

**AT A GLANCE**

**25 YEARS OF Adventure!**

**DIFFICULTY**  
Grade 2-4 | No previous experience needed | Moderate fitness required | max 110kg weight

**DURATION**  
3days/4nights, 4days/5nights

**SEASON**  
All year round

**LOCATION**  
Orange River  
Onseepkans

**Orange River**

**gravity adventures**

**Gorge | Onseepkans**

## OVERVIEW

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Starting near Pofadder in the Northern Cape, this section of the river is arguably the best on the Orange River. The scenery is awesome with highlights being the Orange Gorge and the Richie Falls – the second highest waterfall on the river, after Augrabies. This area has been designated as pristine wilderness and of extreme biodiversity importance, forming part of the Orange River Karoo Conservation Area (ORKCA). It is our privilege to be able to share it with our clients.

The river offers a variety of conditions, from flat water with flowing channels, lots of exciting small rapids and a few 'Big Ones' to get the adrenaline flowing. At high water, it becomes an exciting whitewater trip. We use inflatable two-person boats that are easy to paddle and steer.

Our standard trips are 4 days and 5 nights or 3 days and 4 nights long. We wild camp for three nights on the river on some incredible beaches and spend the first and last nights at Wild Paradise base camp. Longer expeditions and custom itineraries can also be arranged.

## THE TRIP

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Gravity's base camp, Wild Paradise Riverside Camp, is a peaceful campsite set on the banks of the Orange River in Onseepkans. Our guide team will meet you here on the evening before your river trip begins. Your walk in canvas tents will be set up and ready for you and dinner will be served under the stars. There are basic ablutions, including flush loos, warm showers, and easy access to the river for a refreshing dip or trying your hand at catching (and releasing) some Yellowfish.

We cover just over 35kms during the trip so there is ample time to relax, read your book or explore the camp surroundings. Each trip is run as a self-contained wilderness expedition - we carry everything we need and take everything back out again at the end. This trip will provide you with a complete break from reality – Offline is the new luxury, after all. It is truly an opportunity to recharge your batteries and reconnect with yourself, your family and nature. We make our way down river, choosing a different campsite each night. All camping equipment will be provided – tent, mattress, linen, sleeping bags and pillow. All meals are included, as are

IRF qualified guides, boating and safety equipment. You can bring along your choice of drinks or send us a list and we will shop for you.

On the evening before your trip begins, your guides will give you advice on how best to pack your dry bags for your trip down river. Next morning, after a simple breakfast, before getting on the water you'll also have a thorough safety briefing and some paddling instruction.

Then, it's time to get going for three or four days of relaxation and excitement! The first day's paddling consists mainly of flowing channels and flat water ending with Scorpion camp. Day 2 brings bigger rapids, and an evening walk to view the amazing Ritchie Falls (time and season permitting). Day 3 is full of excitement with a challenging portage around the Falls which usually take up most of the morning, carrying & lowering the boats in above '42 man hole'. 'Big Bunny' and 'Dolly Parton' rapids follow before you reach camp for the evening. As you leave the gorge on day 4, things mellow out once again and the last section is just gentle paddle with mountains increasing in size around you. The group will be met at the take-out after lunch (unless an earlier take out is arranged) and transported back to base camp to enjoy a final meal around the campfire. Please Note: the above itinerary may change slightly according to trip, season and water level. If the water level is too high or too low, the trip will not be cancelled but will be moved to the Thunder Alley section of the Orange River near Hopetown – please bear this in mind when planning your route, itinerary, flights and accommodation.



## Sample Itinerary (4-day, 5-night trip)

- Day 1:** Wild Paradise Riverside Camp. Camping and dinner included.
- Day 2:** Pack up, safety briefing and start paddling. Wild camp on banks. Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner included.
- Day 3:** On river, wild camp on banks. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included
- Day 4:** On river, wild camp on banks. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included
- Day 5:** On river, take out after lunch and transfer back to Wild Paradise for last night. Breakfast, lunch, and dinner included
- Day 6:** Depart at leisure



## PRICELIST

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<b>Gorge River Safari: 3 days, 4 nights all-inclusive 2025/26</b>		
<b>Number in group</b>	<b>Cost per adult</b>	<b>Cost per child under 18</b>
4-5 pax	R24,000pp	R20,400pp
6-9 pax	R19,000pp	R16,000pp
10-14 pax	R17,000pp	R14,500pp

