

BAR ONLINE Newsletter

OTTER LODGE

2011 Highlights
2012 Updates

Twenty-Eleven Season in Review

No shortage of water this year! In fact, too much water certainly has its challenges but we were very fortunate not to miss very many days. We were on the Salmon almost the entire summer and while this saved a lot of gas we were not able to utilize the Klamath River, which is truly the bread and butter of our beginning programs and handily sustains us in low water years. Our weeks were better attended and, as we looked back at all the photos, we realize what a joyous thing it is that we do here. In fact, as many of you know, you can still go to the Otter Bar web site, click on the “our fans” page (you can find it on the homepage), scroll down and see hundreds of photos from each and every week last year. The “blog” also has write-ups from every week. So if you spent a week here and can’t remember who some of the people were – you know what to do! I will continue this practice through the 2012 season so you can always check in and see what’s happening. Big news for the boss last season was the purchase of a new (to us) backhoe complete with 4x4, extendahoe, 4 in one bucket etc (see photo). To say he has been obsessed with this toy would be a gross under statement and he moved 60 tons of rock with it in July and August. As always, we had a spectacular staff on all levels and dinner was almost always served. The “hicups” were minor and Otter Bar ran as the well-oiled machine it is, thanks to the five star team we have in place AND thanks to you for coming here year after year in many cases.



Cat Coward taking a spin in Peter's backhoe

Letter from the Baron

It is late march and after a fairly dry winter we are finally getting lots of rain and snow! It is becoming "Miracle March" once again and the storms are stacked up out in the Pacific! I was in the process of redoing many of our roofs at Otter Bar last Fall, when my right knee decided it had had enough! I eventually had Arthroscopic surgery in Dec. and am still rehabbing in March. This business of getting older certainly has its trying and demoralizing moments. I suppose it has made it easier with the poor winter for skiing, but all that has changed now and I am doing my rehab in the snow. Stunning here at OB now and the frogs are in full riot with flowers popping up everywhere despite the very wintery weather we are now experiencing. I traveled to Antarctica in November and joined Graham Charles (who treated me like a king) aboard The Ocean Nova for a three week trip with Quark expeditions. Fantastic experience and, if you have time to burn, you can find heaps of photos on Face Book Fans Page, which is on the home page of on our web site @ otterbar.com. I was able to paddle a sea kayak down there and I highly recommend this option as it is a sublime way to view the wild life, bergs etc. Graham and the crew do a sensational job of it and this is truly the trip of a lifetime! Our itinerary included multiple stops in The Faulklands, South Georgia and the Antarctic Peninsula. Before I left we had a busy Fall cleaning both ponds and replacing some roofs that sorely needed it. Of course, the landscaping projects go on and I have made some dramatic improvements to various spots on the property. Currently we are installing a new Ultra Violet system for the lodge as well as lots of other upgrades throughout. No shortage of projects to ramp OB up to the standard you are all used to!



SUP Programs Twenty-Eleven & Twelve

We ran our very first Stand Up Paddling weeks in 2011! Chris Zawacki, from the Sierra, helped us out. We had never utilized the Klamath River for this, and were thrilled at how well The Klamath is suited for these craft. The boards were quite popular with many of our clients last season who tried them out on the ponds. It was incredible to see some of the more experienced paddlers and guides take to this discipline very quickly! This is not an easy sport to learn in the river but for those with knowledge of whitewater paddling, the challenge and rewards are intoxicating. It may look a bit goofy but it gives a different perspective of the river and terrific fun to try and master the skills needed. And it's a full body work-out! We will have more boards on hand for the kayakers to try and we, of course, are hopeful our August SUP weeks will book. Dan Gavere is on tap to be the lead guide for these weeks so come check it out! Dan is one of the Top Guns in the SUP world.

Summer Diving on the Salmon by Peter S.

