

of the AMERICAN RIVER

SATURDAY DINNER AND CAMPFIRE

Saturday evening, we have a pot-luck dinner with barbecue, salads, and whatever else people bring along. Of course, beer or wine, as needed. We'll supply barbecue grill, propane stove, coolers, tables, lanterns, firewood, and cooking gear. The unwritten rule is that guides, who have been "working" all day, do not have to cook dinner or clean up. (Good try.) Dinner is a shared and cooperative event. There may be music, horseshoes or frisbee playing, campfire stories and lies, and plenty of bad jokes and a fun sing-along. Sleeping is in tents or not, as preferred; mosquitoes will be mild, but available. Evenings will be warm and dry. The sky will be filled with stars.

Camp Lotus is a culture unto itself! The site is heavily wooded, so there is plenty of room for privacy among the crowds. The place overflows with rafts, canoes, kayaks, inner tubes, and other water craft. In the evening, there are barbecues, groups singing, fishermen, volleyball, and lots of laughing, lounging, tired folks. There is abundant drinking water by each campsite, and again, (in case you care!) inside toilets and hot (or in the evenings, warm!) showers! Eeeehah.

SUNDAY SCHEDULE. THE CHILI BAR RUN

For Sunday breakfast, we do a traditional Francisco's Famous Burrito Breakfast Spectacular, which has multiple virtues of using up a lot of the leftovers, and being quick, filling, idiosyncratic, and delicious.

Sunday, we do the shorter Chili Bar run, which starts running earlier and is done by early afternoon, giving us time to beat the traffic back home. We drive the boats and gear up to the Chili Bar put-in, and get on the river about 10 a.m., or as soon as the water comes up. This run starts out quickly with the first rapid, (Meatgrinder III+), only 1/2 mile down river, and fairly continuous rapids until we get to the infamous Troublemaker, III+, a riotous ride. We stop for lunch for an hour, and are back at Camp Lotus by 3 p.m. An hour to dry, pack the boats and gear, and we are on our way home by about 4 p.m.

"I liked going down the huge rapids because I now have something to be proud of." — Kristi

ON THE RIVER

You also need:

1. River clothes: swimsuits; light long pants or poly-pros are sometimes preferred; and Tevas, sneakers or river shoes. No hard or golf shoes, avoid cotton if possible.
2. Sunscreen and chapstick, hat with **retainer cord**, long shirt, or other methods of sun protection. Bring two pairs of sunglasses, just in case.
3. Lunch packed in a **plastic container (to prevent crushing** in the dry bag), soft drinks, or a quart of water each, and snacks. **We don't drink booze on the river** (can cause hypothermia and dehydration if you flip and swim), except maybe one beer at lunch and as much as you want at take-out or in the evening. **No glass** containers on the river or in boats, please.
4. Camera if you like, preferably waterproof! Disposable waterproof cameras work quite well on the river. You can also buy photos from Rapid Shooters, who are strategically positioned at the major rapids to get photos of us in action, as we get thrashed in the rapids.
5. When you make a reservation, you will receive a map, a more detailed list of what to bring, including gear, clothes, camp gear, and we will coordinate the Great Saturday Barbecue.

The water will be swimmable; the air hot. There is an indoor chemical toilet at the lunch stops. We will have a dry bag on board for lunches, dry clothes, cameras, pianos or personal effects, and a net bag for drinks. We swim a lot. Depending on the group, water fights are common.

There is a lot of goofing around and just having fun. There are also quiet reflective periods for those serious conversations about the meaning of life, the philosophy of becoming, and the prioritization of finite time in a relatively limited life span, and getting to know each other.

If interested, we also have articles, or for a book about the history and features of the river, it is available from REI or any boating store. (The American River, by the Wilderness Conservancy)



"Two days on the river with this gang was definitely wild, wacky, & wet! What a blast!" — Gary

