



The Merced River

Class 3-1
April through July
1 (16 miles) and
2-day (26 miles) trips

The Merced River cascades out of **Yosemite National Park**, gradually mellowing into a runnable river just below El Portal. It is here that our trips begin. Offering abundant class 3 and 4 whitewater confined by a narrow corridor, this river is a must for the whitewater enthusiast. Indeed, the Merced offers one of the finest paddle raft trips in the West! A trip on the Merced can easily be combined with a visit to Yosemite, as our starting point is just minutes from the El Portal entrance.



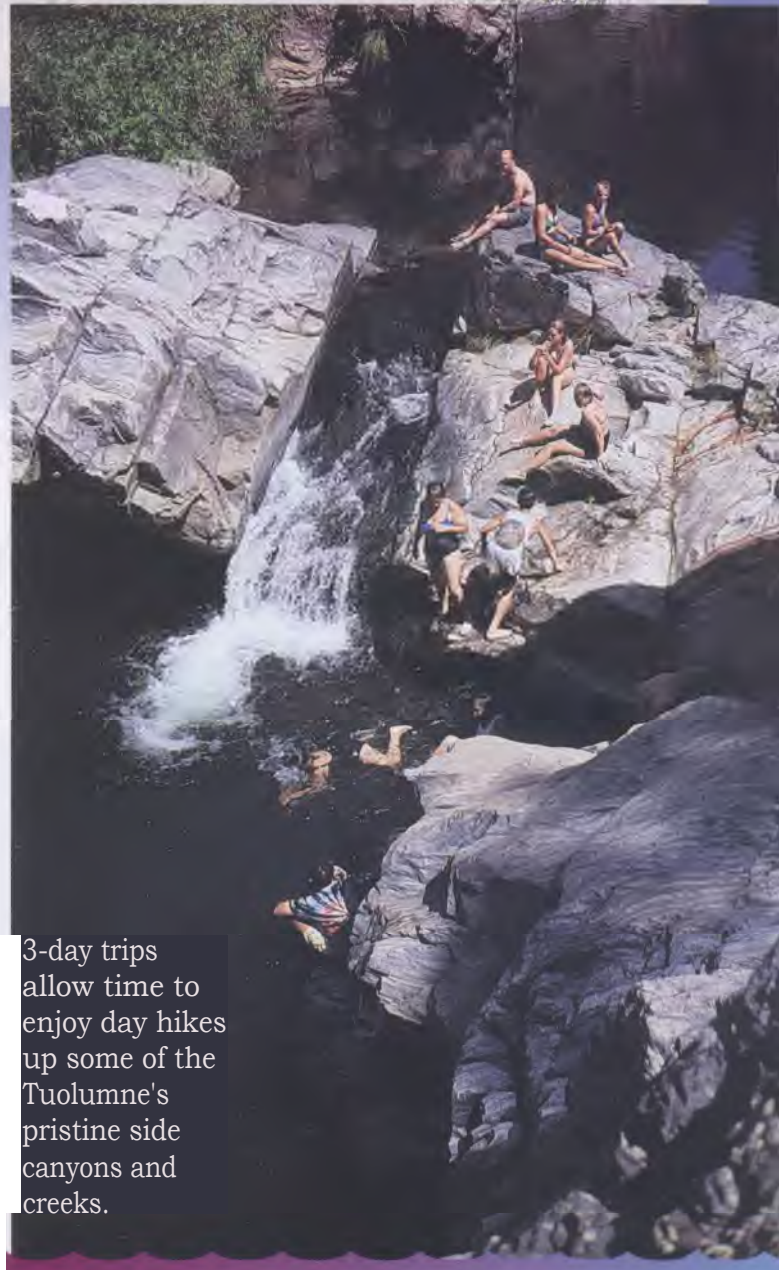
For part of its course, the river follows the old Yosemite railroad grade, passing abandoned gold mines and water flumes. Our overnight trips include the famed "Quarter Mile Rapid"over 500 yards of jam-packed action. Just below this intense section is a 20 foot waterfall which we must portage (a portage necessitates carrying the rafts around the obstacle and full passenger participation is required.) NOTE: When the water is high, the lower section of this river (including Quarter Mile) is too difficult to run. During these periods, after breakfast the second day, we shuttle upriver and begin our second day one mile above our first day launching point. This new "Redbud" section offers fantastic class 4 whitewater, and we continue on downstream to Briceburg, where our trip ends.



Our trips range in length from one to three-days. All trips cover the entire 18 miles of river, but there are so many wonderful things to see and do in the canyon, that the more time spent there, the better. One-day trips are offered only in April and May, and allow only for a lunch stop. Our 2 and 3-day trips give you more time to enjoy the river itself, the great swimmable side creeks, historic mining relics, and allow more time to shed the stresses generated by our hectic modern lifestyles. Our three-day trips also offer you the opportunity to test the awesome culinary talents of our guides.

A WORD ABOUT TUOLUMNE FLOWS:

After about July 1 or so, the water that we raft on is power released water from the Hetch Hetchy system. The normal summer power release schedule for July through mid September is excellent runnable water every weekday, a little lower flow on Saturdays, and no flows on Sundays. If you can schedule your trip mid week during this period, you are in better shape, although weekends still can be utilized as follows all Saturday launches are 3-day trips with a layover day on Sunday. All Sunday launches are 2 1/2 day trips, with camping shortly after our launch late Sunday afternoon.



3-day trips allow time to enjoy day hikes up some of the Tuolumne's pristine side canyons and creeks.