During the warm summer months we often take those who are interested on Wednesday afternoons to a lovely pool for some snorkeling. While the high water last season made it a late season for this activity, the diving was spectacular this year! Almost all the guests routinely saw lots of King Salmon and steelhead. What a year it was with the returning fish at record numbers. The schooling fish hiding under cool overhangs was a source of fascination for all. Crystal clear Salmon River water makes this an amazing activity at Otter Bar! I shot lots of videos some of which you can see on our Face Book Fans" page if you have the patience to scroll down and find them! I have often said that you could come to Otter Bar just to experience this phenomena and your week would be complete but why not learn to white water kayak or paddle SUPs while you are here! There are hundreds of emerald pools that hold fish at this time of year and they were hard to miss in the summer of 2011!



OTTER BAR ORIGINS



A Mostly True Incomplete Tale of Otter Bar's First Season

By **The Sole Survivor Creek Hanauer**

(I've often told one version or another of this story during classes.
This is how I remember it; it's my story and I'm sticking to it.)

In 1982, Otter Bar held two five day classes made up of mostly local Salmon River and Klamath River folk.
Cost around five hundred bucks, give or take.



The Staff:

Peter Sturges, Owner/Operator
JoLynn Smith, Cook/Housekeeper/Student
Don Banducci, Instructor
Larry Hewitt, Instructor

The Students:

Me and six others, Jo Smith, Richard George . . . David Jacques in the second class and the rest are lost in the mists of time . . . I am, as they say, the sole survivor of those classes.

Day One . . .

Sunny, warm outside morning meeting with the instructors; pretty sure Peter gave the first draft of his now famous welcome aria.

Got outfitted: Similar to modern day.

The Outfit, head to toe . . .

For brain buckets we had the old hockey type helmet; pretty much short on everything that would protect a head from a close encounter between that ubiquitous rock and hard spot; or an equally feeble Pro-tec plastic helmet.

A Hi-float lifejacket; so big you rolled up the bottom quarter or you couldn't get in the cockpit of a kayak. Small women couldn't get completely under water in roll practice there was so much bulk.

A Blue Puma (now Kokatat) itchy, poly-pro sweater, under a Blue Puma spray jacket, blue w/red neoprene cuffs. Neither of them very warm, nor dry.

A sprayskirt, virtually the same as today's models, only featuring an unbelievably smaller "codpiece" spray-deck.

Last but not least, most everyone wore old tennis shoes while I wore a pair of old leather moccasins on my feet, the boats being so long and narrow a guy with size 12's was limited to the thinnest footwear he could find. The myriad of choice in river equipment we have today was a tad more primitive back then.

The Equipment

Kayaks were Hollowform Riverchasers that I think Larry "borrowed" from the HSU Recreation Dept. Hollowforms were the first production plastic whitewater kayaks; four meter boats, 13 feet 2 inches; narrow to the point of silliness by today's standards. My legs were virtually extended straight, my knees slightly flexed, encountered two small dimples in the upper deck, generously referred to as thigh braces. The cockpit was so small that it required extensive, methodical training to wet exit from it safely. A bigger guy like me could actually get entrapped in the boat if I didn't calmly execute the proper technique. There was no, NO, outfitting beyond the foot-pegs and thigh braces and seats. A real paddler didn't need that silly stuff we were told. (Meanwhile, we glued any stray piece of foam we could find to try and tighten up the excruciating pain of sitting in the boats). They were long enough to have float bags in the nose of the boats, in front of the foot pegs, as well as the back bags. And, added bonus, you could raft-up and "Deck-Walk" during lulls in the whitewater action!



“... eddy-out; SPEED, ANGLE, EDGE ... eddy line, TUCK, ROLL!”

The paddles were the old metal shafted, orange bladed Iliads or the blue fiber glass shaft, metal tipped, white bladed Harmonys. Both featured 90 degree off-sets and both were descendants of a primitive version of a Maori war club. Paddling with one of those babies was a sure path to carpal tunnel syndrome. I'm six foot two, I now boat a Werner carbon fiber, neutral bent-shaft, 45 degree paddle 197 cm long. My first Harmony paddle was a 90 degree offset, 206 cm long, and heavy.

Up to this point things were pretty similar to the modern day experience, but the pace was about to pick up.

