



*Twice Named*  
**“Colorado Company of the Year”!**

**River:** Gunnison River

**Trip:** 3-Day Whitewater and Fishing Trip, Gunnison River. Class III-IV. 14 miles.

**Meeting Place:** Gunnison River Pleasure Park. 1-888-782-7542. 15 miles east of Delta, CO off CO Hwy 92.

**Times:** Meeting time is 8:15am, trips depart at 9am. Get back to the Pleasure Park at about 4pm. River times outlined below are approximate.

**Closest Major Airports:** Montrose (MTJ) – 30 mins, Grand Junction (GJT) – 45 mins., Telluride (TEX) – 1 ¼ hrs., Colorado Springs (COS) – 4 hours, Denver (DIA) – 5 hours.

**Meals Provided:** 3 Delicious smorgasbord lunches along the river, 2 hearty dinners, dessert and 2 full breakfasts.

**Season:** May 1 – September

**Itinerary:** Come explore the Gunnison Gorge on a great multi-day trip and experience the fun of self-contained overnight camping by the river. Wilderness Aware has specialized in running multi-day rafting trips since 1976. This experience gives us the competitive edge when it comes to organizing your adventure. The Gunnison Gorge offers some of the finest whitewater and canyon scenery in the West. Wilderness Aware prides itself on putting on a great trip with top-notch equipment and guides. We do not specialize in fishing trips, but our guides can expertly position the raft and deliver you exactly where you need to be at a cost savings over outfitters with devoted “fishing guides”.

Located at the downstream end of the newly designated Black Canyon of the Gunnison National Park, the Gunnison Gorge combines a classic whitewater adventure with world-class trout fishing in a remote wilderness. Spectacular 1200 ft. vertical canyon walls of granite, limestone and sandstone are the norm as you challenge Class III –IV rapids deep below. Bighorn sheep, river otters, beavers and even mule deer can be seen alongside the river.

**8:15 am:** You will meet your guides at the Gunnison River Pleasure Park where they will check you in and give you a pre-trip briefing. The guides will be available to help pack your gear (camp clothing, toiletries, sleeping bag and pad) in a watertight overnight bag that has padded backpack straps. Everyone gets their very own souvenir insulated coffee mug to keep after the trip. Tents are packed away separately. Remember, everything you bring you will be carrying downhill about a mile from the end of the road down to the river. Our guides will be happy to carry extra items to lighten the load. If a member of your group is not capable of carrying a bag, we will be happy to carry it for you.

**9:00 am:** We will pick up a driver and take a scenic trip to the river via the challenging Chukar road, nearly a four-wheel drive road, we pass through a moonscape of clay hills leading the edge of the canyon. We will drop about ½ way down from the rim toward the river. A mile from the river, the road becomes too treacherous to pass.

**10:00 am:** At the trailhead, we will unload our equipment and hike about a mile down the Chukar trail to the river, dropping about 1000 vertical feet as we go. This is a beautiful and easy walk, making you feel a true departure from the world of phones, highways, and responsibilities.

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**10:30 am:** At the bottom, you will find the rafts and overnight gear that was packed in by horses and the guides the day before. After a breather and change of clothes into your river gear, the guides will outfit you in a Coast Guard approved life jacket. Your trip leader will give you a comprehensive orientation and safety talk with plenty of time for questions. You will have the confidence needed to handle anything that comes up during the trip. There are fantastic opportunities for fishing in-between Class III rapids named Chukar, One Miler and Improvise. With a healthy population of Cutthroat, German Brown and Rainbow trout, its no wonder that the Gunnison River has been designated a Blue Ribbon trout fishery by the State of Colorado. Most folks can hardly wait to wet their line at the sight of this ribbon of green water in the wilderness! You are sure to have a great experience.

**11:00 am:** Your trip leader will give you a comprehensive orientation and safety talk with plenty of time for questions. You will have the confidence needed to handle anything that comes up during the trip. The guides will finish rigging all the camping gear and food into the boats and we will be on our way! Our first rapid of the day, the Class III Chukar Rapid, begins only a few feet downstream of where we launch. This rapid with its tight entrance and wave filled drop is typical of several more rapids on our first day. The scenery is fantastic with sheer canyon walls reaching straight up from the river's edge. Black granite and gneiss rock walls gives the canyon a severe and ancient look, but the cool and frolicking water creates a playful path through this magical canyon. A perfect backdrop for some perfect fishing.

**12:00 pm:** A well-deserved lunch break gives you time to stretch your legs and take in the unique scenery. Enjoy some tasty hors d'oeuvres while the guides prepare a hearty deli-style lunch.

**1:00 pm:** After you have filled your belly, more rapids are on the way. Upper and Lower Pucker and the popular Buttermilk will thrill you just before you reach camp. Just try to remember that lots of people come here for the rafting alone, even though you are in fishing heaven!

**3:30 pm:** 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 are now free to wade some of the most productive and isolated water in the west. Make a plan for dinner and the guide will have it ready for an early evening break from fishing or for an after dark banquet-- if you can make it that long with food! Be sure and grab a snack before heading out if you are planning a late dinner.

**7:00- 9:00 pm:** The guides will have put on their chef's hats and will have happy hour snacks ready, and at the arranged time will have 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 under a blanket of stars playing cards, telling ghost stories, and re-living your fishing lies from the day.

**Day 2 – first light:** Let us know if you want an early cup of coffee before heading out and your guide will have it ready.

**8:00 am:** The smell of bacon in the air tells you breakfast is nearly ready. Take a break from wading and come back for an array of fresh fruit, juice and other goodies. 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:** The second day of rafting on the Gunnison offers plenty of excitement. We'll enter the Ute Park, where the canyon walls recede, the river widens, and the fish are plentiful. This is the wading fisherman's paradise, alone in the wilderness, nothing but the sound of the passing river in your ears.

**5:00 pm:** Our evening will be filled with fishing and food!

**Day 3 – first light:** Let us know if you want an early cup of coffee before heading out and your guide will have it ready. The Gorge's walls get narrower and steeper and the rapids increase in intensity. The famous Boulder Garden is a great warm-up for the continuous Class III- IV rapids of S-Turn, Squeeze, the Drops, Cable and Grand Finale.

**12:00 pm:** We'll enjoy lunch along the banks of the Smith Fork, a warm water tributary of the Gunnison that provides a beautiful hike up to a quaint waterfall that is possible to swim into. After lunch, the canyon walls recede and the river flattens out providing excellent drift fishing

**3:00 pm:** We will arrive at the Gunnison River Pleasure Park at the confluence of the Gunnison and the North Fork Rivers. Your car, a dry change of clothes and a cold drink or ice cream await you at the riverside bar and restaurant. It's time to unpack your bags and say good-bye to new found friends and reflect on this rapid and fish-filled wilderness canyon trip. You may also choose to remember your trip with a T-shirt, hat or pair of shorts. There is no better way to spend 3 days!