



California Pro Guide Training



river trips

10 day training course for prospective guides

5

best things about this school

Full, progressive itinerary with lots of rapids and challenges

Ten days of motivating instruction

Three different rivers

Small class size

(usually 12 students and 4 instructors)

No previous experience required

(but you must be at least 18 years old)

PLANNED ITINERARY

(subject to change based on river conditions)

- Days 1 – 4: South Fork American
- Days 5 – 6: Middle Fork American
- Day 7: South Fork American & travel
- Days 8 – 10: Tuolumne

INSTRUCTION TOPICS

- Professional guiding skills & expertise
- Whitewater navigation & technique
- Trip leadership & responsibility
- Rowing & paddle captaining
- Swiftwater rescue & river safety
- Emergency procedures & scenarios
- Leave No Trace ethics & wilderness camping practices
- Multi-day, expedition-style trip preparation & execution
- Equipment care, repair & maintenance
- Knots, rigging, signals, cooking, interpretation, and so much more!

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best things about ARTA's schools

Friendly and patient instructors

Emphasis on expedition-style trips

Casual and inclusive atmosphere

Over 50 years of experience on the west's most iconic rivers

We donate our profits back to protecting the environment



Let's go!

Our 10 day Professional Guide Training Course is a fast-paced, active class designed to train commercial river guides. The course is highly participatory and you should come prepared to pitch in, jump in, and do your share of the work.

While the emphasis of the school will be on rowing and paddling in low-volume, high-gradient, technical rivers, all aspects of commercial guiding will be covered, including training in river rescue, equipment maintenance, risk management, and emergency procedures as well as on-shore training in cooking, sanitation, and logistics. There will also be managed scenarios where your skills, judgment, and responses will be assessed and reviewed, as well as team events, games, skills challenges, and other fun activities to help hone your guiding and leadership skills. The rapids and the student responsibilities will increase in difficulty as the school progresses, making every day a challenge, an adventure, and loads of fun.

Upon completion of the course, students should have the experience and skills necessary to qualify to be Assistant Guides on ARTA's commercial trips. The goal of the California Pro Training is for every student to be a safe and responsible river user.

We want you to be comfortable and capable of taking your own raft down Class III rivers with a good sense of the things that can go wrong, the proficiency to avoid them, and the skills to deal with them if they aren't avoided.

"One of the best river experiences I have ever had. We covered a bunch of material and learned so many new things while still having fun. I also made some amazing friends!!!"
Sydney Steinberg



California Pro Guide Training~ logistics



10 day training course for prospective guides

Meeting Place

Camp Lotus, 5461 Bassi Road,
Lotus, CA 95651.

Meeting Time

8:00 pm the evening before the course begins.

Ending Place

ARTA Office, 24000 Casa Loma Road,
Groveland, CA 95321

Ending Time

Around 5:00 pm on the last day.

Pre-trip checklist

- **Complete on-line registration**
(follow the link and directions that came with your original reservation)
- **Plan for the unexpected**
(purchase Travel Insurance through [USI Travel Insurance](#)).
- **Gather and pack your gear**
(there is a thorough list on the Equipment page; call if you have any questions).

What we provide

- Local ground transportation and shuttles in support of the school.
- Friendly and professional instructors.
- All meals from breakfast on the first day to lunch on the last day.
- All taxes and government access fees.
- Waterproof bags, lifejackets, and other specialized river touring equipment for the trip.

What you are responsible for

- Transportation to Camp Lotus before the course and transportation from Groveland after the course.
- Personal clothing and toiletries (see Equipment page).
- Camping gear (see Equipment page for information on renting equipment from ARTA).
- Soda, beer, wine, or liquor (you must be over 21 to consume alcoholic beverages during the school).

Where and when to meet

We will meet you at **8:00 pm the evening before the school begins** at Camp Lotus which is located along the South Fork of the American River near the town of Lotus (5461 Bassi Rd, Lotus, CA 95651). Camping will be provided that night at Camp Lotus.

How to get there

Driving: Most students arrive at Camp Lotus by car. Driving time is 2 to 3 hours from the Bay Area and about 7 to 8 hours from Los Angeles.