So, to the first skill . . . PORTAGING! It seemed like we did endless miles of carrying very heavy thirteen foot boats great distances to and from these “put-ins” and “take-outs”. With boats thrown precariously up on shoulders or double carried, we struggled down to Otter Bar's upper hole . . . and once there?

We jumped in and swam the Otter Bar Rapid!

We then hiked back up the rock bar to the boats looking like a bunch of bedraggled, drowned puppies and with what remained of the morning we “learned” the forward stroke, sweep stroke and forward/side/stern draw strokes; pinwheels; low and high braces; “Eskimo Rescues;” and we were introduced to the extended paddle, west coast sweep-roll. Sweep way out and go to your back deck, with the constantly heard exhortations from Larry or Don:

“Don't pull your HEAD!”

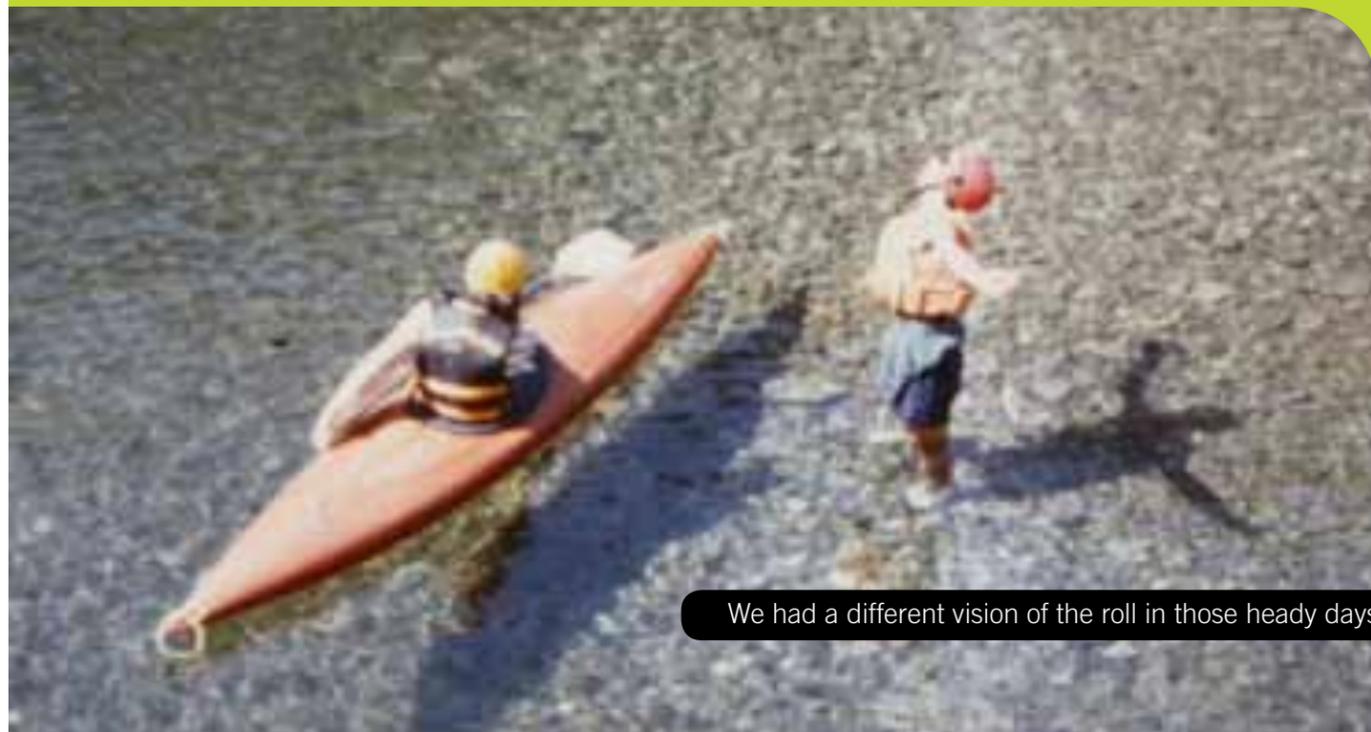
or

“Keep your HEAD down!”

