

## Overview

The Deschutes River Rafting expedition in Oregon 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 wild and scenic 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 the necessary skill sets for each activity and each course area. The course also includes an emphasis on leadership, character development, and an ethic of service.

Wilderness travel is demanding. It can take every waking moment to get from point A to point B. Rafting includes numerous challenges, such as navigating through rapids, swimming in cold water, paddling into headwinds, and more. 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 leaders. Past students 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 introduce students to the ideas of leadership, character development, and service that are integral to Outward Bound. Students will begin to 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.

## 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.*

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| 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 | De-issue and clean gear; course closing and celebration  |
| Day 7 | Transportation home  |