

Welcome!

Our 2 day trips on the South Fork of the American are fun-filled adventures through the rolling foothills of California's Mother Lode country. The 20 miles of river between Chili Bar and Folsom Lake contain over 50 rapids including Meatgrinder, Triple Threat, and Troublemaker, as well as the numerous rapids of the famous American River Gorge. The rapids range in difficulty from Class II to Class III+, making South Fork trips ideal for first-time rafters, yet still exciting enough for seasoned veterans. Our two-day South Fork Wilderness trips camp along an isolated stretch of the river that has no vehicle access. Meals are prepared by our guides and after a campfire, you will be serenaded to sleep by the sound of the river. There is often a delay on the second morning of your trip, as we wait for the upstream water releases, so be prepared for a relaxing morning. Paddle and oar rafts are used on Wilderness trips. In the paddle rafts, four to seven paddlers form a paddle team and, following the instructions of a guide who sits in the rear of the raft, propel the boat through the rapids using canoe-type paddles. Previous experience is not required.

Meeting Time & Place:

All trip members will meet an ARTA guide at 8:30 am the morning the trip starts in the parking lot at Camp Lotus, (530/622-8672) which is located on the South Fork of the American River near the town of Lotus. Obtain a parking permit from the campground attendant, park in the main lot, and look for an ARTA representative in the parking area near the river.

Driving Directions:

From Sacramento: Take Highway 50 east 30 miles to the Ponderosa Road exit in Shingle Springs.

Cross over the Highway and turn right onto North Shingle Road. Continue for 12 miles following the signs to Coloma and Lotus. Turn left at Bassi Road (stop sign just before entering the town of Lotus), and go one mile to Camp Lotus.

From Placerville: Take Highway 49 north through the Gold Discovery State Park in Coloma. Turn left on Lotus Road, (just before the bridge across the South Fork of the American) and go 1 mile to Bassi Road. Turn right on Bassi Road and go 1 mile to Camp Lotus.

Flying Options:

There is no public transportation available to Lotus. The nearest airport with commercial service is Sacramento, (1½ hours west of Camp Lotus). If you choose to fly, we recommend renting a car and driving to Camp Lotus. Due to potential delays, please do not schedule a flight out of Sacramento any earlier than 9 pm on the day of your trip.

Parking and River Shuttle:

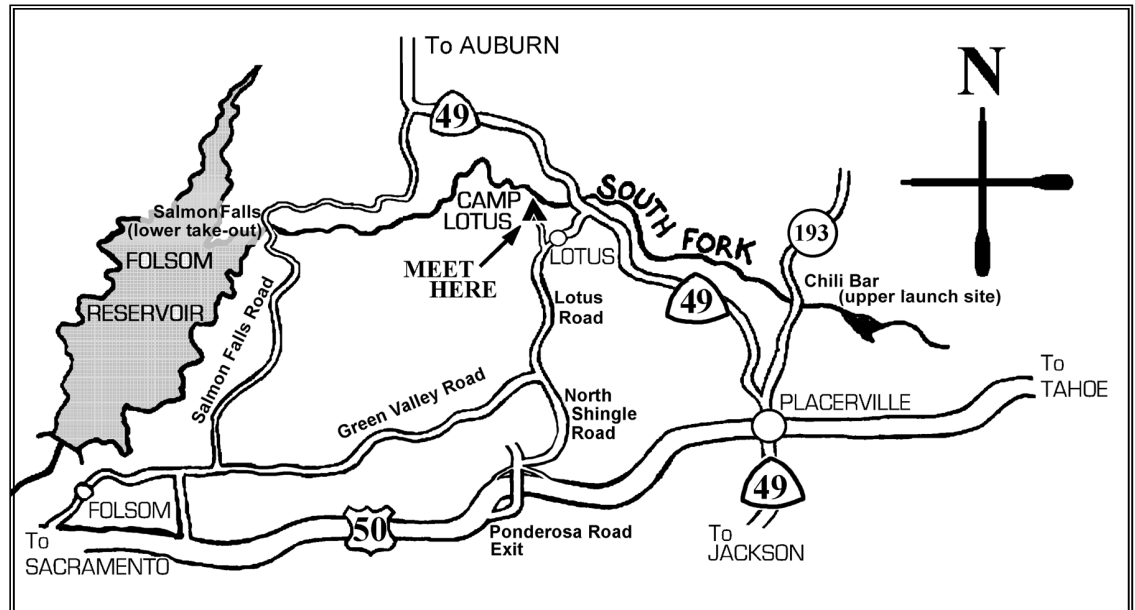
ARTA will provide all transportation from Camp Lotus to the river and back and vehicles may be left at Camp Lotus during the trip.

Pre- and Post-trip Accommodations:

Camping and cabins for before or after your trip are available with advance reservations at Camp Lotus (530/622-8672), which has hot showers and a small store. The Cameron Park Best Western (530/677-2203) and the Placerville Best Western, (800/854-9100) are nearby.

