

Selway River



5 or 6 day rafting trip

5

best things about the Selway

- Unparalleled solitude
- Challenging & energizing rapids
- World-class trout fishing
- Beautiful, crystal-clear water
- Layover day!

SPECIFICS

Length in days: 5

Length in miles: 47

Overall difficulty: IV

Highest difficulty (#): IV+ (4)

Rapids/day: ~12

Gradient: 28 feet/mile

Signature Rapids:

Moose Juice

Types of boats:

Oar and paddle rafts

Minimum recommended age: 12

Rapids:	★★★★★
Scenery:	★★★★★+
Wilderness:	★★★★★+
Swimming:	★★★
Hiking:	★★★★★
Campsites:	★★★★★
Wildlife:	★★★★★
Fishing:	★★★★★+

5

best things about ARTA

- Friendly, fun & gracious guides
- Active, engaging & informal style
- Steadfast commitment to safety

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

We donate our profits back to protecting the environment



A rare piece of the untouched west

The Selway River begins its journey high in the Bitterroot Mountains near the Idaho-Montana border. Heading north into the rugged Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness Area, the river travels through isolated and primitive country before its confluence with the Lochsa River near Lowell. Our trips cover 47 miles between Paradise Guard Station and Selway Falls in the heart of the Wilderness Area, offering a wilderness river experience with few equals.

The Selway is a steep, free-flowing river in a geographically compact drainage basin and has a wide range of flows. Rapids vary from long, technical rock gardens to large, crashing wave trains. The nine mile stretch of nearly continuous rapids below the confluence with Moose Creek earns the river its deserved reputation as one of the best whitewater runs in the United States. Between rapids, the river flows through quiet pools and stretches of crystal clear water over a mosaic of colorful rocks.

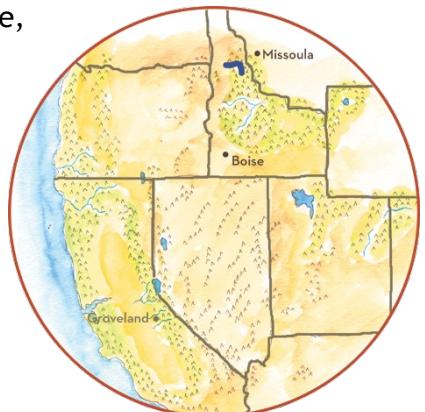
Whitewater, however, is only one of the many appealing features of the trip. We will have time to hike, fish, swim, and enjoy the many fascinating natural elements of the canyon. The Selway was one of the original rivers to be protected in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System, and the Forest Service manages it in a highly primitive condition.

Only one group, with a maximum of 16 people, is allowed to launch each day. Few people are able to float this wild and pristine stretch of river, and we come away from each trip with a new appreciation for this wonderful remnant of the unspoiled west.

"I treasured feeling as though we were the only group in the magnificent alpine wilderness. It was so cosmic to paddle with all the butterflies and birdies around us.

What a gorgeous, gorgeous place"

Karen Raasch



Selway ~ logistics

5 or 6 day rafting trip



Meeting Place

DoubleTree Missoula Edgewater
100 Madison St. Missoula, MT
406/728-3100

Meeting Time

8:00 pm the day before your launch date.

Return Time

5:00 pm on the last day of your trip.

Pre-trip checklist

- **Complete on-line registration**
(follow the directions and link that came with your original reservation)
- **Reserve pre- & post-trip lodging**
(most people stay at The DoubleTree; options are listed to the right).
- **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

- Transportation from Missoula to the river before the trip and from the river back to Missoula after the trip.
- Friendly, entertaining and professional guide service.
- All meals from lunch on the first day to lunch on the last day.
- All camping gear (freshly laundered sleeping bag, liner, self-inflating pad, two-person tent).
- Waterproof bags, lifejackets, and other specialized river touring equipment for the trip.
- Wetsuits and splash jackets when necessary.
- Camp chair, plate, eating utensils and mug.
- All taxes and government access fees.

What you are responsible for

- Transportation to and from Missoula
- Meals and lodging before and after.
- Personal clothing and toiletries (see Equipment page).
- Soda, wine, alcoholic beverages (see Details page).
- Guide gratuities (see Details page).

