



Trip Planner: Vernal Trips

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Trip Planner

Please use this Trip Planner as a resource for general information on your whitewater adventure. The information enclosed covers most everything you'll need to know before your trip. Of course, if you have questions that are not answered in this packet, we are happy to help! Call us at 800-332-2439 or email us at info@griffithexp.com

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TRIP PREPARATION CHECK LIST

- Purchase Travel Insurance: Sheri Griffith Expeditions has a NO REFUND policy. 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.** Please take some time to visit the following website www.travelinsure.com/affiliate/selecthigh.htm?32219, which contains information about Travel Insurance.
- Trip Forms: Each participant will need to complete the required trip forms. Refer to your confirmation e-mail for details. Forms must be filled out no later than 60 days prior to your trip. If you are reserving your trip within 60 days, please complete the forms immediately. Send them to info@griffithexp.com or fax them to 435-259-2226
- Reserve flights and/or shuttles: Confirm travel arrangements to and from your departure and return cities. Verify with our office that your trip has met minimum numbers prior to booking flights.
- Hotel Reservations: Reserve overnight lodging for the night prior to your trip, if applicable. You may also wish to reserve a room for the night that you return from the river. It is important to make reservations early, as rooms may be limited during peak travel periods. If you want a list of our preferred lodging guide let us know.
- Payments: Final payment is due in our office 45 days prior to your trip (refer to your invoice for final payment date). Please let us know if you would like us to automatically charge your credit card on file when final payment is due.

Getting to Vernal

A green and tree shaded community in an otherwise dry plain, Vernal is an attractive small town with some 8,000 residents. It serves as a good base for visiting nearby Dinosaur National Monument, Flaming Gorge National Recreation Area and the Uinta Mountains. It offers a decent selection of motels and has numerous small restaurants, cafes and fast food joints. It also has a small, well-done prehistory museum, a couple of movie theaters and water slides for the kids.

Vernal is located along Hwys. 191/40 in the northeast corner of Utah. It is southeast of the Uinta Mountains, 20 miles west of Dinosaur National Monument and 35 miles south of Flaming Gorge.

Driving Direction to Vernal

More specific directions visit www.mapquest.com We meet at Best Western Antlers 423 West Main Street Vernal, UT 84078
From **Salt Lake City, UT** (2.5 Hours) – I-80 East to Park City / Turn onto US-40 South and East to Vernal
From **Grand Junction, CO** (3 hours) – US 139 North to Rangely/ US-64 West to Dinosaur/ US-40 West to Jensen and then On to Vernal
From **Denver, CO** (8 hours) – I-70 West toward Grand Junction, CO / US 139 North to Rangely/ US-139 North to Rangely/ US-64 West to Dinosaur/ US-40 West to Vernal

Orientation

The day before your trip we will meet at 6:30 PM at the Best Western Antlers Inn located at 423 West Main Street in Vernal, UT, for a pre-trip meeting. Your trip leader will provide a thorough trip orientation and pass out your waterproof bags so that you can pack your belongings that evening. The trip leader will also reconfirm the meeting time for the following morning and give you an opportunity to ask any last-minute questions.

Weather

You can expect warm, sunny, delightful days in Northeastern Utah. In May through June, high temperatures range between 70° and 85°. July and August high temperatures typically range between 85° and 90°. The climate here is very dry with little humidity and is not oppressively sweltering. Nighttime temperatures can range between 40° and 50°. Other than an occasional rain cloud, there are few overcast days, however, always pack your raingear! No matter the weather, you will find your visit to be fascinating and unforgettable

	Average Temperatures ~Vernal, Utah							
	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT
Avg High	48°	62°	72°	84°	90°	87°	77°	64°
Avg Low	22°	30°	38°	47°	54°	51°	42°	31°
Mean	30°	47°	56°	65°	72°	68°	60°	47°
Avg Precip	0.7 in	0.8 in	0.9 in	0.8 in	0.5 in	0.6 in	0.9 in	1.1 in

Degrees in Fahrenheit

Water Levels

The Yampa River:

The flow of the Yampa River is generally unregulated. The river can reach flows considered extreme during spring runoff in years when the high country feeding the watershed has received a plentiful snowpack. Peak run-off usually occurs between mid-May and mid-June, but can vary widely from early May and into July. High water trips equate to a more intense whitewater experience and a high level of physical fitness is recommended. Water temperatures are coldest during the high water period and rain gear and warm synthetic clothing will be required.

The Gates of Lodore:

The Flaming Gorge Dam regulates the flow of the Green River through the Gates of Lodore. It is very consistent throughout the year and has little variation.