Boats:

Our South Fork American trips are all-paddle adventures. Six or seven paddlers plus one of our guides form a team and actively paddle the raft through the rapids. No previous experience is necessary. Oar rafts and oar-paddle combination rafts, which entail less paddling, are available by special request.



Personal Equipment List

CAMP ITEMS: These will be packed in a waterproof dunnage bag and will not be accessible during the day. We will be carrying everything into camp by raft (and up the hill to take-out by foot), so please pack as lightly as possible.

- Sturdy plate, cup and silverware
- Compact sleeping bag, (rated to 40°)
- Self-inflating pad or ensolite pad
- Small, lightweight pillow
- Ground cloth, tarp or small tent
- 1 complete change of clothes for camp (versatile pants and shirts, cotton if fine)
- Shoes for camp, (tennis shoes or light hiking boots are fine)
- Warm sweater, or compact jacket, (fleece or pile pullover or jacket will work in camp and on river)
- Personal hygiene items, medicine and towel
- Small flashlight or headlamp
- Beer, wine, or soda for in camp (optional)
- Book or magazine in case we have a delay

RIVER ITEMS - These will be worn or packed into a community day bag or carried in your personal day-pack (small). They are likely to get wet!

- Swimsuit or quick-drying shorts and a t-shirt, (women will want to wear shorts over their swimsuits)
- Tennis shoes or sandals with heel strap (must stay on feet when swimming!) **NO FLIP-FLOPS OR SLIP-ONS!**
- Visored hat with strap, (baseball style is fine)
- Sunglasses with strap (maybe not your best pair)
- Sunblock (SPF 15 minimum), lip ointment
- Water bottle, (empty Gatorade bottle is fine)
- Lightweight clothes for sun-sensitive skin, (cotton ok)
- Small day-pack, (one per family)
- Bandana (for environmental reasons, we do not provide paper napkins or disposable plates, a bandana is handy at meals)
- Fleece or pile jacket for Spring trips (**required**)
- Waterproof rainshell for Spring trips, (**required**)
- Farmer-john wetsuit for Spring trips, (recommended)

Equipment hints and suggestions:

CAMP ITEMS are packed into a waterproof dunnage bag (provided by ARTA). All camp items, including your sleeping bag, go into this bag, so compact items are better. Please limit the weight of your belongings to approximately 20 pounds.

RIVER ITEMS will be packed in a community day bag which will be accessible during the day or you may bring a small daypack on the raft with you.

ON YOUR FEET you will want shoes that will stay on while you swim. Old tennis shoes or sandals with heel straps work fine.

DO NOT WEAR SLIP-ON SANDALS OR FLIP-FLOPS.

SUMMER TRIPS - (June 15 - September 15)

It is likely to be hot and wet on the river, so wear clothes that dry quickly, (nylon shorts, bathing suits, athletic sandals, etc). Please don't forget a hat, waterbottle, and sunblock. In camp, tents are nice for privacy, but many guests prefer to sleep out under the stars.

SPRING AND FALL TRIPS - (before June 15 and after September 15) Everyone should come prepared for cool and/or wet conditions, (even if its sunny).

We strongly advise a thick synthetic fleece pullover and a waterproof rainshell for each person. Synthetic fleece (commonly called "polartec" or "polarfleece"), retains its insulation when wet and works well on the river. Thick tops are available at outdoor stores and most department stores. **DO NOT BRING COTTON.** Wetsuits are also advised for anyone who chills easily, (and may be required for everyone on cold and rainy days). They can be rented from The River Store in Lotus, (530/626-3435) and should be reserved in advance.



Meals & Drinks:

ARTA menus feature fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats and the guides double as camp chefs. Dinner is usually grilled chicken or fish, pasta, green salad and a baked Dutch Oven dessert. If you have special dietary needs, please tell us in advance and we will do our best to accommodate you. We also provide fruit drinks at meals; if you want alternative beverages in camp, please bring your own in non-glass containers. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed at lunch or while rafting, but are welcomed in moderation at camp.

Insurance:

We strongly recommend that all trip members purchase short-term travel insurance. Baggage, accident and trip cancellation coverage is available through the Travellers Insurance Company. Please request a travel insurance flyer from ARTA if you have not already received one.

Included:

The trip fee includes all meals from lunch on the first day to lunch on the last day, bus shuttle service from Camp Lotus to the actual launching point and from the take-out point back to Camp Lotus, camping and access fees and the use of all river touring equipment for the duration of the trip. Gratuities for your guide are not included and are always appreciated when given in recognition of outstanding service.

NOTE:

El Dorado County requires that we print the following notice: *Water flows in the South Fork of the American River result from releases from hydro-electric facilities located upstream. Such water releases are not subject to the control of El Dorado County or commercial companies operating under permits from the county of El Dorado.*