Where and when to meet

We will meet you at 8:00 pm the evening before the trip begins at the DoubleTree Edgewater in Missoula. The DoubleTree is along the Clark Fork River and has courtesy airport van service. At the pre-trip meeting we will give you your waterproof bags, go over equipment and packing information and answer any last-minute questions.

How to get there

The trip will begin and end in Missoula, Montana.

FLYING: Alaska/Horizon, United and Delta have service into Missoula. Try to arrange your arrival flights to make the 8:00 pm pre-trip meeting and we recommend making your departure flight for the day AFTER your trip concludes. Arrival time back in Missoula is usually around 5:00 pm, but could be later; flying out in the morning will give you added peace of mind at the end of the trip.

DRIVING: The Doubletree is in downtown Missoula just across the Madison Street Bridge from the University of Montana. You may leave your vehicle at the Doubletree during the trip.

Where to stay

Lodging in Missoula is good at the DoubleTree (406/728-3100, tell them you're with ARTA), as well as the nearby Holiday Inn Downtown (406/721-8550) and Holiday Inn Express (406/549-7600).

Itinerary

Day 1: We will meet at the Doubletree early in the morning and be transported by bus to the launch site at Paradise Guard Station, (2-3 hours). Or to the airstrip outside of Hamilton (1.5 hours) and fly into the canyon. After a thorough safety briefing, we will launch and run a handful of great rapids, including Galloping Gertie, Washer Woman, and Cougar Bluff, before arriving at our first night's camp.

Day 2: A full day carries us 10-12 miles downriver through major rapids at Goat Creek, Pettibone, and Ham before arriving at the beautiful campsite opposite Moose Creek. We will stop during the day for a picnic lunch and maybe to explore a side stream.

Day 3: The third day of the trip is usually a "layover day" which is spent off the river enjoying the Selway's many other attractions. You can take a strenuous hike to a fire lookout, hike along the river to scout the following day's rapids, stroll up scenic Moose Creek, fish, relax in camp, or any combination of these.

Day 4: Between Moose Creek and Jims Creek, the Selway earns its reputation as one of the premier whitewater rivers in the world. We will run over 14 major rapids, including Double Drop, Ladle, Little Niagra and Wolf Creek, during this intense, 12 mile day.

Day 5: On the last day of the trip we will float a shorter stretch to our take-out at Race Creek, just above Selway Falls. After lunch at take-out, we will be transported back to the Doubletree in Missoula (3 hours).

Other things to do in the area

Within a day's drive of Missoula are Glacier, Yellowstone, and Grand Teton National Parks as well as the Gallatin, Madison and Yellowstone rivers and some great fly-fishing.

Selway ~ details

5 or 6 day rafting trip

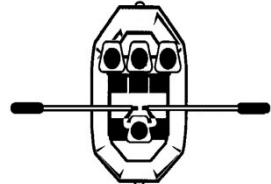


Types of boats

On the Selway we usually have two types of boats in which to ride:



Paddle raft is 14 feet long and carries 6 guests who actively paddle through the rapids and down the river. Everyone has a paddle, sits on the outer tube of the raft, and follows the instructions of the paddle captain who sits in the back.



Oar rafts are 18 feet long, carry all of the overnight gear and up to 4 guests. They are rowed by a guide using oars attached to a metal frame. Guests ride in the front, hang on through the rapids and relax in the calm stretches.

Please note that we can not guarantee space in paddle raft. If there are more people who want to paddle than there are spaces, we will rotate so that everyone gets a chance to participate. Under certain conditions, we may replace the paddle raft with an oar-paddle combination (hybrid) raft that provides superior precision. On a typical 12 person Selway trip we have 3 oar rafts and 1 paddle raft.

Meals

ARTA meals are well-balanced and consist of high quality ingredients with fresh meats, fruits, vegetables, and breads. Guides double as camp chefs and the menu includes a wide variety of dishes. Lunches are served riverside and vary from deli spreads to salads to wraps. Dinners and breakfasts are hearty and healthy and often include a tasty Dutch Oven baked treat. If you have any specific dietary requirements or are celebrating a special event during the trip, please let us know in advance.

Drinks

We provide water, lemonade and fruit juice during the day and juice, 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, (beer & soda in cans, wine in bags/boxes or plastic bottles and liquor in plastic bottles).