Or the iconic,

“DINK!”

(Some things never change.)



We had a different vision of the roll in those heady days



And then we ran the Otter Bar rapid and portaged the boats back up to the lodge for lunch.

We were short on technique and long on exhortation in those earliest days.

(An innovation in year two was to video all the students performing all of those “skills” at the end of every Day One for morning meeting fodder the next bay. A practice we stopped in year three with the arrival of Phil DeRiemer, who asked, “Why do you want them to see how awful they are on day one?” Good question. Otter Bar shed the “seat-of-the-pants” technique that year to become an incubator of modern teaching techniques).

River lunches in those days deserve a mention. They often contained pita pockets that wouldn't open, PBJ, humus, luncheon meat, mayo/mustard, canned sardines and smoked oysters; or a pretty fancy kitchen creation that we could never do justice to in the middle of a river day; and a desert that rival today's offerings. We drank a lot of cranberry/fizzy-water mix.

Roll practice after lunch?! Urp...

After lunch we once again portaged the boats back to the upper hole and after a brief refresher, ran the two miles of class II river below the lodge down to Crapo Creek, repeated the portage thing, threw our boats in a stack on an open drift boat trailer, used a lot of eastern-Pakistani shepherd's knots to tie them down, then all jumped into the back of the green Ford pick-up truck (yes, that green Ford pick-up) for the shuttle back to the lodge. For longer trips down to the Klamath River we threw a couple of lounge chair pads in with the coolers and gear to cushion the client's ride in the back of the pick-up. Nobody can say the Otter Bar beginnings weren't humble.

During the week there was a lot of swimming; the “crash and burn, learn as you go” theory. Good old fashion seat-of-the-pants stuff! We were learning the extended paddle-to-partial extension-to- for real Eskimo roll and I was very good at it. No swims that whole week! (That sounds better than it actually was. The truth is that I needed that roll, desperately! I pretty much used it when doing anything else river related. On peel-outs I'd set up; SPEED, ANGLE, EDGE (this being the primitive version of Position, Angle, Speed, Edge) then I'd hit the eddy line and immediately be flipped and have to roll up in the current and continue down river where I'd set up to eddy-out; SPEED, ANGLE, EDGE . . . eddy line, TUCK, ROLL! I got way more roll practice than the whole rest of the class put together! But, I made my rolls! Winning ugly, as Mick Jagger would say; but winning non-the-less.)

On Day Three . . .

Larry kept me behind the rest of the group to practice peel-outs and eddy entries that didn't include a roll, in a spot down river from the lodge that featured a granite wall below the eddy on river right, with a boily eddy on river left. Back and forth I drove my boat until I; 1) stopped staring at the wall instead of the eddy (a huge breakthrough) and; 2) started making eddy line crossings without having to resort to fish counting (we always encouraged students to give us a hand with counting the Chinook salmon run while they were under the boat working out their next move.) It finally worked, mostly, though for a couple of years boating buddies would ask me, after some hairball roll in some namby-pamby location, “Why'd you roll there?” “Because I could,” was my answer until my imprinting of river skills broadened and I could actually use my roll in troubling situations instead of thoroughly random occasions.

“Hey, what's the worse that could happen?”

Day Four . . .

We were down on the lower Salmon between Wooley Creek and the confluence with the Klamath River, four miles downriver. I had a bit of trouble in Little Kissing Rock. Most of the group decided to walk it, but I must have thought, “Hey, what's the worst that could happen?” Turns out I was a bit of a rock magnet (you go where you look had yet to sink in) and I ended up high bracing on the cushion on the river left side of the rock. The only problem as it developed was that as the cushion rejoined with the river behind the rock, so did I, with a quick pat on the head from the Little Kisser. I saw stars, but rolled up. Not the last time that would happen. What's that ringing in my ears?

Day Five, the last day . . .