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. At Bassi Road, (stop sign, just before entering the town of Lotus), turn left and go one mile to Camp Lotus on the right; check the campsite board at the office for the school campsite.

From Placerville: Take Highway 49 north through Gold Discovery State Park. Turn left on Lotus Road, (just before the bridge across the river) and go 1 mile to Bassi Road, (stop sign). Turn right on Bassi Road and go 1 mile to Camp Lotus. Check the campsite board at the office for the school campsite.

Flying: The nearest commercial airport to Camp Lotus is Sacramento. For transportation from the Sacramento Airport to Camp Lotus you can rent a car or pre-arrange an airport shuttle through Folsom Airporter or Folsom Lake Express who will take you to Placerville where we can pick you up and take you to Camp Lotus. Please call our office if you plan on using public transportation so that we can assist you in getting to and from Camp Lotus.

Itinerary (subject to change based on river conditions)

Pre-Trip Meeting (8:00 pm the evening before the school begins): We will have an orientation and familiarization meeting at Camp Lotus to go over logistics, discuss expectations and get to know each other. We will set up our Camp Lotus Base Camp and establish cook crews for the school (no dinner provided on the first evening).

Days 1 - 4: We will spend the first four days rafting various stretches of the South Fork of the American River. Depending on flows and skill levels we will raft 10 - 20 miles each day, concentrating on paddle raft techniques. Each day will present new challenges as we incorporate swims, flips, wraps, and other situations into the course. Camping will be at Camp Lotus or on the river.

Days 5 & 6: We will spend two days on the Middle Fork of the American.

Day 7: We'll spend the morning working on rescue and safety scenarios at Camp Lotus before caravanning to our facility in Groveland to prepare for the Tuolumne.

Days 8 - 10: The Tuolumne! We will raft the legendary "T" from Meral's Pool to Ward's Ferry Bridge, camping along the river. The rapids on the Tuolumne are much more challenging than the American and instructors may guide some of them as demonstration opportunities. The school will conclude late in the day in Groveland.

After the school: We are looking for dynamic, hard-working people to work for us as guides and this course is a primary source. Qualified students will be given the opportunity to join ARTA on a commercial trip as an Assistant Guide (unpaid position), to further their training and prepare them for a guiding career.

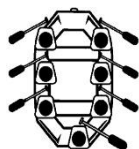
California Pro Guide Training~ details



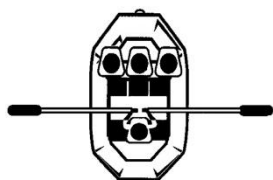
10 day training course for prospective guides

About the boats

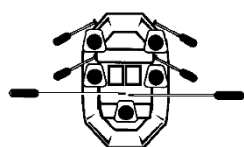
The California Pro Guide School will focus on instruction in three different types of boats:



Paddle rafts are 14 feet long and have 4 to 6 students plus an instructor who work together to get the raft through the rapids. Social, sporty, and participatory, paddle rafts are the standard on short trips and solid paddle captaining skills are essential for commercial guides.



Oar rafts are 16 feet long, carry all of the overnight gear, and up to 3 students plus an instructor. They are rowed by one person using two, 10-foot oars. Big, brawny, and beautiful they are the standard craft on extended wilderness river trips.



Oar-paddle combination rafts are 14 feet long and combine the precision of an oar raft with the power of a paddle raft. They are captained by a student using oars in the back and powered by paddlers in the front.

Every school and student make-up is different, but generally we'll have 12 students, 4 instructors and up to 5 rafts per school. We usually start with and concentrate on paddle skills for the first part of the course, then introduce combos and oar rafts later in the school.

About the rivers

This course will take place on the South and Middle Forks of the American and Tuolumne Rivers. The South Fork is a Class III river with lots of medium-sized, fun rapids spread over a 20 mile stretch. We will spend the first few days of the school here, using Camp Lotus as our base camp and running between 10 and 20 miles of river each day. The Middle Fork is an enigmatic stretch of river offering a bunch of unique challenges including a Class IV+ rapid, a tunnel, and a portage around a waterfall as well as long sections of easier rapids and riffles. The Tuolumne is a world-class whitewater river with numerous challenging rapids in a very remote and wild canyon; a great test of any guide's skills and a wonderful place to spend time and learn. The stretches of river that we will run are designed to increase in difficulty as your skill level increases and may change due to flows or safety concerns.