Camping

Camping will be at beautiful riverside beaches or flat benches along the river with spectacular views of the canyon. Our guides will set up a central area with chairs, a snack and beverage area, and a complete kitchen. You will pick out a spot nearby to pitch your tent or lay out your sleeping bag (our guides are happy to help). Camp activities vary from hiking and exploring the area, to relaxing along the river with a good book, to playing "koob" (you will learn). If you enjoy helping out in camp, you are welcome to pitch in as much as you want. A portable toilet will be set up away from camp. "The Groover", a sturdy metal box with a comfortable toilet seat and minimal odor, and a hand-wash station will be set up in an isolated (and usually beautiful) location; going to the bathroom in the wilderness is surprisingly pleasant.

Weather

The weather in the mountains of Idaho is difficult to predict; we have encountered heatwaves in June and hailstorms in July, so please read the equipment list and come prepared for a variety of conditions. Summer high temperatures usually range between 75 and 90 degrees, cooling off to the 40's and 50's at night. June trips can be 10 degrees cooler. Rain, usually in the form of thundershowers, can be expected at any time and good rain protection is essential. The water temperature is a chilly 45 to 55 degrees.

Fishing

Fishing for cutthroat and rainbow trout is excellent in the Selway. The fishing is usually best in July, after the high water period. A light-weight fly or spinning outfit works best, and all rods should be protected in a sturdy case. Effective flies include Caddis, Grasshoppers, and Stimulators and small trout spinners work well. The Selway is a catch and release river so only single, barbless hooks are permitted, and fish caught in the river must be released. An Idaho fishing license is required and can be purchased on-line at www.fishandgame.idaho.gov.

Suggested Reading

We will have a communal library on the trip with lots of reference material and maps. For pre-trip reading, *Idaho Loners* (Conley) has some great stories about Idaho's odd hermits, including the tale of William Moreland, the Ridgerunner of the Selway. Lewis and Clark passed through this part of Idaho, so *Undaunted Courage* (Ambrose) is fun to read before or during the trip.

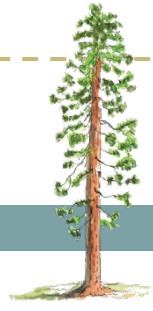
Tipping

If you truly enjoy your trip, tipping is a great way to show your appreciation. Tipping is optional and personal, but since a lot of people ask, a customary amount is between 10 and 15 percent of the trip cost. Tips can be given to the Lead Guide who will share them with the entire crew. And the entire crew will appreciate them and put them to good use. (And thank you.)



Selway ~ equipment

5 or 6 day rafting trip



Get ready!

One of the joys of life on the river is how simple it is. We will be carrying everything we need into the wilderness with us and leaving a lot of stuff behind; bringing the proper gear will make your trip much more enjoyable. The basic rule of packing is: **the right stuff, not more stuff**. One synthetic fleece pullover is much more compact and versatile than six cotton sweatshirts; a good raincoat is better than twenty ponchos. You should be able to find most of the gear you need in your closet, garage or neighbor's basement and what you can't find or borrow, you can rent from us. Your guides will help you make last-minute decisions at the pre-trip meeting, but please feel free to call us if you have any questions as you go through this list; we want you to have the best trip possible.

PERSONAL EQUIPMENT LIST

This list has everything we can think of for June AND July trips.

You can adjust it to fit your departure date (more and thicker fleece on June trips), but you probably shouldn't skip anything.

CAMP ITEMS:

- Your favorite pillow (an extra pillow-case is handy for organizing stuff in your bag)
- 2 complete changes of clothing (versatile pants and shirts, cotton is fine - something exciting for dinner is welcome!)
- Extra swimsuit or shorts and T-shirts for on the river and in camp
- 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)
- 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)
- Rain gear, (can double as on-river gear); top is essential, bottoms are advised before July 1
- Small flashlight with extra batteries, (headlamps are great)
- Book, sketch pad, journal, etc.
- Sarong (very versatile)
- A small day backpack to carry water and snacks for the optional layover hike.

