

# Desolation Canyon 7 Day Trip



Desolation  
Canyon

## River Trip Information

The Green River through Desolation Canyon is the only river canyon registered as a National Historic Landmark.

The Fremont Indians farmed, hunted and lived here over 700 years ago and left ruins and ancient rock art. In the late 1800's homesteaders, trappers and outlaws shared the area.

The McPherson's befriended Butch Cassidy

and his "Wild Bunch," and their ranch still exists. On this trip, extra time is set aside to explore these ancient sites, ranches and legends.

Today, ranchers and cowboys along the canyon claim to be descendants of these infamous residents. The river borders the Uinta and Ouray Indian reservations, where they still farm and ranch today.

## Sample Itinerary

### Pre-Trip Orientation: 5:00 pm the day

**BEFORE departure:** We will meet at the Sheri Griffith Expeditions Office, located at **2231 South Highway 191 in Moab**. Here you will learn what to expect and prepare for, receive your dry bags, sign Assumption of Risk forms, and get a chance to ask last minute questions

### Day 1

#### **6:30 AM--**Meet at the Moab Airport, **14 Miles north of Moab, on Highway 191.**

Please leave any extra luggage in your car, and leave only your keys with the airport staff. Your car will be safe parked at the airport while you are on the river. We will fly to a Mesa-top above the Green River. Your bags will be loaded into a van or truck and taken to the boats while we take a short hike from the mesa top to the river,

**9:30 am**—After our short hike, we will have a brief safety meeting and then we'll load everyone onto the boats and start our river journey.

**Mid-day**--We will stop for a "Build Your Own" Sandwich Buffet lunch at one of the beaches along the river.

**4:00 pm**—We'll pull over for the evening and set up camp. You will be asked to set up your own tents and sleeping gear while the guides work on setting up the kitchen and "living room" and then start dinner. Once camp is set up, you are welcome to play games, go hiking, or relax.

## Overview

- Orientation: 5:00 pm on the evening prior to departure
- Meet Time: 6:30 am at the Moab Airport
- 7 Full Days: 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
- Launch Point: Sand Wash Ranger Station
- Take-Out: Swasey Beach, near Green River, Utah
- Class II – IV whitewater (water level dependent)
- 84 River Miles
- 50 Named Rapids
- Oarboats, Paddleboats and inflatable kayaks

## The Sheri Griffith River Expeditions Mission:

*Enhance and Enrich People's Lives through Outstanding Outdoor Adventures.*



We'll see so many petroglyphs and ruins on this trip!



## Tips From the Pros:

Packing for a river trip can be daunting. Here are some items that our guides highly recommend:

- Disposable Moist Towelettes
- Small Day Pack or Fanny Pack
- Skirt or Sarong
- Travel Pillow
- Garbage Bag or Stuff Sack—for soiled clothing
- Journal or Notebook with Pen or Pencil
- Duck Tape
- Goggles—If you wear contacts
- Personal Alcohol (Please Limit Glass)

### Other Handy Items:

- Ziplock and Trash Bags
  - Useful for separating personal items such as medications, shampoo, soap, wet items and dirty laundry
- Extra Snacks
  - We Provide snacks throughout the day, but it is a good idea to bring extra snacks for children, for individuals who have snack preferences or for those who are diabetic.
- Wet Wipes
  - Great for washing your face, wiping your hands and cleaning dirt and sand off of personal items.
- Rain Gear
  - Not just for rain! When riding through the rapids, rain gear can provide extra protection and warmth when being splashed by cold water.
- Carabiners
  - Very handy in the outdoors and at home. Easily clip personal items nearby.

## Sample Itinerary (Continued)

### Days 2-7

**7:00 am-** First Coffee Call. Everyone starts working on waking up and then packing up your personal items and breaking camp.

**8:00 am-** Breakfast is served. After breakfast we will finish breaking camp and load the boats.

**10:00 am-** Before we leave for the day, the guides take time to teach you how to enjoy the rapids safely. The guides will re-check the PFDs, and one guide will go over important safety details that will help keep everyone safe as we traverse the whitewater.