Packing List

*Available in our Travelers Store or by phone (800) 332-2439

***We provide wetsuits when conditions require them

What to pack:

To maximize the versatility of your travel wardrobe, we recommend packing lightweight clothing that can be worn in layers and one warm sweater or fleece jacket. Casual clothing that is comfortable and practical is appropriate for travel in the American Southwest. All hotels and restaurants are accustomed to informally dressed travellers, and in camp, dress is entirely casual.

It is especially important that you pack clothing that you do not mind getting wet. Synthetic fabrics have the advantage of being quick to dry because they don't retain water. Pile and fleece made of polyester or nylon work well as insulation. Cotton sweatshirts and jeans are not recommended as river wear as they are usually made of heavier fabric and take a long time to dry when wet.

If you wear prescription glasses or contact lenses, we recommend that you bring an extra pair. A strap for your glasses is essential. If you wear contact lenses, wrap around sunglasses are recommended, as are goggles during the rapids.

ESSENTIAL ITEMS

- Rain jacket & pants** * ~ thunderstorms in the desert are *very* unpredictable!
- Fleece or sweatshirt** ~ nights & mornings are cool; also great under raingear
- Water bottle w/ strap or carabiner** *
- Sunglasses** with a retainer *(2 pairs)
- Sunscreen ~ SPF 15 or greater** * ~ a must!
- Lip moisturizer ~ SPF 15 or greater** *
- 2 Hat or visor** with hat clip to attach to life jacket or shirt *
- Flashlight * or headlamp**
- T-shirts *(one per day)**
- 2 Swimsuits/sports bras** ~ ladies—a sports top & swim shorts are very convenient!
- 1 pair Lightweight pants** ~ zip-off, convertible pants are great—they're 2 in 1 and save space when packing your dry bag
- 2 pairs Quick dry shorts** ~ swimsuit and shorts all in one!
- Long sleeve cotton shirt** ~ provides sun and insect protection
- Underwear**
- River sandals** or shoes that can get wet, will dry

quickly, and will not slip off of your feet

HIGHLY RECOMMENDED ITEMS

- Hiking shoes & socks** ~ for hiking and wearing around camp
- Moisturizing lotion ~ Aloe Vera**
- Waterproof camera ***
- Sun umbrella ~ if sensitive to sun
- Binoculars ~ for viewing wildlife
- Books ~ for relaxing in the evening
- Cash for Gratuities
- Toiletry Kit:**
 - Tooth brush & tooth paste
 - Biodegradable soap & shampoo
 - Feminine hygiene products
 - Small pack of tissue
 - Medications ~ prescription and non-prescription
 - Comb and/or brush
 - Small towel and washcloth

TIPS FROM THE PROS (Our Guides)

- Disposable moist towelettes**
- Small day or fanny pack**
- Ziploc bags ~ for extra water protection**
- Sarong * ~ 101 uses!**
- Travel pillow**
- Garbage bag or stuff sack** ~ keeps wet & dry clothes/items separate
- Extra snacks** ~ for individuals with particular tastes or who may be diabetic—**great for kids too!**
- Personal sodas / juices / alcohol** (no glass)
- Journal or notebook** with pen / pencil
- Duct tape** ~ great for quick repairs of almost anything—sandals, sunglasses, luggage, you name it!
- A few **clothespins** and **small piece of rope** for drying clothes
- Goggles** ~ for individuals who wear contact lenses
- Area guide or River Map ***

NOTES ON PACKING ~ Pack clothing that you will not mind getting wet and dirty. Fast drying, durable, comfortable clothing is best for rafting. Cotton is recommended for hot weather and synthetic polypropylene or wool clothes for cool weather.

Packing Tips

Waterproof Bags:

Each guest will get two waterproof dry bays at orientation. The overnight bag is evening items goes into a 20" x 20" x 27" dry bag.

Your sleeping bag will come already packed in this bag also. You may pack in an athletic bag for easier access. You will also receive a day bag which are 9.5" Dia x 20" H

Handy Items

Ziploc and trash bags are very useful for separating personal items in your dry bag such as medications, shampoo, soap, wet items, and dirty laundry. Wet wipes are great for washing your face, wiping your hands, and cleaning sand or dirt off of personal belongings. Pack a few clothespins and rope to dry clothes while on the river. Remember, on the river it is better to have it and not need it than to need it and not have it! All of these items *can* be invaluable and do not take up much space or add much weight to your luggage.