WHAT YOU NEED TO BRING

RIVER ITEMS:

- 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 - women often prefer to wear shorts over their swimsuits)
- Polypropylene pile or synthetic fleece top (**essential**)
- Polypropylene pile or synthetic fleece pants (encouraged)
- 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)

OPTIONAL ITEMS:

- 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)
- Beer, wine, liquor, or soda in unbreakable containers, (cans or plastic bottles). We will try to keep it cold
- Fishing gear, (compact, lightweight, rods protected in a case)
- 1 or 2 plastic garbage bags & gallon size zip-lock bags for organizing gear

WHAT WE WILL PROVIDE

- Camp chair
- Plates, eating utensils and mug
- Waterproof splash jacket
- Neoprene wetsuit (if necessary)

*We will bring 1 tent for one and two person reservations; 2 tents for three and four person reservations; 3 tents for five and six person reservations, etc. Please let us know if you need alternative tent space or if you prefer to bring your own tent.

Underlined items are the preferred choice of our professional river guides!
PLEASE DO NOT BRING: Valuable jewelry, radios, guns, or any irreplaceable items!

Extra luggage can be stored at The Doubletree Inn during the trip.

Selway ~ life on the river

5 or 6 day rafting trip



Professional Tips

Our **dry-bags** are great for keeping things dry but are somewhat awkward for packing and living out of, (they are tall and narrow with a small opening at the top). Compact sleeping bags are much more convenient, and small stuff sacks or zip-lock bags are helpful for dividing up your stuff inside the bag.

Our guides say that one of the most versatile things to bring on a trip is a **sarong**. Comfortable and colorful, sarongs get used for quick clothing changes, beach throws, sun screens and dinner celebrations.

Layering your clothing is an effective way to adjust to the daily weather changes that you will encounter. A light polypropylene layer under a heavy fleece top under a rainshell will get you going on the chilliest of mornings and allow you to shed layers as the day warms up.

"Fleece" is a generic term for a spun, polyester fabric developed for outdoor use. It is thick and fluffy and does not absorb water, making it ideal insulation on a river trip. It is commonly called Polartec or Polarfleece. "Polypropylene" is a thinner, stretchier, woven variation used predominately for long underwear. Any polypropylene long underwear will work; heavy-weight is the most versatile.



A day on the river

One of the joys of our trips is their pace; we're going to encourage you to leave your watch behind and find the natural rhythm of life on the river. Each day is different and will be adjusted to fit the interests of the group but every day will start with our revered "COFFEE!" call, an invitation to rise and shine and join us for hot drinks and warm conversation. A hearty breakfast follows before we break camp, load the rafts, discuss options, and plan the day's itinerary. Options may include a hike, a visit to an historical site, or a dip in an idyllic swimming hole (or all three). We'll stop for a picnic lunch when we get hungry then head downriver for more adventure. All day, we'll tell you about the upcoming rapids so that you can find yourself in the proper type of boat. Typically, we're off the river in the late afternoon, leaving time in camp for games, naps, hikes, swims, fishing and all kinds of other activities. Appetizers are served at the perfect time and dinner is usually ready after the heat of the day subsides and enjoyed in our natural riverside dining room. Nightfall in the canyon is magical and we'll enjoy it for as long as we can before heading to bed and falling asleep to visions of the river and sounds from the canyon.

How to dress

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 or an old lightweight cotton dress shirt and maybe even lightweight long pants or capris). Also, a brimmed hat and a bandana will help you stay cool.

On cool days you will want a thick, synthetic fleece top, (pullovers are best; "polartec" or similar). You may also want fleece pants or polypropylene long underwear bottoms and rainpants, particularly in June. Don't bring a cotton sweatshirt and windpants; cotton is worthless when wet and won't work for on-river insulation and you need something waterproof over your fleece.

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). 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 on the river.

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, one for camp - and have a backup in case one gets drenched. Good raingear for camp is essential.

How to pack

We will provide you with three waterproof bags for your gear.

At the pre-trip meeting, you will get a waterproof duffel bag for your personal items. Each bag is about 13 inches in diameter and 27 inches long, (the size of a medium duffel bag). Garbage bags and small zip-lock bags are helpful for keeping things organized and dry in your bag. There is plenty of room for everything on the equipment list, but please try to limit your gear to 20 pounds.

At the launch site, you will get a waterproof bag with your tent and sleeping bag in it as well as a small watertight day bag for anything you want to keep handy during the day, (rain gear, fleece, sunblock, etc). If you want to bring your cell phone to use as a camera, please get a sturdy waterproof case such as an Otter Box or an EscapeCapsule)