**Mid-Day-** We'll stop for a delicious lunch and possibly a hike or two.

**4:00 PM--** Arrive at our evening camp site and set up for the night.

### Days 3-4

\*\*Possible Layover Day at Rock Creek Ranch to visit granaries and petroglyphs. We may take an extended hike up the canyon to see additional historical sites. An extended hike would include a packed lunch, and would be based upon group dynamics and goals.

## Trip Highlights:

- Tabyago Riffle-Petroglyphs and Cowboy Stash
- Turtle Shell Fossil
- Mushroom Rock Petroglyphs
- Flat Canyon Petroglyphs

## What to Bring, What to Wear

### The Essentials

- Rain Jacket and Pants—Not just for rain
- Fleece or Sweatshirt—For cool mornings and evenings
- Water Bottle with Strap or Carabiner
- Sunglasses
- Chums—or other Sunglasses retainer
- Sunscreen—SPF 30 or greater
- Chapstick—SPF 15 or greater
- Hat or Visor
- Hat Clip—to keep you hat from flying or washing away
- Flashlight or Headlamp—extra batteries are good
- T-Shirts or Lightweight Shirts
- Swimsuits—We suggest two piece for women
- Lightweight Pants—Zip-off pants are GREAT!

### Day 7

**3:00 PM—**We will arrive at the Swasey Beach Ramp. The guides will load the boats on the trailers and then we will head back to the Moab airport. We will arrive around 5:30 pm.

\*\*We will motor downstream at different times during the trip so that we can offer the most time available for hiking to the different historical sites along the river.

\*\*This a sample of how each day will go. Weather conditions, hiking time and group dynamic will all contribute to changes in this schedule.

\*\*The take-out and return times are approximate. Water Conditions, weather and other factors may lead to a later or earlier return time.

\*\*Due to current political relations, we cannot offer hikes on Ute Tribal lands which extend River Left for the majority of Desolation and Gray Canyons.

- Rock Creek Ranch and Petroglyphs and Granaries
- 3 Canyon Natural Bridge or Range Creek Ruins
- Coal Creek Dam Site
- Price River Petroglyphs

- Quick Dry Shorts
- Long Sleeve Shirt—to keep the sun and bugs off
- Underwear
- River Sandals—Or other shoes that can get wet
- Sarong—For women AND men
- Toiletry Kit:
  - Toothbrush and Toothpaste
  - Biodegradable Soap and Shampoo
  - Medications—Prescription, and over the counter
  - Comb and/or Brush
  - Small Towel and Washcloth
  - Feminine Hygiene Products
  - Small personal first aid kit



Oarboats and Paddleboats are options on this river stretch, though for this trip, we will also use a motor on one of the boats to help us quickly cover river miles so that we can take more time for hiking to historical sites in Desolation Canyon.

## What to Bring, What to Wear (Continued)

### Highly Recommended Items

- Hiking Shoes and socks
- Moisturizing Lotion
- Waterproof Camera
- Sun Umbrella
- Binoculars
- Books
- Bandanas—prevents PFD Chafe

### Cool Weather Items

- Wool or Fleece Jacket and Pants (2 sets)
- Wool or Fleece Hat
- Extra Wool or Fleece Socks
- Wool Gloves
- Polypropylene Long Underwear
- Neoprene Gloves and Booties
- Extra Shoes
- Extra Set of Warm Clothing for the Evenings

## More Details

### Whitewater

Depending on snow pack and time of year, Green River water levels will vary dramatically, creating diverse rafting conditions. Some rapids are more challenging at high water, while others require greater skill at low water. Different flows have their appeal, and we provide specific watercraft that will make the most of each water level. Desolation Canyon rapids are rated I-III.

### Boats

All of our equipment is top quality, state of the art and carefully maintained and serviced. Our Desolation Canyon Archaeology trips are run with Oarboats. **Oarboats:** These are inflatable rafts (approx. 18 feet in length) with guides that maneuver them with a set of oars secured to a frame in the middle of the raft. We will have a small motor attached to one of the boats that will be used to cover longer flatwater stretches, thus allowing for more hiking and exploring.

