


Types of Whitewater Boats

GRAND CANYON RAFTING



Rivers & Oceans



One of the biggest factors to consider when choosing a Grand Canyon whitewater rafting trip is the type of commercial boat you want to take down the river. This guide will help you understand the differences between motorized and non-motors trips, the different types of commercially run boats, and the unique experience each has to offer.

NEED TO KNOW

We have organized our trips into two different categories – *motorized* and *non-motorized*. Each type of trip offers a different experience, but there are two main deciding factors to consider:

- **Age Restrictions:** Motor trips require children to be at least 8 years of age. Non-motorized trips require children to be at least 12 years of age.
- **Trip Length:** As a general rule, motor trips tend to travel approximately twice as fast as non-motorized trips. This means that you can travel the length of the Grand Canyon in as little as 6 days on a motor boat and as little as 12 days on a non-motorized boat.





MOTORIZED VS. NON-MOTORIZED TRIPS

Motorized Trips

- Group size: 28 passengers
- Boats per trip: 2
- Passengers per boat: 14
- Minimum age: 8 years
- Miles traveled per day: 35

Trip Lengths

- Full Canyon (188-277 river miles) - 6-10 days
- Upper Canyon (88 river miles) - 3-4 days
- Lower Canyon (100-189 river miles) - 5-7 days
- Western Canyon (89 river miles) - 3-4 days





MOTORIZED VS. NON-MOTORIZED TRIPS

Non-Motorized Trips

- Group size: 18-24 passengers
- Boats per trip: 4-6
- Passengers per boat: 4
- Minimum age: 12 years for oar boat trips, 14 years for paddle boat trips
- Miles traveled per day: 18

Trip Lengths

- Full Canyon (188-277 river miles) - 11-18 days
- Upper Canyon (88 river miles) - 5-7 days
- Lower Canyon (100-189 river miles) - 5-7 days
- Western Canyon (89 river miles) - 3-4 days

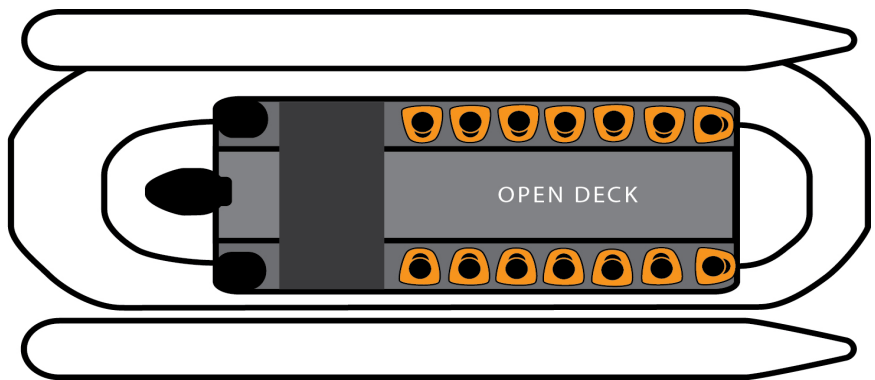


WHY WE LOVE MOTORIZED BOATS

- **More availability.** There is more availability for motorized trips and the higher number increases the chances to find availability.
- **Accessibility.** For those who are new to rafting or looking for a less intense rapid experience, motor boats are a good option, depending on the water level of the river. Motor boats sit higher up off the water and the larger boat size offers an easier ride on whitewater.
- **Trip length.** Motorized trips are more accommodating to passengers who are shorter on time, but want to experience as much of the Canyon as possible. Traveling in a motor boat allows you to cover more river miles in a shorter period of time.

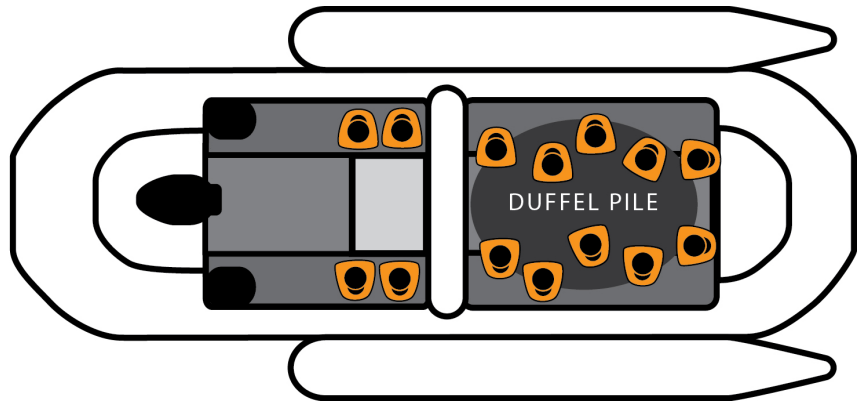
TYPES OF MOTOR BOATS

All motor boats are powered by environmentally friendly, quiet, four-stroke outboard motors. A guide stands at the back of the boat to operate the motor.