Our graduation day found us down at the confluence of the Salmon River and the Klamath River. Our put-in on the rocky point on the Salmon River side of the Klamath at the Ishi Pishi Bridge, on a little used class IV fishermen's trail. Even though we were bruised and already exhausted by the time we finally reached the river, we set out to run the class III+ Ikes Run. At Ikes Falls most of us chose to portage over the rocks on river left in the face of a maniacally, gusting upriver wind and pure fear. As I reached the apex of the portage my kayak was lifted off my shoulder by an exceptional gust of wind. We watched slack-jawed as the boat flew through the air, then slid over the steep rocks to the river where it smoothly made a perfect, right-side up seal-entry and proceeded to have a river-left run through the rapid, that included briefly ed-dying out in the middle. The only student to dare didn't fare anywhere near as well.

I felt like had I spent the whole week in a washer/wringer, with my heart in my throat. Come to think of it, in some ways I still haven't come down.

The second week was a pretty much a carbon copy of the first week with the addition of yours truly as the designated “Downriver Probe.” The teaching moment coming when I would just barely make my objective and Don or Larry or Peter would point out to the remaining upriver kayakers, “See, if he made it. . . !”

One universal truth does survive from those “Good Ol' Days:”

Nobody looks good in a sprayskirt!





THE

GRAND CANYON



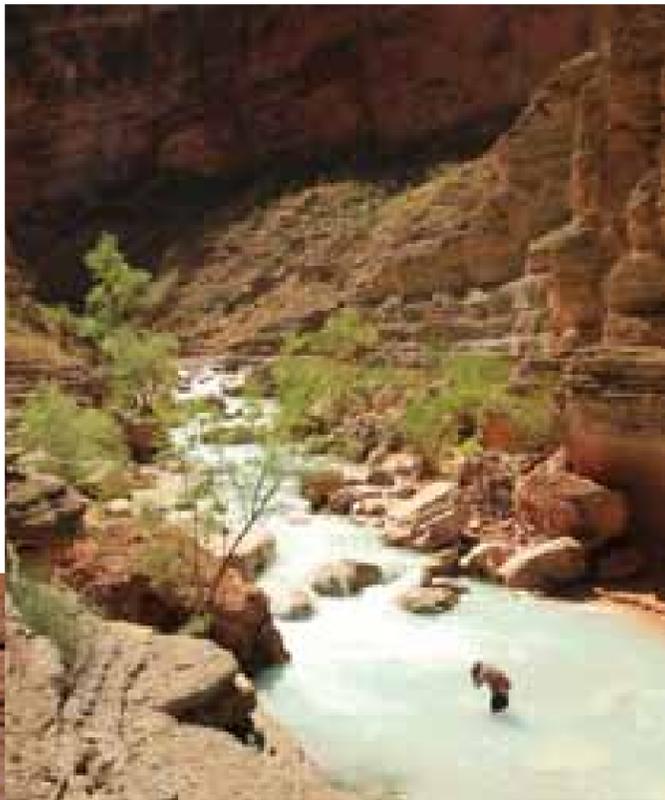
The Colorado River within the confines of The Grand Canyon is a place that means so much to so many people. It is a place of life, history, adventure, nature, fears, remoteness and commitment. As a kayaker, the river provides much more than just the obvious fact that you can be on the water for 15 days in a row while your skills progress. There is also a great deal of time for you to work on your skills if you are so inclined. The river has beautiful eddies to catch, many surf waves to carve up a storm, holes to play in and endless miles of flat water to keep working on technique.



Everyday that you are on the water you face rapids of varying size and are constantly looking for the “right line” to get you through in one piece. The rapids also allow you to keep practicing your combat roll (if you practice it, is it a combat roll?). As a kayak instructor it is inspiring to see people progress from the first day at Lees Ferry where people are nervous but eager, practicing rolls at the put-in and checking if everyone else can roll - to the last day where everyone has their own stories and are now moving around the river with ease having learned so much and having enjoyed the simple life.



If you want some thing to take your mind off the kayaking there is always the spectacular scenery, countless photo opportunities, delicious food, a refreshing swim or bath in the Grand Canyon (even though it is very cold) and the great hikes that enter the side canyons and take you to magical places like Elves Chasm. My favorite thing about the Grand Canyon, apart from the kayaking is the opportunity to sleep under the stars , the nice cool night temperatures and the gentle breezes that make sleeping so easy.



