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Grande Ronde – A Self-Support Kayaking Adventure Kayaking, Hiking & Camp Cooking

Tucked away in the Blue Mountains, in the extreme northeast corner of Oregon, flows the fast but gentle Grande Ronde River, the perfect place to learn how to read water and paddle your own inflatable kayak. While we also offer whitewater rafting trips on the Grande Ronde River, this adventure is designed for people who want to learn how to kayak and run their own river trip.

Participants will learn how to paddle an inflatable kayak, how to read water, how to prepare and pack for a river trip and how camp cooking and set up works. There will also be plenty of time for hiking and exploring the canyon trails of the Grande Ronde.

Our Grande Ronde four-day kayaking adventure travels some 36 miles through a wilderness of pine-studded canyons, on waters protected as part of the National Wild & Scenic Rivers Act. Towering mountains and formations of volcanic rock from the Columbia Basalt flows make for a dramatic setting.

Every participant on this trip is furnished with an inflatable kayak about 11-feet in length. These are stable and fairly easy to maneuver, making them an ideal platform for learning how to run rivers with whitewater. Each day we paddle about 10 miles on fast-flowing water, getting instruction from your guides along the way. Trips are scheduled during the week when few other paddlers are on the water. Non kayakers may be accommodated in a raft.

We are sure to leave plenty of time to stop and hike to vistas of the Blue Mountains and the canyons of the river. We make camp by the river's edge each evening. Along the way we may see Rocky Mountain big horn sheep, elk, mule deer and coyote. If river levels allow, we'll spend our third day as a "layover day" and take a longer hike into the mountains, returning to our same camp mid-afternoon.

Unlike other ROW Adventures' trips, which lean towards the luxury end of service and camping, on this kayaking trip everyone carries their own overnight bag in their kayak and chips in to set up camp. Meals are ROW's standard five-course camp gourmet fare and participants who wish may learn how to do Dutch oven cooking alongside the guides. Those who choose to do so will learn how to bake salmon with a huckleberry and maple syrup glaze, prepare awesome camp lasagna, cook a variety of cakes and on the final night, prepare a prime rib!

Guides will also demonstrate packing and rigging techniques for those interested. For those that want to learn the basic skills for organizing a self-support river trip, this is the perfect introduction!

Sample Itinerary:

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info@ROWadventures.com • ROWadventures.com

Setting the High Watermark for Outdoor Adventure

Day 0) The trip begins the evening before the departure date with an orientation meeting at the Red Lion Hotel in Lewiston, Idaho. During this meeting any last-minute questions are answered and participants are given a dry bag to pack.

Day 1) We depart from Lewiston early the next morning and drive about three hours to our put-in point at Minam, Oregon. It's a dramatic drive through the mountains, including the spectacular Rattlesnake Grade. Once at the river we meet the rest of the ROW Adventures guides who have traveled ahead with the support raft and kayak gear. After a thorough safety briefing we launch our inflatable kayaks onto the waters of the Grande Ronde. In fact we launch on the Wallowa River and follow it for the first 10 miles to the confluence with the Grande Ronde. A couple of miles past the confluence we make our first night's camp.

Camps are set on large benches of grass and pine trees. Everyone helps get the boats unloaded and camp set up. Our spacious tents are quick and easy. The next learning opportunity is focused on river camp cooking. Anyone who wants to learn more is welcome to join the guides in the kitchen. You can learn how to prepare gourmet camp food using a propane stove and Dutch ovens. At each meal you'll learn a new trick or two and create some delicious meals. A highlight for many will be learning how to bake in the Dutch ovens. Cakes, cobblers, fresh salmon, lasagna and prime rib are some of the dishes cooked on the trip in Dutch ovens.

Day 2) We enjoy breakfast and then break camp. We launch again on the Grande Ronde, which continues as a fast-flowing but gentle river with mild rapids. We pass beneath dramatic basalt columns that jut out from the sloping mountains. With any luck we may see deer, elk or even big horn sheep. The fresh mountain air is fresh and clean. Huge ponderosa pines stud the mountainsides. After a couple hours floating the river we pull over for lunch and you have your choice of helping or just kicking back. We review some paddling techniques prior to setting out for the afternoon.