<b>Gorge River Safari: 4 days, 5 nights all-inclusive 2025/26</b>		
<b>Number in group</b>	<b>Cost per adult</b>	<b>Cost per child under 18</b>
4-5 pax	R26,000pp	R22,100pp

6-9 pax	R20,000pp	R17,000pp
10-14 pax	R18,000pp	R15,300pp



## Why Gravity?

Gravity has an unwavering attitude towards quality and safety on all our trips. Some of the aspects which make Gravity one of the leading adventure companies in SA include the following.

- Only IRF qualified and trained guides, in the recommended guide: client ratios. 1:8 for the Gorge AND 1:10 for Thunder Alley
- SAMSA Approved
- Top notch equipment
- The best in bush cuisine – all fresh prepared on river
- Undiscovered sections of river – no crowds
- All inclusive – 2 nights in base camp and ALL meals – no hidden extras
- No border crossings or passports needed
- Public Liability insurance

## Are you a member of an association?

Yes, we are members of SATSA and SA AIA and our guides are IRF registered, trained, qualified and experienced.

## Do you have your SAMSA Licence to Operate?

Yes, we do, we were the first rafting operator to become compliant with the law. Note that SAMSA has not recommenced surveys in the n cape since the pandemic.

### **Why are your trips more expensive than some other operators?**

We use only qualified guides – they are professionals and we pay them accordingly. Our Guide: Client ratio is 1:8 on the Gorge and Thunder Alley sections and 1:10 on the Thunder Alley section. On River safari trip, we also have a camp team to do logistics. We invest in top notch equipment and keep everything well maintained – it's all about safety!

### **What does the trip include?**

It includes all of your meals, from the evening of your arrival, to a light breakfast on the morning of your departure, hot beverages, camping accommodation at Wild Paradise Riverside Campsite on your first and last nights, 4 full days and 3 nights on river (3 days and 2 nights if doing a 3 day, 4 night trip), qualified and experienced guides, all boating and safety equipment.

### **How do I get up to the river?**

You can self-drive or we can put you in touch with a transport service. The road is a good tar road all the way up from Cape Town and takes around 9 hours. The road is also good tar coming in from the Gauteng direction. The last section of +/- 50 kms to the camp is usually a good dirt road. This road does, however, become difficult after heavy rain. Full directions will be supplied on confirmation of booking. You can also fly in to Upington Airport, 2.5 hours' drive away.

### **We would like something to commemorate our trip – what do you suggest?**

We can offer you a personalised Gravity T-Shirt with the name and date of your trip in a choice of T-shirt colours for R195.00 per shirt. You will need to book this in good time to ensure that the T-shirts can be handed out on the trip itself. We can also arrange a photographer, videographer and drone pilot to make a professional record of your trip, including a beautiful, high quality coffee table book. Other adds on include personalised kikois, caps and eco friendly toiletry packs from Africology.

### **Do I need my passport?**

No, you don't. The trip starts and ends on the South African side, so no border crossing is required.

### **What are the facilities like?**

Wild Paradise has expansive lawns and lots of shade for camping. There are ablutions with warm and cold showers and a small shop across the road. On river, we'll be wild camping.

### **What about ablutions?**

On river, your guide will give you a thorough briefing regarding ablution procedures. Generally, you will wash in the river. We usually use the environmentally friendly 'cat hole' toilet method (don't worry – your guide will explain!), depending on the season and the size of your group.

### **What do I need to bring?**

A full kit list will be supplied on confirmation of booking. Remember that whatever you choose to bring will get very dirty so don't bring your new clothes! You'll be able to leave your bags behind at the lodge.

### **Will my clothes get wet?**

There are no guarantees on a river trip but it's extremely unlikely - you will be supplied with a dry-bag, which will keep your clothes dry even if the bag lands in the water. You can also pack your clothes into black bags inside the dry bags to make sure. Your guides will explain to you the best way to pack your bags. Space is sufficient but limited so don't bring too much with you.

### **Can I bring my camera?**

Yes. Although there can be no guarantees on a river trip, we do provide watertight dry buckets for cameras, binoculars etc. It is also worth considering bringing a waterproof camera.

