tents are packed away separately. Then you can change into your river gear in our spacious and clean indoor changing rooms. Next, the guides who will outfit you in a Coast Guard approved life jacket, helmet and paddle.

9:00 am: Once you are suited up, your trip leader will give you a comprehensive safety orientation with plenty of time for questions. You will have the confidence needed to handle anything that comes up during the trip. You will then be whisked to the river for your two-day adventure.

10:00 am: You will start your morning in The Narrows, which doesn't allow much warm-up time as you jump right in to the big stuff. The Class IV Miracle Mile begins just a short time after you launch and really tests your skills with fast moving water and tight moves. The Narrows features a continuous gradient keeping the action moving fast. Other Class IV drops include Frog Rock Rapid, The Silver Bullet, and House Rock where split-second timing is required to avoid a gigantic boulder blocking the channel. Along the way, you will be reminded of Colorado's mining past as you see the Historic Midland Railroad Tunnels, an old miner's cabin or even someone panning for gold!

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12:00 pm: At lunchtime alongside the river, our professional guides will prepare hors d'oeuvres and a hearty deli-style lunch. After eating, you will meet up with our gear boat, affectionately known as the "Pig Rig". Your overnight bags and supplies for the trip will have been loaded up before your arrival. A well deserved lunch break gives you time to stretch your legs and soak in the sweeping mountain views. Enjoy some tasty hors d'oeuvres while the guides prepare a deli-style lunch. Because lunch is by the river adjacent to our office, a clean restroom is available and you have access to your car for final adjustments to your attire for the trip. On cool days, hot drinks are also available at the breakfast bar.

2:00 pm: After lunch, you'll help load gear onto the paddle boats and be on your way to camp. Once we arrive at our riverside campsite, we unload all the rafts and have an opportunity to change into camp clothes and set up tents. Guides will be on-hand to assist with setting up your camp. After a brief camp orientation where you'll become acquainted with the "Groover", our solid waste toilet system and the camp routine, you will be free to take a hike with spectacular views of the 14,000 foot Sawatch Mountain range or a refreshing swim in the Arkansas River.

7:00 pm: After unwinding for a couple of hours, the Guides have put on their chef's hats and have a hot dinner ready for you. Some of the dinner entrees we offer are: Grilled Chicken, Steak and Salmon, Stir-Fry, Lasagna, and Enchiladas, followed up with a Dutch-oven cake. This is not pork-and-beans camping! After dinner you can relax with a cup of cocoa or tea next to the campfire under a blanket of stars playing cards, telling ghost stories, and re-living your adventures from the river.

Day 2- 7:00 am: In the morning, you'll wake up to the aroma of freshly brewed "Cowboy" coffee delivered to the door of your tent. When you get up, you'll see that camp is nearly in full swing and an array of fresh fruit, juice and other goodies available for you to nibble on. The smell of bacon in the air tells you breakfast is nearly ready. Our breakfast entrees may include blueberry pancakes, French toast, or Veggie eggs. After you eat, it's time to pack up your tent and overnight bags and re-load the rafts for the day's river adventure.

9:00 am: Now you're ready to take on Brown's Canyon. The character of this section is challenging to seasoned rafters, yet forgiving for beginners. Most of the large rapids are followed by a calm pool of slow moving water allowing an opportunity to either catch a quick breath of fresh mountain air or take a picture of the unique Granite rock formations set off against the clear blue Colorado sky. With that kind of scenery, it is no wonder that Brown's canyon has been designated a Wilderness Study Area by the Bureau of Land Management. If you are lucky, you may just catch a glimpse of a herd of Bighorn Sheep or see a Brown Trout shooting out of the water after a quick snack.

Don't look too long – Browns Canyon will demand both your attention and muscles as you challenge rapids like Widow-maker, Zoom Flume, the Staircase and Seidel's Suck-hole. In June, when the river is swollen with snowmelt, prepare for a wet and wild ride with towering waves and powerful currents – a wetsuit is a must for rafting at this time of year. During late July and August, the river changes, requiring technical maneuvers around rocks and dropping through narrow chutes. As the river warms, wetsuits disappear and are replaced by swimsuits, providing opportunities to splash fight with new friends or even swim a rapid!

After the trip, you will enjoy complimentary drinks and snacks on the 30-minute ride home from the take out.

4:00 pm: When you return to the office, professionally taken photos from your trip will be available for purchase or you may choose to remember your trip with a T-shirt, hat or small souvenir. There is no better way to spend a weekend!