This year was different for me in the Grand Canyon. Much of the anticipation and unknown had gone for me. I now had a much better sense of the river, had met some of the AZRA staff and was familiar with the process. This meant that I knew what I was in store for (packing a couple more bottles of whisky was one of the key learning points from the previous year). Whisky is one of the best forms of currency on the river and is a favorite amongst the AZRA staff and possibly all water boat men/women!

Whatever your goals are, the Grand Canyon can accommodate many different needs . . .

I hope to see you on the river this year!



As experienced by Daan Jimmink



2012 GRAND CANYON DATES:
SEPTEMBER 9-23, 2012
COST FOR 15 DAYS: \$3750.00
DISCOUNTS: If you have been on an ArTA Colorado River Trip within the past 3 years, there is a discount. Check in with Otter Bar.

Judging from our 'client reviews' 2011 was a great year. We have had a few set backs over the years, due to fires & the economy. For our 30th year in business anniversary, we lowered our rates (didn't quite make our overhead), but brought in a lot of new guests. Stellar water, guests and staff were the winning combination in 2011. We brought some new instructors on board and mixed them in with the Otter Bar Vets and improved the program again! PETER KETTERING has been teaching here the longest of our instructional staff. Peter is our 'Go-To' Guide for holding our world together. Again, he's been in New Zealand for our winter/his summer with Vicki, teaching, gardening and loving his life there. Then he's back here for our Summer. We are forever grateful to P.K. for introducing GRAHAM CHARLES to our area, and has been invaluable to our program. A few years ago, MR.CHARLES was 'taken' by one of our kayaking students. To sum it up, the wedding is this September. He has given ELISSA BROWN the 'G.C. Boot-Camp' and she passed with flying colors! She has stamina, brains and beauty. We had a chance to entertain Elissa last season and welcome her into the Otter Bar Family. Dave Farkas is looking forward to another season here. Looks like 2012 is going to be a big year for Dave. He's the Rocky Mountain/California Rep. for Fluid Kayaks and runs his own guide service, Horizon Line Adventures. His business is taking off with trips for skiing, paddling and rock climbing. Ben & Zack have been busy this winter. Ben is off in Antarctica trying to stay warm before he's off to Denmark. He has fallen in love with those Danish pastries and can't get enough of them. He better watch his

SCUTTLEBUTT '12



weight! Zak is hunkered down, downunder, for an entire year seeing how the other half lives, by taking a full time job teaching Outdoor Education at the local Community College in Greymouth. JESS & DAAN have been teaching at New Zealand Kayak School during their NZ Summer. They are putting out an online magazine, dreamingof-whitewater.com. Take a look. We can't say enough about how great these two are! We have been lucky enough to have ANDY ROUND around more (no pun intended) last season. He's doing more freelancing and teaching here, and we are the beneficiaries of this move. We had some new instructors onboard last season that have joined our team. ANDREW DUNNING showed up eager to join our team. Andrew's uncle is none other than one of our first guides here, CHRIS SPELIUS. Chris was here years ago and we still have students coming here who had him as their instructor!

So, we're really happy that Andrew is following in his Uncle's paddle strokes. KYLE KOVALIK showed up on our doorstep with a dream. He wanted to be an Otter Bar Kayak Instructor. His perseverance paid off. He also shared his other gifts with us such as his AMAZING guitar playing, help around the lodge and enthusiasm. That's not the reason we hired him, but an extra bonus..is always nice. Our lodge staff was stellar as well. KENDRA HOWARD, spent her 2nd season with us. Unfortunately, she is staying close to home in Eugene this coming season so she won't be in the kitchen this summer. DANO JOHNSON & JACKIE MAZZUCA were our other chefs for the season and the combination of these three extraordinary people made for presentations and quality that was beyond belief (thanks for all the amazing food pictures). The house keeping staff, the ones who never get enough standing ovations, were: AMANDA GIANNAROS; JAMIE SCEPKOWSKI; VIOLET STEARNS AND MELINDA STEARNS. (The only mother & daughter team.) They were all great and loads of fun. Our staff is always fun, the best at their jobs and we all have lots of good times together. We're hoping to have Allison Sturges back this summer. After graduating from UC Santa Cruz, and teaching children with Autism in Berkeley, she can go on to wash dishes and help her poor parents get more 'with it' in this



