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MERCED RIVER TRIP INFORMATION

Welcome to ZEPHYR WHITEWATER EXPEDITIONS and the MERCED RIVER! Although the churning waters of the Merced River do not look particularly "merciful" to today's rafters, it was a different story in 1806, when Lieutenant Gabriel Moraga and his men named the river "Nuestra Senora de La Merced" (Our Lady of Mercy).

The following detailed information and maps are designed to give you a smooth and enjoyable whitewater vacation. If you have any questions about any of the following information, feel free to give our office a call. During periods of high water or inclement weather, it is advisable to call our office to check in 2 days before your trip.

MEETING TIME AND PLACE: NOTE: as of the 2019 rafting season, our meeting location for our Merced River trips has changed. We no longer meet at the Indian Flat RV Park. All trips now meet at the **ZEPHYR WHITEWATER MERCED RIVER PROPERTY**, located at **6940 State Highway 140, Midpines, CA, 95345**. Our property is eight miles from Mariposa, and just across Highway 140 from the Yosemite Bug Rustic Mountain Resort.

Full-Day Trips meet at 9:30 A.M. **sharp!**

Morning 1/2-day Trips meet at 8:00 A.M. **sharp!**

Afternoon 1/2-Day Trips meet at 1:30 P.M. **sharp!**

ONE-DAY TRIP LOGISTICS: Your head guide will meet you at **9:30 AM** the morning of your trip at our staging area. After a brief orientation talk, wet-suits will be passed out, cars locked, and we will set out for a great day on the River. We will raft 16 miles, with a stop for lunch along the way. Depending on water levels (the higher the water, the faster the trip!) we will have you back to your vehicles between 3:30 and 5:30 in the afternoon.

HALF-DAY TRIP LOGISTICS: Morning trips meet at **8:00 A.M.** and return at about 12:30 P.M. Afternoon trips meet at **1:30 P.M.** and return at about 6:00 P.M. Your head guide will meet you at our staging area. After a brief orientation talk, wet-suits will be passed out (if needed), and we will board our bus for the drive to put-in. We will raft 11 miles, ending at Briceburg where you will board our shuttle for the short drive back to your car. LUNCH IS NOT PROVIDED ON 1/2-day trips, only beverages. Our Late Season 1/2-day trips will raft the 5.5-mile Gorge section.

DIRECTIONS: All trips meet at the **ZEPHYR WHITEWATER MERCED RIVER PROPERTY**, located at **6940 State Highway 140, Midpines, CA, 95345**.

Please note that the Highways in and around Yosemite can be confusing and summer traffic can add driving time to the estimates below. It is important that you key into where you are staying, and are clear on your driving directions. It is your responsibility to get to our meeting location ON TIME. If you are late, you will miss your trip and there are NO refunds.

FROM YOSEMITE VALLEY: Take the Highway 140 Exit out of Yosemite Valley heading west toward Mariposa and follow the Merced River downstream. Continue traveling west on Highway 140 towards Midpines. As you pass the turnoff for the Yosemite Bug Rustic Mountain Resort, begin looking for our signs. Our driveway is on the left-hand side of the highway, on the outskirts of the town of Midpines. Driving time from the Yosemite Valley floor is about 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes, depending on traffic.

FROM MARIPOSA: Take Highway 140 toward Yosemite Valley, passing through the small town of Midpines. Stay on Highway 140, and about a mile past Midpines, begin looking for our signs on the right. Our driveway is on the right-hand side of the highway, right next to the large CalTrans illuminated sign. Driving time from Mariposa is about 15 to 20 minutes depending on traffic.

FROM THE GROVELAND AREA: Proceed to Coulterville on Highway 49. From Coulterville, proceed south on Highway 49 to Mariposa. Then, follow the "FROM MARIPOSA" directions above. Driving time from Groveland is about 1 hour and 20 minutes, depending on traffic.

FROM TENAYA LODGE: Take Highway 41 South to Oakhurst. From Oakhurst, take Highway 49 North to MARIPOSA (about 30 minutes), and follow the "FROM MARIPOSA" directions above. Driving time from Tenaya Lodge/Fish Camp is about 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 hour and 30 minutes, depending on traffic.

FROM MAMMOTH / MONO LAKE: Take TIOGA PASS (Highway 120) west towards Yosemite Valley. When you reach the junction with the North/South Highway 120, turn left (South) and head towards Yosemite Valley. Proceed through the tunnels, dropping into the Merced River canyon. You will come to the junction of Highway 140. Turn right on Highway 140, following the Merced River downstream. Continue traveling west on Highway 140 towards Midpines. As you pass the turnoff for the Yosemite Bug Rustic Mountain Resort, begin looking for our signs. Our driveway is on the left-hand side of the highway, on the outskirts of the town of Midpines. Driving time from Mammoth/Mono Lake is about 4 hours to 4 hours and 30 minutes, depending on traffic.

IF YOU ARE COMING FROM SAN FRANCISCO OR LOS ANGELES, please use the town of MARIPOSA as a destination marker and then follow "FROM MARIPOSA" directions above.

