

Welcome!

Our one day trips on the South Fork of the American River are exciting journeys through the rolling foothills of California's Mother Lode country. We will cover 10 miles of river and tackle over 20 rapids, from small riffles to big drops, and we will enjoy the scenery and history of the region. Depending on your wishes and the water levels, we will either run the upper stretch from Chili Bar to Camp Lotus, (Meatgrinder and Troublemaker), or the lower stretch from Camp Lotus to Folsom Reservoir, (Satan's Cesspool and Hospital Bar). Both stretches are 10 miles long and offer the same amount of whitewater. The most difficult rapids are rated Class III+, perfect for families and first-time rafters, yet still exciting enough for seasoned veterans.

Meeting Time and Place:

All trip members will meet an ARTA guide at 10:00 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, (5461 Bassi Rd. Lotus, CA 95651). 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:

Camp Lotus is 1 hour east of Sacramento between Highways 50 and 80. Driving time from San Francisco is about 3 hours, from Los Angeles it is about 8 hours.

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:

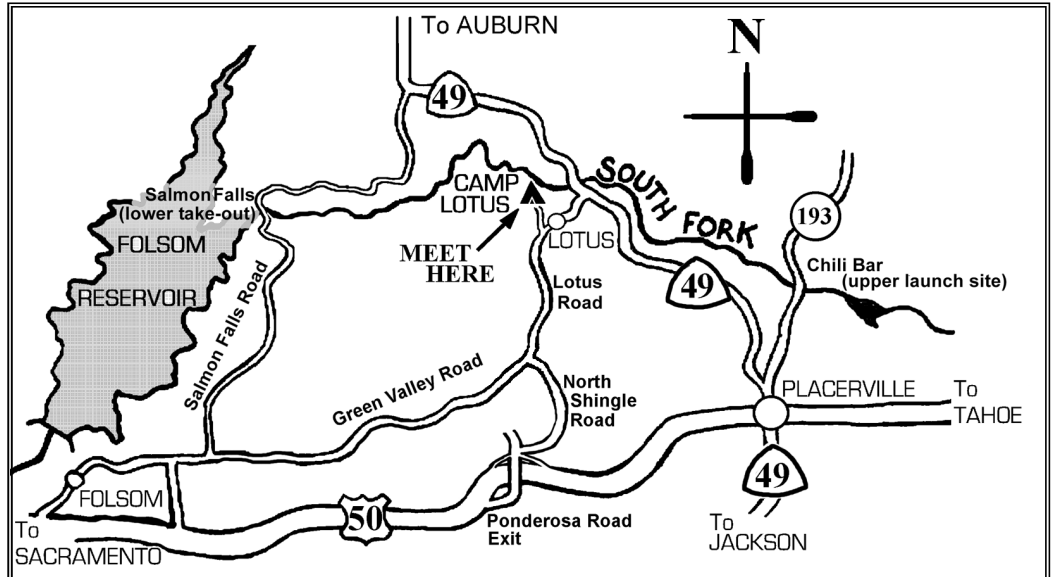
There is no public transportation available to Lotus. The nearest airport with commercial service is Sacramento, (1½ hours west of Camp Lotus). If you choose to fly, we recommend renting a car and driving to Camp Lotus. Due to potential delays, please do not schedule a flight out of Sacramento any earlier 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 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) is on Highway 50, about 2 miles before the Shingle Springs exit. There are numerous motels in Placerville, 25 minutes away, including the Placerville Best Western, (800/854-9100). Please make reservations well in advance!



Personal Equipment List

RIVER ITEMS:

- Tennis shoes or sandals **with heel strap** (must stay on when swimming) **NO FLIP FLOPS OR SLIP ON!**
- Swimsuit or shorts and a t-shirt (women will want to wear shorts over their swimsuit)
- Baseball-style hat or visor to wear under helmet
- Waterproof sunscreen/block (SPF 15), lip balm
- Sunglasses with strap, (maybe not your best)
- Small water bottle, 1 quart, (**essential** - even if its just an empty plastic Gatorade bottle)
- Bandana (for environmental reasons, we do not provide paper napkins or disposable plates)

BEFORE JUNE 1 (or if the forecast is for cool weather):

- Synthetic fleece "polartec" top or polypropylene long underwear top - (NOT COTTON) - **required**
- Water-PROOF rainshell (NOT simply water-REPELLENT) **required**
- Farmer-john wetsuit, (recommended)

OTHER ITEMS:

- Dry change of clothes and towel to leave in your car
- Small daypack to take on raft
- Long-sleeved, lightweight clothes for sun-sensitive skin.

Being Prepared:

It is usually warm and sunny in the Sierra during the heart of the summer so you won't need much for a day on the South Fork. You will be getting wet and the water is cold (60^o) so things that dry quickly work best. You will be wearing a helmet, so a visor or baseball-style hat works best. Don't forget a water bottle and if you get cold easily, a lightweight fleece top is handy (we'll pack it in a community dry bag).

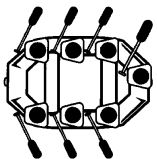
During the spring months the South Fork is full with snowmelt and is quite cold. Therefore, we **require** that all trip members have a synthetic "fleece" top ("polartec", **NOT COTTON**) and a waterproof rainshell. "Fleece" is a synthetic material that works well on the river; it is commonly called "polartec" and is available at most outdoor, thrift and department stores. Do not bring cotton clothing for on-river insulation. If the water levels are high, we may require everyone to have a wetsuit. Wetsuits can be rented in advance from Sierra Nevada Sales (e-mail: julie-sierranevadasales@jps.net) or from the River Store (530/626-3435) which is 1 mile from Camp Lotus.



Redtail Hawk

Weather:

The California Foothills enjoy warm to hot temperatures for most of the summer with very little rain. Summertime highs can reach the 100's, however, it is usually cooler along the river. In the spring, (April, May and early June), it is generally cooler and there is a greater chance of rain. A fleece top and a good rainshell are advised during the early part of the season. The water on the South Fork is a chilly 60 to 65 degrees most of the year.



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, but everyone should be ready for an exciting day on the river.

Included:

The trip fee includes lunch, bus shuttle service from Camp Lotus to the actual launching point and from the take-out point back to Camp Lotus as well as all guides and helpers 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.

Insurance:

We strongly recommend that you purchase short-term travel insurance prior to your trip. Contact USI Travel Insurance (www.travelinsure.com or 800-937-1387) for more information.

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.*