Carabineers

Carabineers are very handy in the outdoors as well as back home. Their oval shape and simple gate mechanism allow you to easily clip your water bottle, camera, hat ~ just about anything ~ nearby.

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.

Beverages

Each boat has an ice cooler for "personal" drinks such as soda, juice, beer, wine, etc. Since there are no stores along the river, we recommend bringing more than you anticipate needing. Please do not bring glass. SGE provides water, available to you all day long, with lemonade, Gatorade, and iced tea mixes. We also provide two sodas per person, per day.

Vehicles and Valuables

You can leave your vehicle at the Best Western Antlers if you are staying there. We recommend that you leave your valuables at home. For personal items like wallets, purses, keys, and cell phones, we have a locked safe area for storage while you are on the river.

Extra Luggage

If you do have extra luggage that you need to store, we can store it at the Best Western Antlers.

Dress Up Night

Traditionally, this last night is a "Dress Up" night. Anything goes, from formal wear to clown outfits with floppy hats. Guests are not required to participate, but are welcome to use their imagination and help celebrate an amazing trip.

COOL WEATHER ITEMS (March, April, May, September October & November)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra set of wool or fleece jacket & pants | <input type="checkbox"/> Neoprene gloves & booties |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Extra wool or fleece socks | <input type="checkbox"/> Dry suit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wool gloves | <input type="checkbox"/> Wetsuit *** |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wool or fleece hat | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra shoes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Polypropylene long underwear | <input type="checkbox"/> Extra set of warm clothes for evening |

More Trip Details

Vernal Stores

The grocery store is open late so you can pick up any last minute items you may have forgotten. The liquor store is open from 11 AM to 9 PM in the summer (May through October). The bookstores in town carry an excellent assortment of books about the rivers and the Colorado Plateau.

Restaurants

There are a few restaurants in Vernal to choose from that accommodate various culinary tastes. Most are open late in the evening and early in the morning. Our guest services staff can help assist you with what restaurants are closest to your hotel.

Time Zones

Utah operates on Mountain Standard Time (Please note that Arizona does not have Day Light Savings time)

At 9:00 am in Utah, it is:

- 11:00 am the same day in New York – Eastern Standard Time
- 10:00 am the same day in Chicago – Central Standard Time
- 8:00 am the same day in Los Angeles – Pacific Standard Time

Photography

Generally, when travelling, you'll want to bring all the film, camera batteries and other equipment you will need, as supplies may be intermittent. 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 discs 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.

Sheri Griffith Expeditions provides a camera to the guides to photograph the trip. A CD can be purchased at the end of the trip for \$40. If you do not want to risk your camera you are more than welcome to take photos with ours.

River Camping

The private camps in which you'll stay are mobile-tented river camps. They are set up to host you and your fellow travellers exclusively. After you depart, the entire camp is broken down and the campsite returns to untenanted wilderness again. Many aficionados of the true camping experience vastly prefer mobile camping, which is truer to the traditional, romantic camping atmosphere. You will not only be very comfortable in camp, you will also enjoy absolute privacy in your own pristine corner of the wild. Your guides, camp staff and travelling companions are likely to be the only other people you see.

Camping Equipment

We provide top quality tents that sleep two or three persons comfortably. The tents used on the rafting programs are large enough to stand-up in (10' x 10' x 6'). We also provide comfortable sleeping bags and pads. To keep tents cool and airy there are two "doors" and a mesh, open top with a nylon rain fly. Sleeping bags are cozy and professionally laundered prior to each trip.

Food and Drink

Riverside meals, prepared and served by camp staff trained in outdoor cuisine, are delicious and varied. Meals are served buffet style. You may bring your own beer, wine or hard liquor and we will be happy to store it and keep it chilled. Please avoid bringing glass. Bring beer in aluminium cans and transfer hard liquor into plastic containers.

Please note: Please remember we are in remote areas, usually in a mixed group, and far from medical assistance. We trust our guests will not endanger themselves, offend others, or evoke a guides' intervention by over drinking.

If you have a **special dietary requirement**, please advise Sheri Griffith Expeditions of your needs at least six weeks prior to departure. Every effort will be made to comply with your request.

Bathing and Toilets Facilities

In camp, there are separate shared bathroom facilities for men and women. Due to environmental impact issues, bathing facilities are limited to areas in, or directly adjacent to the river. If you choose to bring your own soap/shampoo, we suggest they be biodegradable products. Sanitary facilities throughout the American West need to be in compliance with the strict standards set by the land management agencies and local, state, and federal guidelines. We provide top of the line portable toilets that offer privacy and are designed to be stable and comfortable. The most widely used system is a sealed container with a regular toilet seat attached. Hand washing stations will always be located near toilet and dining areas and all guests are encouraged to use them regularly.