century. Her plans as of today are to study for the GRE and then go to Honduras to get her Dive Masters certification. Ah yes, I remember those days well! And as a back-up she can always reopen her Mani/Pedi biz. Rush, our outta-house-kayaker, is off around the world again after his recovery from Malaria and a flesh eating staph infection he acquired in the Congo. Ending up in a Portland Hospital for a week, and then recovery taking over 2 months. He is a lucky guy to still be boating. He is now in New Zealand doing the biggest rivers NZ has to offer with "must make or die moves." His parents are so glad he's back to boating safe waters instead of the 1.5 million CSF in the Congo. And the last bit of good news is "It's official!" JASON ARBETTER and RACHEL were married in a wilderness Sierra setting last summer and are now on their honeymoon! Congratulations.



Strokes from the Folks 2011

It is a rare combination to find knowledge, instructional competence together with friendly and welcoming personalities. The instruction was awesome! Each instructor has their own style and communication. I have to say that Andy was the best instructor I ever had. [John Marshall, Reno Nevada](#)

Otter Bar is the most beautiful lodge I have visited. The natural vegetation around the lodge gives you the feeling you are beside a wild and scenic river but with all the comforts of an upscale resort. The cooks went out of their way to prepare my food according to my dietary restrictions. The food was excellent. I wish I could bring the cooks home to my kitchen. [Beth & Len Gaydos](#)

The instruction was outstanding. Each gave his/her unique view and teaching approach. All were so attentive, courteous and sensitive. Incredible people skills in addition to teaching skills. [Clifford Shostal, Longview, WA \(A past client from the 1980s, still coming back\)](#)

Top notch-very good! It was nice having 4 instructors with 11 students so the classes were flexible. Challenged me to do stuff I would not have. I learned and improved. Instructors fun to hang out with, making the week really great. [Bella Lewis, Leesburg, GA \(Bella makes a yearly pilgrimage to Otter Bar every year!\)](#)

This was an amazing experience. I really look forward to coming back next year and bringing a few friends. Not only is the kayaking superb, but the entire region is great for cycling, running or simply slowing down to smell the wildflowers. [Sara Strope, San Francisco, CA](#)

Absolutely beautiful, very clean, comfortable, designed for groups. A lot nicer than I expected. I've had a lot of teachers, at least 10 trying to teach me the roll. These guys finally brought it all together. I can see why Otter Bar is considered the best kayak school in the country. The instructors did a great job of keeping me laughing, making it fun, which I know is really hard for 7 days in a row! [Laurel Brauns, Bend Oregon](#)

This is why I come: The instructors are very articulate, making it easier to translate their words into our actions. They are also very patient, fun and they make me feel SAFE. One of the best things is rotating the instructors. It really helps to have different people. I love that. [Erin Rottman, Los Angeles, CA](#)

Food gave me the 'Otter Bar Belly'. It was awesome! This is a wonderful place. I would not change a thing. Quality instruction, friendly staff & guests. I learned a ton of valuable skills. A huge acceleration to my boating career. [Mark W. George, Ketchum, Idaho](#)



ADVANCED & INTERMEDIATE & PLAYBOATING

Classes run concurrently

May 6-12

May 13-19

May 20-26

INTERMEDIATE & BASIC INTERMED

Classes run concurrently

May 27-June 2

June 3-9

June 3-9

BASIC INTERMEDIATE

June 3-9

June 10-16

June 17-23

June 24-30

BASIC INTERMEDIATE & BEGINNING

Classes run concurrently

July 1-7

July 8-14

July 15-21

July 22-28

July 29-August 4

August 12-18

August 19-25

August 26-September 1

All Adult Weeks are \$1990.00

NOT FOR GROWN-UPS-KIDS CAMPS
N.Q.G.U.