### **Do I need to be fit? What if I'm not a strong swimmer?**

We cover around 35kms on the trip, including a challenging portage alongside the Ritchie Falls. Although you don't have to be an athlete to do the trip, this is a harsh environment and you should have reasonable level of fitness and good health. Temperatures can be extreme, especially in summer so please bear this in mind. There is no upper age limit, but you should familiarise yourself with what the trip entails and make an informed decision on your ability to participate, based on your own fitness. Our general recommendation is a minimum age of 10 years and a maximum of 70. Each client is issued with a PFD ('Lifejacket') and is instructed on how to handle themselves in the water, you don't need to be a strong swimmer but please let us know if you are not confident in the water. There is always the option to walk around rapids you are not happy to do. You also have the option of requesting a very stable raft, which is steered by a guide (dependent on water level and guide availability)

### **Is it difficult to steer the boats? Will I fall out?**

We use 2-person inflatable 'crops' that are very stable and easy to paddle, even for beginners. This section of river has lots of flowing water and a few challenging runs. There is therefore quite a good chance that you'll have at least one swim! You will be equipped with a PFD ('lifejacket') and will have been given instruction on exactly how to behave if you fall out of your boat. We also use only highly trained guides who will be on hand to rescue you if required. You also have the option of requesting our very stable 5-person raft, which is steered by a guide (dependent on water level and guide availability).

### **Is it safe? What about if I hurt myself?**

Whilst there is an inherent element of risk in every adventure, running rivers with our professional guides should not be considered dangerous. Our guides are all trained in First Aid and we carry a First Aid kit. It is your responsibility to inform the guides about any allergies or medical conditions you may have and to make sure you have any personal medication with you (e.g. asthma pumps, allergy medication etc.). We do not always carry a sat communicator as there is cell coverage from high points at various locations along the river so please request that it be taken along if you prefer. In general, evacuation by helicopter is not possible due to the rough terrain and the distance from the nearest helicopter but in our 20+ years of operation, we have not needed it! We have comprehensive Public Liability insurance and access to a 24-hour crisis call centre with evacuation coordination support.

### **What about my drinks?**

Gravity provides all meals, but you should bring your own choice of drinks. You can also give us a list of your preferences and we will shop for you. We will supply you with cooler boxes and ice. It's also a good idea to bring drink mix such as Gatorade, which can be mixed with water - water purification tablets will be supplied. You can use this to keep your drink bottle full for during the day.

### **Is the water safe to drink?**

Generally, the water is clean enough to drink but we use water purification tablets to be on the safe side.

### **What will the weather be like?**

In summer (September-April), days are very hot (30-40 degrees) and the nights are also warm. In between seasons, the days are still warm, but the nights can be quite cool - a change of warm clothing and a good sleeping bag are required. In winter (June-August), days are warm (20-25 degrees) and nights are cold. The rainy season is usually late summer with thunderstorms occurring occasionally.

### **What will the meals be like?**

We pride ourselves on providing our clients with the best in bush cuisine. All meals are prepared fresh on the river and consist of hearty, healthy ingredients. All meals are served at table, with a glass of wine with dinner.

### **I have specific dietary requirements; can you cater to them?**

We are very happy to cater for specific dietary requirements for example, vegetarians and those requiring halaal meats. For other dietary requirements and preferences, we will supply you with our menu so that you can advise us or bring along additional items or substitutions. If your food requirements are complicated, we ask that you consult with us before the trip so that we can come up with the best solution for you.

### **Why restrict group sizes?**

We generally limit our River Safari trips to 12 or less.

### **Any other restrictions?**

Our code of safety requires us to warn you against consuming alcohol or drugs in the 8 hours preceding the trip as well as on the water.

### **How do I book?**

To book, we will need a completed booking form as well as a 40% deposit into the following account: Gravity River Tours, First National Bank, Claremont branch #204209, Business Cheque Account: 623 790 739 60. Your booking is NOT confirmed until we have received both completed the form and payment. Please make sure to reference your deposit with your name and the dates of your trip e.g. "Smith Thunder Alley Dec 12-15".



Adapted from 123RF

**More Questions? Give us a call!**

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