Electrical Power

There is no electrical power in the pitched camps along the rivers. It is suggested that you carry a supply of additional batteries for your camera and any battery-operated appliances you are taking along. On a trip of this nature, items such as curling irons and hair dryers are **NOT** recommended. Mechanical or electronic devices that are noisy and which may disturb other guests "wilderness experience" are discouraged.

Entertainment

Your campsite will also include a library of books and information about the river and surrounding area as well as a variety of games and activities such as horseshoes, bocce and volleyball. Singing and telling stories around the campfire are nightly occurrences.

Communications

You will be visiting some of the most remote areas of the United States, you should be aware that radio contact is not often possible while travelling in river canyons. Additionally, cellular phones do not operate in river canyons.

General Information

RESERVATION DETAILS

A \$300/person deposit is required at the time of reservation. The balance is due 45 days prior to departure. After making your reservation you will receive a reservation packet that will include a packing list, helpful travel hints, travel insurance information, a beverage request form, and a guest registration form. Please fill out the guest registration form and send or fax back quickly. Call 800-332-2439 to reserve a trip.

CANCELLATION POLICY

The initial \$300 per person DEPOSIT is non-refundable. The FINAL PAYMENT, due 45 days prior to departure is also non-refundable. (This includes cancellation of the river trip, rental equipment, lodging and, vehicle reservations.) 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/selecthigh.htm?32219.**

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.**

NON-PERFORMANCE

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.

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.

GRATUITIES

Guests often ask whether gratuities are appropriate, and in what amount. If you feel your guides have provided a very special trip for you, a gratuity may be left with the trip leader and will be shared among the crew. Entirely discretionary, anything between 15% and 20% of the trip cost is a general tipping guideline. If you plan to tip, remember to bring a personal check or cash—ATM's are hard to find in the

backcountry! PLEASE, do not make out checks to Sheri Griffith Expeditions. If you are writing check please make it out to the Trip Leader.
NOTE: we cannot take credit card gratuities.

What is Included

- SKILLED, PROFESSIONAL AND FUN GUIDES: the best in the business.
- FULL DAYS ON THE RIVER ~ We begin early the first day and return the last day at day's end.
- ALL RAFTING, CAMPING and SAFETY EQUIPMENT ~ Rafts & related equipment, life jackets, safety equipment, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, tent, personal dry bags for your gear, kitchen, dining & toilet equipment.
 - Some companies make you “rent” camping gear from them, others will even make you buy a cup(we give you one free.)
We include everything you need to go camping.
- ALL MEALS ~ Beginning with lunch the first day through lunch the last day. Our menus are healthy and creative, and are prepared fresh daily by your guides. Many of our fruits and vegetables are locally grown. Dinners always begin with hors d'oeuvres. Breakfast and lunch are equally tasty with varieties of foods to choose from. Every meal is balanced and there is always plenty. We can accommodate most diets and food restrictions with advanced notice.
- HIGHLY EXPERIENCED, LICENSED GUIDES Trained in the art of river running, all of our guides have Emergency Medical Response and CPR certification, as well as hours of river rescue and river specific training. We are one of the few companies that train our guides this extensively.
- TRANSPORTATION: the van ride to start the trip is included in the cost of the trip. Transportation to the start location from the hotel the morning of the trip and from the take out back to the hotel.
 - Some companies make you pay extra for the land transportation. This is all included in our prices.
- ORIENTATION: The day before your trip we will meet at 6:30 PM at the Best Western Antlers for a pre-trip meeting. Your trip leader will provide a thorough trip orientation and pass out your waterproof bags so that you can pack your belongings that evening. The trip leader will also reconfirm the meeting time for the following morning and give you an opportunity to ask any last-minute questions.
- BEVERAGES ~ Iced water, Gatorade, lemonade, Wine and iced tea are on every boat. Soda, wine, coffee, hot tea and cocoa are provided in camp. There is also an iced cooler available for additional beverages you may wish to bring, i.e. beer, wine and soda.

What is Not Included

- TRANSPORTATION TO VERNAL:
- GRATUITIES: by no means required but always appreciated by our guides(15-20% of your trip price is the suggested gratuity)
- PERSONAL ITEMS: See packing list.
- LODGING: We recommend spending a night before and after the trip in Vernal. We recommend the Best Western Antlers, in Vernal.
- TAX and Government User fees. About 6% of the trip cost.