BEGINNING CAMP

Ages 10-14

July 22-28

Kid's Camp: \$950.00

SUP (STAND UP PADDLING)

August 5-11; 12-18; 19-25

GRAND CANYON COLORADO TRIP

September 9-23, 2012

What can you say about Otter Bar? Phenomenal, world-class instructors, five star food, beautiful surroundings and friendly people. A place to come back to year after year and feel like you've come home to family! [Heidi & Brian Oberlander, Saugus, CA](#)

Fantastic Instructional Staff! With first-time kayakers, the material was introduced in such a way to minimize overload and promote internalizing it. The food was delicious, fantastic, spectacular, amazing.....we're spoiled now. [Mark & Mary Cenovich, La Canada, CA](#)

Superb! I've been at many outdoor activities and I felt Otter Bar took us along at a pace set for the individual, with lots of one-on-one and encouragement. I found the guides to use the right amount of careful control and let us experiment on our own. [Fred David, Santa Rosa, CA](#)

I have experienced, or should I say survived, bad kayak instruction before, so it is a complete delight to come to Otter Bar and learn from the BEST. Having each instructor work at least once with each group over the course of a week is brilliant. I picked up great tips from each and had fun doing it. The food, scenery and relaxed family-style atmosphere make it easy to sell the notion of a kayaking vacation to a non-paddling spouse. [Pete & Kathy Litz, Garland, TX](#)

The lodge had everything I would need or want to make my stay enjoyable. I liked the layout, views, hot tub, outdoor shower, etc. I cannot think of anything I did not like. I would enjoy staying here with my wife, regardless of the kayaking. [Michael Evans, Pleasanton, CA](#)

I am a professional educator who has hired hundreds of teachers and observed thousands in the classroom. The three instructors we had the opportunity to work with are beyond talented. They make the week one of: personal growth, skill and knowledge. But equally one of enjoyment. [Tim Ritter, Temecula, CA \(Tim brought his 3 grown children here for a family vacation and learning experience.\)](#)

Five Star and More! Otter Bar is much more than a lodge. The grounds are stunning, the lodge & cabins are beautiful, cozy with the 'make you feel at home' atmosphere. But Peter and Kristy and their staff are the stars here. Your kindness and attention to all the details makes Otter Bar sing. Loved the art work too! I had fun and I did things I never dreamed of doing-all because of the expertise, kindness, humor and communication skills of our 3 lovely instructors. What a joy to watch them work! [Maryke Brannin, Glendale, CA](#)



Kids at Kid's Camp 2011. Sedate, darling children.

Continued Strokes . . .

The place is magical. Far and away the best vacation I have ever had. To find monumental comfort, style and beauty in one place is rare. Coupled with gracious, friendly and hyper-competet staff, it is sublime. [Bruce Van Nice, Los Altos Hills, CA](#) (Bruce took our lodge program while his son, Hollis, was in the kids kayaking program on the other end of the property. This is a great way to learn a sport the same time as your child.)

What impresses me about Otter Bar is not only how well put together the program is, but the quality of people who make it all happen. From Peter to Kristy to the talented and patient guides to the chefs. [Anonymous](#)

Absolutely Amazing. Something different at each meal. Unique recipes. Print a cookbook. I will sell it. A great variety and all healthy. [Jack Batzler, Del Mar, CA](#)

You guys really know what you're doing. You seem to anticipate all the guest's needs-physical, mental, emotional. Great progression. [Anonymous](#)

I came back because I wanted a great learning experience and that's what I got. I set out my goals on Sunday and you guys really nailed it. The groups you put together gave everyone exactly what they needed. This is like a second home. [Jennifer Stewart, Boulder, CO](#)

I wanted to start with a quick THANK YOU to Peter & Kristy for one of the most awesome experiences of my life. I cannot stop gushing about it...I am getting eye rolls from people now as I open my mouth. You guys ROCK. [Elizabeth Snyder, Manassas, VA](#)



**OTTER BAR LODGE
& KAYAK SCHOOL**

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