Water levels determine how long we spend on the river each day. At higher flows the river moves faster, making our miles pass more quickly. We arrive at camp in plenty of time for a hike, game of horseshoes or other activity. Those desiring to learn more about camp cooking will report for duty in the kitchen.

Day 3) Flows on the river will determine whether our third day is another day floating and kayaking on the Grande Ronde, or a layover day in camp. If it's a layover day, we'll have time for an extended hike into the mountains. Or time to catch up on your favorite book under a tree. Layover days are always a popular option! If we float today, we'll continue downriver another ten or so miles, learning along the way and stopping at any sites of interest.

Day 4) On our last day we float another 8-10 miles and use the skills we've learned thus far to paddle the currents. We reach the take-out just after lunch, pack up and head back to Lewiston. There's a farewell dinner and a chance to share thoughts and memories of the last few days together.

Rates: \$1095.00 per person, plus 5% Land & Water Access fee. *Minimum age is 12 years old.*

Meeting Time: We meet you at 7:00 PM the evening before your trip at the Red Lion Inn in Lewiston. Here we have an orientation meeting to tell you more about the trip, answer your last minute questions, and to give you your waterproof bags to pack. As well we'll have some of our specialty outdoor items for sale such as ROW hats, eyeglass retainers, T-shirts, polypro underwear or whatever else you may have forgotten.

Launch Point: Early the next morning (around 7:30am) we leave the hotel in the ROW bus and drive to the put-in. Please have breakfast on your own before we leave. We put in at Minam, Oregon, a spectacular 3-hour

drive from Lewiston. On the last day of the trip, we'll return you to the Red Lion Inn where we encourage you to spend the night and enjoy our hosted "farewell dinner" with other trip members and the ROW crew.

Lodging Accommodations: We meet you at the **Red Lion Inn** in Lewiston, Idaho. ROW will make your motel reservations for you and this will be reflected on your invoice. The hotel has storage facilities for your luggage and a place for valuables while you are on the river. Cars may be left in their parking lot. Local phone number is (208) 799-1000.

If you drive: There are good highways leading to Lewiston from all directions. Some people may even want to fly to Seattle or Portland and drive. From either city, to Lewiston it's roughly 350 miles and takes about 6 hours.

If you fly: The Lewiston airport is easily reached by major and regional airlines that connect through Boise, Seattle, Portland or Salt Lake City. Two major airlines that service Lewiston are Horizon Air (Alaska) and Delta Airlines. ***The Red Lion Inn does provide free transfer service to/from the airport from 8am to 9pm. Otherwise taxi service is about \$12 each way.*

Groups of two or more will probably find it more economical to fly to **Spokane, Washington** and then rent a car for the pleasant 100-mile drive south that takes about two hours. You can also take a taxi one-way to or from Lewiston for roughly \$200 for up to 4-5 people with luggage. We recommend All Ways Transportation (877) 437-5237 or ABC Taxi of Lewiston (208) 437-5237. Be sure to clarify how many are in your party and how much luggage you may have when reserving a taxi with them.

Last Minute Phone Numbers: If you need to reach ROW at the last minute, try our office first at 800-451-6034. If there's no answer, call our summer warehouse in Clarkston, at 509-758-5585.

Gratuities: Here are some helpful guidelines on tipping. Your guide is a paid professional. Tips are appropriate and accepted only if we exceeded your expectations. Whether you tip and how much you tip should depend on your satisfaction with the trip, your feelings about tipping, and your financial means. If you believe your guide deserves a tip, a suggested range is from 7-12% of your trip cost. If you had the time of your life, then the sky is the limit! We also appreciate your comments. We use your feedback to recognize extraordinary guest service and to discover areas where we can make improvements. Our goal is to exceed your expectations! (P.S. Let us know if you found these guidelines appropriate or helpful.) Tips can be given to the ROW "Team Leader," who will distribute it equally among the crew.

ROW Inc. is an Equal Opportunity recreation service provider under permit from the U. S. Forest Service, Umatilla National Forest.