MEALS: One day trips include a full lunch served on the river, as well as cold beverages at the end of the day. No alcohol of any kind is allowed during the day. Half-day trips do not include lunch. Please bring a water bottle with you on the raft.

WET SUITS: For trips through late May or so (depending on winter snowpack), wet-suits are a must. In spring, the water is high and cold, and we want you to be comfortable. Wet-suits are provided by Zephyr at no charge. A nylon swimsuit (or other thin material suit) should be worn underneath the wet-suit.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: For low-cost traveler's insurance, call (800) 937-1387 or (925) 932-1387. (Mon-Fri, 8:30 am-5:00 pm, PST)

WHAT TO BRING:

- Shorts / Swimsuit
- T-Shirt or long-sleeve shirt (for sun protection)
- Tennis shoes or sport sandals with heel strap (required to be worn in the boats) No flip-flops!
- Sunglasses with tie-on
- Baseball-style hat with brim (to wear underneath your helmet)
- Suntan Lotion and/or sunscreen
- Water bottle

TIPPING: We are frequently asked whether it is appropriate to tip guides. While our guides are well compensated for their skills, if you feel your trip was exceptional, or that your guide or guides went out of their way to make the quality of your experience a notch above the norm, tipping is a nice way of saying thank-you.

OVERNIGHT ACCOMMODATIONS: We recommend arriving in the area the night before your trip.

Accommodations in the MARIPOSA, MIDPINES, and EL PORTAL area:

- [Yosemite Bug Hostel](#) - A unique low-cost hostel with camping, dorm type rooms, private rooms, and a great restaurant, located just across Highway 140 from our meeting spot. Located in Midpines, only 8 miles from Mariposa on the way to Yosemite. (866) 826-7108
- [AutoCamp Yosemite](#) Only 5 minutes from our meeting spot, offering "glamping" in cabins and Airstream trailers. (888) 405-7553
- [Mariposa Lodge](#) - (209) 966-3607
- [Mother Lode Lodge](#) - (209) 966-2521
- [Miners Inn Motel](#) - (209) 742-7777
- [Quality Inn Yosemite Valley Gateway](#) - (209) 966-4344
- [Best Western Yosemite Way Station](#) - (209) 966-7545 (800) 321-5261
- [Yosemite Motels](#) - a series of 6 great motels in the Yosemite area.
- [Cedar Lodge](#) - (209) 379-2612 (800) 321-5261

- [Yosemite View Lodge](#) - (209) 379-2681 (800) 321-5261

For lodging between GROVELAND and YOSEMITE:

- [Evergreen Lodge](#) is located just north of Yosemite off Highway 120, and offers a rustic, historical stay in its recently remodeled cabins. The food is excellent and the ambiance relaxing. Very close to Hetch Hetchy reservoir.
- [Rush Creek Lodge](#) provides a relaxed, yet sophisticated experience in a hillside woodland setting at the Highway 120 West entrance to Yosemite National Park.

If you plan on staying in the OAKHURST or FISHCAMP areas:

- [Narrow Gauge Inn](#) in Fishcamp, charming and great food. For reservations, call (888) 644-9050.
- [Tenaya Lodge](#), also in Fishcamp, is a wonderful resort hotel with great restaurants and both indoor and outdoor pools.
- [Chateau du Sureau](#) is a 5 star, 5 diamond inn near Oakhurst.
- [Hounds Tooth Inn](#) is an excellent Bed and Breakfast near Oakhurst and the Southern entrance to Yosemite.
- [Homestead Cottages](#) offers rest and relaxation near Oakhurst.
- [Sierra Mountain Lodge](#) B&B is located in Ahwahnee, just 10 minutes from Oakhurst.
- [Yosemite Southgate Hotel](#) and Suites is located in the heart of Oakhurst.

For vacation home rentals inside YOSEMITE:

- [Yosemite Vacation Homes](#) is an excellent link.
- [Yosemite Scenic Wonders](#) provides cabin, home, and condominium rentals inside historic Yosemite.
- [Redwoods in Yosemite](#) offers year-round vacation home rentals.

Bed and breakfast inns:

- [Indian Peak Ranch Mountain Top Hideaway](#) is an excellent choice just south of Mariposa on 122 beautiful acres.
- [Little Valley Inn](#) also in Mariposa is close to restaurants and services.

Campgrounds:

- [Indian Flat Campground](#)
- [Yosemite](#) - a list of campgrounds inside Yosemite Valley. Yosemite Valley is 40 minutes from our meeting spot.
- [Merced River camping map](#) for BLM and USFS camp sites right on the river.

RESPONSIBILITY

In over 45 years of operation, ZEPHYR has maintained an excellent safety record. However, river trip(s) do involve risk, accidents can occur, and baggage can be lost. We assume no responsibility for injury to trip members, loss of personal baggage, damage to cameras or other equipment or loss of time or expense incurred. All trip members are required to sign a liability release and assumption of risk form prior to trip departure.