

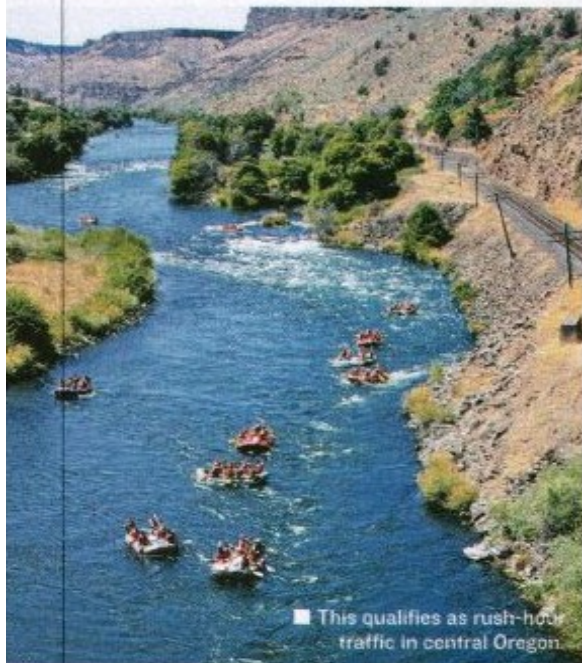
## NOTEBOOK

### » OREGON

**TRIP** Rain Forest and Desert

**DURATION** Four rivers, four days

Pristine rivers churning past old-growth timber and mighty Cascade mountains? In Oregon that's as predictable as flannel shirts, kind bud, and microbrew-swilling socialists. What comes as a bigger surprise here are

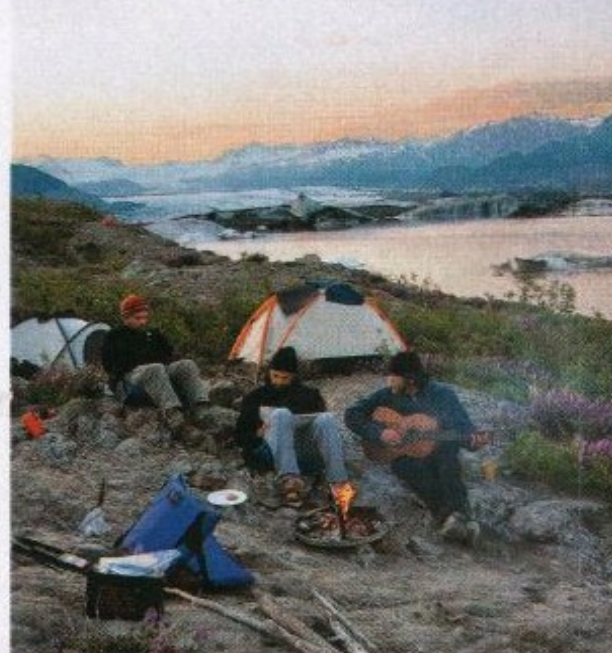


■ This qualifies as rush-hour traffic in central Oregon.

sunny skies, hot summer temps, and the remarkable basalt towers and bluffs that shoulder the rivers running through Oregon's lesser-known high desert. Longtime local river guide Dave Loos helped us plot out an Oregon trip that moves from the tight, technical runs of the McKenzie River in the shady national forests north of Crater Lake to the rapids and sudden descents of the Deschutes River. Then it takes you to the wide-open John Day, at 280 miles the longest undammed river in the Pacific Northwest.

"There's amazing history along the John Day," says Loos. "At several spots you can hike just off the river to see Native American petroglyphs." The river rolls quickly yet gently through the surreal orange and tawny Painted Hills, but in exchange for the lack of adrenaline-pumping rapids there's plentiful smallmouth bass, soft beach pull-outs, and warm nights around the campfire. This leads to the finale of Class IV pool-and-drop rapids in deep woods on the North Umpqua River. And the rapids and sudden descents should be even more reliable this summer than usual. "We've had more than 190 percent of our normal snowpack this year," says Loos with the knowing and slightly insane grin of a veteran river rat. "A lot of these rivers don't have hard dam controls, so with the spring melt we're expecting a banner year" (*from \$525; two and a half hours from Portland, oregonwhitewater.com*).

■ Guitars also make good kindling. Just FYI.



### » SOUTHERN ALASKA

**TRIP** Source to the Sea Expedition

**DURATION** Three rivers, 15 days

There's at least one place in this country where real estate hasn't completely lost its value. With beautiful hanging glaciers and the midnight sun casting pinkish hues on dramatic peaks reaching three miles into the sky, Alaska's backcountry in midsummer is as

desirable as ever — especially to the grizzlies, wolves, moose, sheep, eagles, salmon, and other creatures who populate the wild, mostly uninhabited areas traversed in this epic journey down the Nizina, Chitina, and Copper rivers. The trip starts by bush plane, landing on a gravel bar below the stunning Nizina glacier. Running from its glacial headwaters up to 180 miles (depending on the flow of these massive, braided waterways) to the Copper's sea outlet at Cordova, the Source to the Sea Expedition gives you the rare chance to run a river end to end while taking in stirring and little-seen panoramas across the largest protected wilderness area in the world. Serrated icebergs, 16-foot roller-coaster waves, narrow canyons, pounding rapids, and river flows 10 times as strong as the Colorado through the Grand Canyon characterize the ever-changing river conditions. But this is no mere river-rafting trip — it's also a multisport adventure, with four days off the water reserved for trekking across alpine meadows and tundra to allow you to fully appreciate the expanse of the Wrangell, St. Elias, and Chugach mountain ranges.

“What’s amazing is that the trip goes so quickly from the dry, mountainous climate of the interior to the coastal rain forest near Cordova,” says guide Gaia Marrs. “It’s a highlight of people’s lives, if they manage to pull it off” (\$4,950; about 300 miles from Anchorage, [copperoar.com](http://copperoar.com)).

■ The Child's Glacier make a stunning riverbank on your two-week Alaskan odyssey

