

Course Overview

Join other Veterans on the rafting expedition in Oregon for the opportunity to connect outside of the military on the wild and scenic Deschutes River. This course offers students an opportunity to join a team of others to challenge themselves physically and mentally while exploring amazing wilderness areas. The journey begins the moment you are picked up at the Redmond airport. You will head straight to the Deschutes River where the first days of your trip will be spent building critical skills in teamwork and outdoor skills. This learning will serve as a foundation and carry over through the remainder of your journey. While on the river, your team will learn paddling methods, river hydrology, raft captaining, and rescue techniques.

You do not need to have any previous experience. We will teach you everything you need to know to travel comfortably including how to pack appropriately, load a raft, set up tarps, paddle in a raft, and navigate the river. In addition to the technical skills, our Veteran courses provide unique opportunities to connect with fellow Veterans on an adventure of self-discovery. Our goals include helping participating veterans build a supportive community with other war veterans; facilitating discussions on readjustment and transition challenges; and re-energizing and reinvigorating our veterans' spirits with adventures and challenges in the beautiful outdoors.

From getting up early, packing up, and cooking breakfast to navigating through rapids, swimming in cold water, and paddling into headwinds, traveling in the wilderness is demanding. Additionally, expeditionary travel can pose significant mental and emotional challenges as students must work within a group of diverse individuals, developing their skills as team-members and as leaders. Past Veterans and instructors agree that arriving physically fit and excited for the opportunity for personal development will enhance your experience and ultimately allow you to take full advantage of the expedition.

Course Area

DESCHUTES RIVER, OREGON – The Deschutes River is part of the national Wild & Scenic Rivers System. The river flows north from the Oregon Cascades, feeds into the Columbia River, and ultimately on to the Pacific Ocean. The Lower Deschutes is a popular river for whitewater rafting since the river is spring-fed, which results in an unusually constant water flow and cold water. Excellent geologic evidence is present all around this area. Courses generally travel anywhere from fifty to one hundred miles along the Lower Deschutes. The rapids on the Deschutes are rated to Class III, and are excellent for learning paddle skills and teamwork. The group camps each night along the banks of the river. The Deschutes region has a colorful human history, and a railroad borders much of the length of the Lower Deschutes.

Course Activities

RAFTING – Students will travel on the river in four to six person paddle rafts, and learn to “captain” (maneuver) their paddle raft team through Class II and III rapids. After lessons in basic river travel and safety, students will progress into learning to read currents, anticipate obstacles, scout rapids, and negotiate technical portions of the river. Students will also learn river hydrology, swimming in

currents, paddle techniques, and expeditionary travel. While on the rafting expedition, there may also be an opportunity for short day hikes.

SERVICE – Service to others and the environment is a core value of Outward Bound and is integrated into each course. Participants follow Leave No Trace ethics as service to the environment and do acts of service while leading and supporting fellow participants. Students develop a value of service, seeing the impact of their actions firsthand, and transfer this desire to serve their communities back home.

SOLO – In order for profound learning to take place, there must be time to reflect on the experience. Within course, the solo is that opportunity. It is a chance to experience solitude in the wilderness without distraction while also taking a break from the physical rigors of course. Students experience time away from their group for short periods of time throughout the course. These “mini-solos” are at solo sites chosen by instructors to provide as much solitude as possible (within emergency whistle-signaling distance of other group members). Participants have all necessary equipment, food and water. On this course, solos may range from 30 minutes to 24 hours.

OUTCOMES – This course will encourage students in the areas of leadership, character development, and service that are integral to Outward Bound. Students will develop these skills in an expedition setting so that they can continue to grow once they return home. Instructors will work to challenge students to try new things and step outside their comfort zones. As a team, each group will work together to complete difficult tasks necessary for backcountry travel. Courses for veterans are specifically focused on helping students engage their strengths and bond with fellow veterans, building the self-confidence and sense of purpose needed to continue serving as leaders in their families, communities and the nation.

Sample Itinerary

Please note that this is an example of activities that might occur on course, not a specific schedule or guarantee. All itineraries will vary depending on student groups, instructor teams, and environmental factors.

Day 1	Course Start, welcome and introductions, gear-check, course overview
Day 2	Fitting and use of Personal Flotation Device, safety topics, captaining a raft, reading water, swim assessment, capsize drill, navigation, and camp-craft skills
Day 3	Practice captaining a raft, scouting, throw bag drill, swimming activities
Day 4	Opportunity for a day hike, rock jump, rock climbing, and/or rappelling. These activities are dependent on student and instructor outcomes for the course
Day 5	Day run through the town of Maupin. Largest concentration of rapids
Day 6	Gear de-issue, course end ceremony

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Where will I sleep?