About you

This course is designed for active, enthusiastic, and dynamic individuals who want a challenging, action-packed adventure. If you are the type of person who is first in line to wash dishes and last in line to get out of the surf, the course is for you. Some students come to the school with a lifetime of camping and rafting under their belts, others have never been in a boat before; all have succeeded (with no correlation). A positive attitude and solid work ethic are the most important things you can bring to the school.

Weather

June in California means warm days and cold water; prepare yourself for those conditions and you should be fine. You will be spending a lot of time in the river (cold) and a lot of time exerting yourself (warm) so having the right gear (wetsuit, fleece, paddling jacket) will help you handle the extremes. Daytime air temperatures are usually in the 80s and 90s with mornings being the coolest time of day with lows into the 50s. Rain is uncommon, but you'll be spending the whole time outside, so come prepared for anything.

Meals and drinks

ARTA meals are well-balanced and consist of quality foods with fresh meats, fruits, and vegetables. The menu includes a wide variety of dishes with lots of flexibility, but if you have a special dietary request or allergy, please let us know in advance so we can accommodate you. We will provide water and juice during the day and hot coffee, tea and cocoa in the morning. If you would like soda, beer, wine, or liquor with your dinner, please bring your own in unbreakable containers, (you must be over 21 to consume alcoholic beverages during the school).

Camping

The nature of the school calls for participation and you will be expected to contribute and get involved in all aspects of the trip. While the most lasting skills will be developed in the rafts on the river each day, the most lasting memories always come from sharing time and responsibilities in the kitchen and on shore. Students will form teams with each team taking responsibility for various communal jobs like meal preparation, equipment repair, and sanitation. We'll rotate teams so that everyone gets experience with all the different tasks. Like all things in life, the more you give to the experience, the more you will receive.



California Pro Guide Training~ equipment



10 day training course for prospective guides

Get ready!

Your comfort during the school will be greatly enhanced if you come prepared. **DO NOT SKIMP ON THE EQUIPMENT LIST!** Because the river is cold and because you will be spending both planned and unplanned time in it, we require that you have the following:

- Wetsuit or drysuit** ("farmer-john" is best, a "spring suit/shorty" will work, drysuits can be rented – see next page)
- Thick synthetic fleece top**, (at least one)
- Sturdy waterproof shell**, (drytops or paddling jackets are best; a good, solid waterproof rain jacket will work)

A "farmer-john" wetsuit covers the torso and legs but is sleeveless, allowing good shoulder movement; 3mm thickness is ideal. Synthetic fleece garments retain their insulation even when wet and are perfect for river wear. One or two pile or fleece sweaters, jackets or expedition weight long underwear tops, (such as those made by Patagonia, REI and the North Face - often called Polartec or Polarfleece - and commonly available at outdoor, department and thrift stores) are advised. A drytop, paddling jacket or waterproof rainshell will keep you dry on the river and in camp if it rains - make sure it is water-**proof**, not just water-*repellent*. Also, polypropylene pile or fleece socks, (not cotton!), and a pile or fleece hat will help keep you warm on really cold days and a good pair of cycling gloves, (fingerless with leather palms), will help protect your hands from blistering.

You will be spending 10 days outside, in the river, rain, and sun and your comfort and enjoyment of the school will be greatly enhanced if you are properly prepared. If you have any questions, please call; your equipment is a critical part of the success of your school.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT LIST

CAMP ITEMS: These will be packed in your dry bag and will generally not be accessible during the day.