### Weather

You can expect warm, sunny, delightful days in Southeastern Utah. In April through June, high temperatures range between 70° and 90°. July and August high temperatures typically range between 90° and 100°, with September and October temperatures ranging between 60° and 70°. The climate here is very dry with little humidity.

### Getting to Moab

Moab, Utah, is located on Highway 191 about 30 miles south of Interstate 70. It is approximately a two hour drive from Grand Junction, Colorado and a four hour drive from Salt Lake City, Utah. Both cities have commercial airports with rental cars and vans as well as shuttle companies.



Desolation Canyon is home to many Ancient Fremont dwellings, granaries and petroglyph panels. We love to see these places, and we encourage our guests to respect the sacredness of these sites and take only pictures, leave only footprints.

## **SAFETY, ASSUMPTION OF RISK AND, INSURANCE:**

We maintain an excellent safety record, since 1971. However, all outdoor experiences involve risk and we all must recognize that accidents or illnesses may occur. We cannot guarantee your safety. **We place final responsibility for your safety firmly on your shoulders where it belongs. You have to pay attention to what you are doing.** Mother Nature controls the water level, the weather and the elements, so there is a risk involved in rafting and camping. Before your trip departs, you will be asked to sign an Assumption of Risk and Release Form. If you have questions regarding this document or would like to see one ahead of time, please feel free to request it. We assume no responsibility for injury to trip members, their personal belongings or, for time and expense incurred. **We strongly recommend Travel Insurance, which covers vacation losses and accidents and provides a refund if you have to cancel your trip.**

### **Time Zones**

**Utah operates on Mountain Standard Time (Note Arizona does not have Day Light Savings time)**



## **Some Final Notes and Details Regarding Your Trip**

### **HEALTH ISSUES**

If you are of an adventurous spirit and in reasonably good health, you should have no problem enjoying any of our trips. It's not necessary to be an athlete to participate in a river expedition. However, it is several hours to the nearest medical center. If you take medication you should bring a good supply and inform your guide of all medication that you are taking. When you meet your guide, you should discretely explain any medical conditions you may have or be concerned about including allergies to bee stings, etc. Each guide carries a first aid kit and will need to know if specific medicines should be stored. It's also helpful to know about other health issues when planning activities for the day. Pregnant women and anyone with heart trouble should have their physician's approval before taking a river trip.

### **Cancellation Policy**

We require full payment to confirm your 1 day rafting trip. Since you have reserved space for which we have a limited number of seats, **our non-refundable policy applies in every instance. There are no exceptions for any reason, so we highly recommend that you purchase Travel Insurance to protect your vacation investment. A link for Travel Insurance is: [www.travelinsure.com/affiliate/selehigh.htm?32219](http://www.travelinsure.com/affiliate/selehigh.htm?32219).**

We make every effort to follow through on our plans. However, we reserve the right to make changes in the itinerary or possibly cancel a trip if necessary including but not limited to weather conditions, water fluctuations, insufficient reservations, changes in international relations, or other factors beyond our control. If cancellation is necessary, your money will be refunded. Our financial liability shall be limited to the amount actually paid and shall not be extended to cover any other costs incurred by the trip member.

### **Photography**

**Generally, when travelling, you'll want to bring all the film, camera batteries and other equipment you will need. If you plan to travel with digital photographic and/or video equipment, make certain to pack the specific charging apparatus for each piece of equipment. We also suggest that you take into account the amount of data storage of each unit when determining the amount (if any) of additional memory cards to pack.**

**Bring a protective sports pouch to protect it from water. Participants will be able to store cameras in a shared "dry box." If you are bringing a variety of lenses, please have a waterproof container of your own. Keep in mind we cannot take responsibility for the safety of your personal property. An old river adage is "don't bring it on a river unless you can afford to lose it."**

**Waterproof/disposable cameras are a great idea.**

### **GRATUITIES**

Guests often ask whether gratuities are appropriate, and in what amount. If you feel your guides have provided an excellent outdoor experience, a gratuity may be left with the trip leader and will be shared among the crew. The customary gratuity is between 15% and 20% of the trip cost. Gratuities can be paid in cash, by check or by credit card.