Outward Bound utilizes tarps or tents for our courses. Sleeping shelters vary based on the location of your course. You may also spend the first and last night at our basecamp, depending on weather conditions.

What will I eat?

The menu is largely vegetarian, with lots of grains, pasta, cheese, beans and nuts. Meat is heavy and spoils easily, but we occasionally eat tuna and canned chicken if cans are permitted in the wilderness area. Our diet will have more fats and protein (depending on the season and the environment) than what you are accustomed to. To prepare, we suggest that you cut down on soft drinks, caffeine and junk food. Start eating well-balanced meals, drink plenty of water and commit to a training program.

Will I be able to take a shower?

Some base camps have showers available. We will make sure you get a shower prior to your departure for home. Not on your course itself. Some base camps have showers available at course end, others will offer privacy and a bucket to get you clean enough to make it home. A common misconception about the backcountry is that you have to be dirty all of the time. Not true—it is entirely possible to stay clean. Your instructors will demonstrate bathing options and explain more about backcountry hygiene when you arrive. You will also learn how to dispose of human waste in latrines, “cat holes” or other wilderness-appropriate facilities. All courses carry some sort of hand-washing system as well.

Do you accommodate my food allergy or special diet?

We can easily accommodate vegetarians and with prior notice we can arrange to have some form of accommodation for vegans as well as people with certain food allergies. If you have any special dietary restrictions (nut allergies, lactose intolerance, wheat allergy etc.), please contact Student Services immediately so that we can try to accommodate your specific needs. We are unable to accommodate all special dietary needs. Please note that we may ask you to bring some of your own foods at your expense and that extreme food allergies will be considered on a case by case basis with an emphasis on evaluating the risk of traveling in a remote setting.

Should I bring contacts or glasses on course?

Either glasses or contact lenses are acceptable on course. Sterile lens care is difficult on the trail, and because of this, their use is not encouraged. In winter it can be especially challenging. Whether you wear contacts or glasses, you must bring an extra pair.

Do I need to bring any camping gear?

We supply all necessary equipment. You need to bring only personal clothing and footwear. See packing list for specific instructions. If you already own some equipment and would prefer to use it for your course please check your packing list as to what is appropriate. If you bring your own equipment it will be inspected by your instructor at the beginning of your course. If it does not meet our standards you can store it in a secure location during your course. You will not be able to

purchase supplies while on course. All the equipment issued to you and your patrol must be returned. You and your group will be charged for any equipment that you lose or damage.

What happens to my belongings while on course?

Space will be available for storing luggage, excess clothing and valuables (watches, wallets). Please leave jewelry at home.

What is a typical day?

A typical day involves rising with the sun, making breakfast, packing up camp and hitting the trail. You will hike and/or climb all day—taking breaks for food, rest or to enjoy a view—but generally covering lots of territory. Once you reach camp, group members will divide chores to get food cooked and camp set up. After dinner you may meet to address the next day's plans or to talk and hang out with your crew before crawling into your sleeping bag for a well-deserved rest.

Can I bring a camera?

Please bring your camera if you want to record the events of your course - limited to a small point and shoot camera. Because our courses are rigorous, you run the risk of losing or damaging your camera. This rarely happens, but we want to remind you that the possibility exists. You might want to consider purchasing a waterproof bag (ziplock) for your camera and accessories.

What about iPods, MP3 players, Cell Phones, Personal Computers?

You are more than welcome to travel to and from your course with this equipment. Once you arrive we will ask you to leave it all in your luggage as you are not allowed to take it on your course.

Can I receive mail while on course?

No, the course does not offer an opportunity for mail to be sent or received.

Do I need to bring money for my course?

You do not need any money while on course. However, you are responsible for all incidental costs associated with getting to and from the course start. For example, meals along the road are your responsibility. The only other costs could be charges for lost/damaged equipment. Plan on bringing around \$50.

What happens with my prescription medications while on course?

Please bring your prescription medications and non-prescription medications in separate, labeled, non-breakable, waterproof containers. People with prescription inhalers and epinephrine injections must also bring and carry their own medications. Participants who would suffer severe consequences if they were to miss a dose of medication due to damage or loss should bring back-up doses of that medication. All prescription medications must be disclosed to Student Services prior to course start.