- *Compact sleeping bag, (down or synthetic, rated to 35°)
- *Closed-cell foam or self-inflating sleeping pad (Thermarest)
- *Compact, lightweight tent, (free-standing tents are better)
- Your favorite pillow (an extra pillow-case is handy)
- 2 complete changes of clothing (versatile pants and shirts, cotton is fine - something exciting for dinner is welcome!)
- Extra socks, (wool or fleece are best), and underwear
- Camp shoes, (flip-flops, trail running shoes, tennis shoes; something you can walk and hike in comfortably)
- Small towel, soap and shampoo (*Campsuds & Dr. Bronner's* are the most environmentally friendly, Ivory is fine)
- Personal hygiene items, including medicine, insect repellent, dry-skin lotion, etc. Please bring twice the amount needed of any essential medicine.
- Warm jacket, (thick fleece is great - will work on-river as well or compact/down coat or pullover)
- Rain gear, top and bottom (can double as on-river gear)
- Small flashlight with extra batteries, (headlamps are great)
- Book, sketch pad, journal, etc.

RIVER ITEMS: These will be worn or packed in the communal day bag and WILL be accessible during the day.

- Wetsuit, 3mm Farmer John or drysuit (required)
- Thick polypropylene pile or synthetic fleece top (required)
- Waterproof rainshell, paddling jacket or drytop (required)
- Polypropylene pile or synthetic fleece pants (encouraged)
- Waterproof rain pants (encouraged)
- Sandals with heel strap (Chaco, Teva) or old running shoes
NO FLIP FLOPS OR SLIP-ONS
- Swimsuit or shorts and T-shirt, (nylon, quick-drying shorts and synthetic "tech-dry" type shirts are best ; many students prefer to wear shorts over their wetsuits)
- Brimmed hat, (baseball-style or visors work well; you will be wearing a helmet)
- Lightweight cotton clothing, (synthetic long-sleeved or old cotton dress shirts) for sun protection
- Waterproof sunscreen/block (SPF 30+), lip balm
- Sunglasses with strap, (maybe not your best pair)
- Small water bottle, 1 quart, (essential - even if it's just an empty plastic Gatorade bottle)
- Biking/Sailing gloves for blister protection

OPTIONAL ITEMS: These are not absolutely necessary, but you are welcome to bring them.

- Waterproof camera, (if you want to bring your cell phone to use as a camera, we strongly recommend getting a sturdy case such as an Otter Box or EscapeCapsule)
- Locking carabiner, handy for securing your day-bag
- Beer, wine, liquor, or soda in unbreakable containers, (you must be over 21 to consume alcohol during the school).
- 1 or 2 plastic garbage bags & gallon size zip-lock bags for organizing gear

* These items are available to rent from ARTA and can be reserved when you fill out your on-line registration.

ARTA WILL PROVIDE: a chair, cup, plate and eating utensils for each guest.

PLEASE DO NOT BRING: Valuable jewelry, radios, guns, accordions or any irreplaceable items!

California Pro Guide Training~ life on the river



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things that every professional river guide should have

- 1. Good footwear.** To guide is to abuse your feet. Get something that works and break them in before you get to the river.
Buy it: Chaco Z-2's, Astral Brewers.
Wing it: Old running shoes with wool socks.
Skip it: Anything with velcro straps; crocs.
Bonus: Awesome tan lines!
- 2. Good fleece.** A river guide without a fleece is like a Jedi without a tabard. It is hard to have too much (but we all try).
Buy it: Patagonia Synchilla Pullover, Mt. Hardwear Microchill Zip-T
Wing it: Tommy Hilfiger closeout from Ross; thrift store stuff.
Skip it: Cotton.
Bonus: You can wear it around town and know you are legit.
- 3. Good hat(s).** Sun protection, rain protection, warmth, cover-up; confidence comes from having something on top.
Buy it: Patagonia Trucker, Peruvian knit
Wing it: The beanie your boyfriend knitted you for your 1st anniversary.
Skip it: Your grandmother's big, floppy sunhat; anything orange.
Penalty: If you have a retainer clip.
- 4. Good tent.** Your home on the river. Even the worst possible day is made worse if your tent leaks.
Buy it: Mt. Hardwear Shifter, REI Half-Dome
Wing it: Your friend's backpacking tent.
Skip it: Anything from Wal-Mart; anything orange.
Penalty: If you can't pitch it by yourself.
- 5. Good meshbag.** Wet stuff stinks; wet stuff in a mesh bags stinks less. Bundling everything in your towel is noble, but a disaster.
Buy it: NRS Purest, Diver's Supply Duffel.
Wing it: Mesh laundry bag mom gave you for college; abalone bag.
Skip it: Wheeled carry-on; grocery bag.
Bonus: It makes a bad-ass laundry bag at college (no offense mom).
- 6. Good paddling jacket.** You might not use it every day, but just knowing that you have one will make you feel warmer; like a kitten.
Buy it: Kokatat Stoke, NRS Flux
Wing it: REI or North Face rainshell.
Skip it: Dad's golf windbreaker; poncho.
Penalty: Bringing a kitten instead.

A day on the river

Every day is full. Every day is different. You will scout the rapids; you will row the rafts; you will make the decisions. We'll teach you about currents and eddies and ferry angles. We'll show you throw bags and nut drivers and truckers' hitches. We'll hold your hand while you get your feet wet and we'll let go when you're ready. We'll have formal lessons each day, impromptu question and answer sessions each evening, and a lot of stories and laughs every night. We'll create some odd-ball scenarios to test our skills and nurture our teamwork. And we'll do it all in a low-key, no-pressure, fun manner that makes learning easy and enjoyable. Every day our instructors will greet you with a supportive smile and the river will greet you with a new challenge. Every day you'll learn something new and every day you'll do something you've never done before. Every night you'll drift off to sleep with visions of whitewater dancing in your head.

How to dress

On most days you will be wearing your wetsuit or drysuit plus a thick, synthetic fleece top, (pullover is best) and a sturdy, fully-waterproof rainshell or paddling jacket. Don't bring a cotton sweatshirt and a windbreaker; cotton is worthless when wet and won't work for on-river insulation and you need something waterproof over your fleece.

On hot days you will want clothing that dries quickly (nylon shorts and bathing suits) and something to shield you from the sun, (a high-tech SPF long-sleeved shirt, an old cotton dress shirt and maybe even lightweight long pants or capris).

On your feet you will want shoes that stay on if you go for a swim and are comfortable for hiking. Sport sandals with heel straps (Tevas, Chacos) work well, (buckles are better than velcro), as do river shoes from Astral. Old running shoes work well and are easy to find. Neoprene, wool or fleece socks will add a bit of insulation. Wetsuit booties work but can be a bit clammy after a full day.

In camp you will want practical walking/hiking shoes, (flip-flops or trail/running shoes), and versatile clothing, (T-shirts, warm shirts, shorts, jeans or sweats, extra fleece, etc). Cotton is o.k. for camp stuff, but because it is worthless for keeping you warm on the river, many people bring two sets of fleece - one for the river and one for camp.

How to pack

Camp items will go in a watertight dunnage bag provided by ARTA, (one per person). These are generally not accessible during the day. The bags are roughly 17 inches in diameter and 24 inches tall, (the size of a large duffel bag; plenty big, but you should try to limit all of your gear to about 25 pounds). Plastic garbage bags, zip-locks, stuff sacks, and pillow cases are good for keeping track of small and/or wet things inside your bigger dry bag. Tents will be packed in a separate, communal dry bag.

River items will go in a communal dry-bag provided by ARTA. You'll be able to bring extra fleece, rain gear, etc. with you on the river and have it handy during the day. If you have an expensive camera or other things that must stay dry we recommend a Pelican Box which can be found online and at outdoor stores. If you want to bring your cell phone to use as a camera, please get a sturdy waterproof case.

How to find it

Buy it: Local mountaineering or sporting goods stores should have everything you need. Great selections of river gear are also available on-line through NRS and REI.

Rent it: We have good equipment available to rent. Reserve and pay for it in advance, pick it up at the pre-trip meeting, leave it behind when you're done. Simple.

Sleep Kits (polarguard bag, liner, self-inflating pad & tarp) are \$40 for the school.

Tents (two-person, free-standing, comfortable) are also about \$40 for the school.

Drysuits can be rented from Pacific River Supply, 510-223-3675 or www.pacificriversupply.com