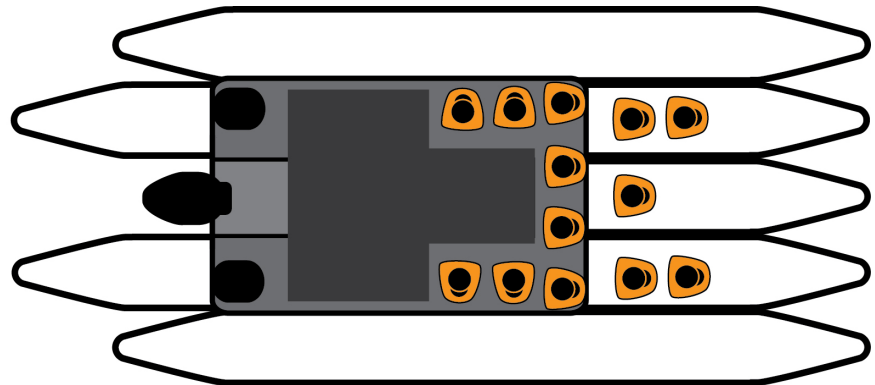
THE C-CRAFT

The C-Craft motor boat is the largest motorized boat offered in the Grand Canyon. At nearly 40 feet long and over 5 tons, the boat is designed with an open deck that runs down the center of the boat. Passengers sit on benches around the deck during periods of calm water and mild rapids. During larger rapids, guests sit down on the deck.



THE S-RIG

The S-Rig motor boat is 25-30 feet across and can carry up to 14 passengers and 2 guides. The center of the boat is a large, oblong shaped pontoon with two shorter pontoons on the sides. Guests sit on the deck that encircles a large duffel pile in the middle.



THE J-RIG

The J-Rig motor boat is 32-37 feet long and is designed with five pontoons attached together. The seating configuration is outfitter specific.

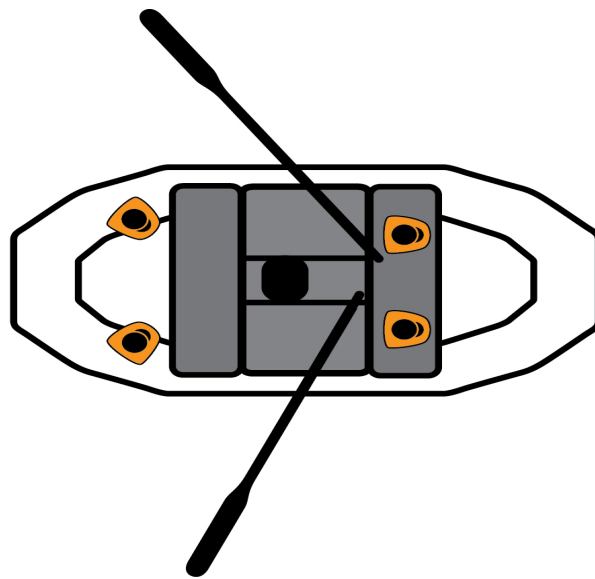


WHY WE LOVE NON-MOTORIZED BOATS

- ***Absolute quiet.*** Aside from the occasional squeak of an oarlock, the ride on an oar raft or dory offers rafters the opportunity to fully hear and experience the sounds of nature.
- ***Closeness to the water.*** Passengers on oar and paddle boats sit closer to the water, which lends itself to the simple pleasure of feeling the river run through your fingers as you travel downstream.
- ***For those with an adventurous spirit.*** The experience of going through the Canyon in a non-motorized boat is the closest feeling we can experience just as the early river runners and explorers did. The smaller size of the boat means that even the smallest riffles are felt.
- ***Slower pace.*** Non-motorized boats travel at half the speed of motor boats, giving you more opportunities to with the flow, sit back, and fully soak in the Canyon.

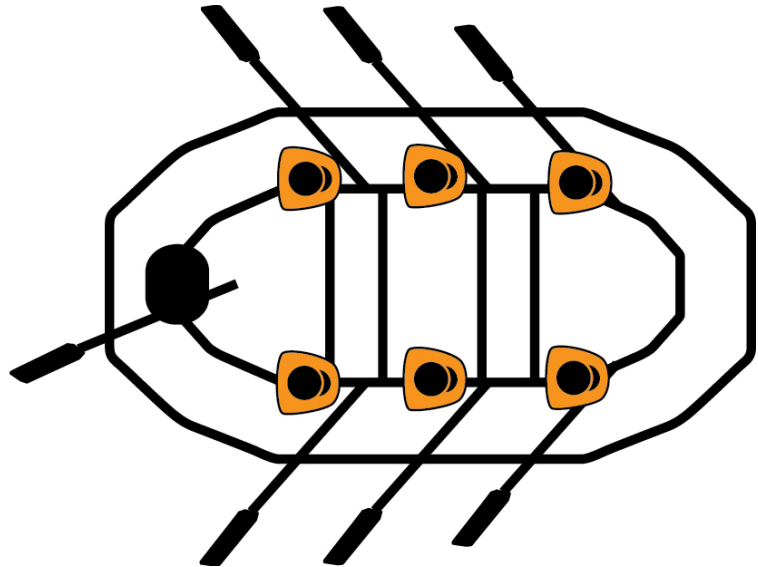
TYPES OF NON-MOTOR BOATS

All non-motorized boats are powered by a guide who rows an oar boat or who captains a team of participants on a paddle raft.



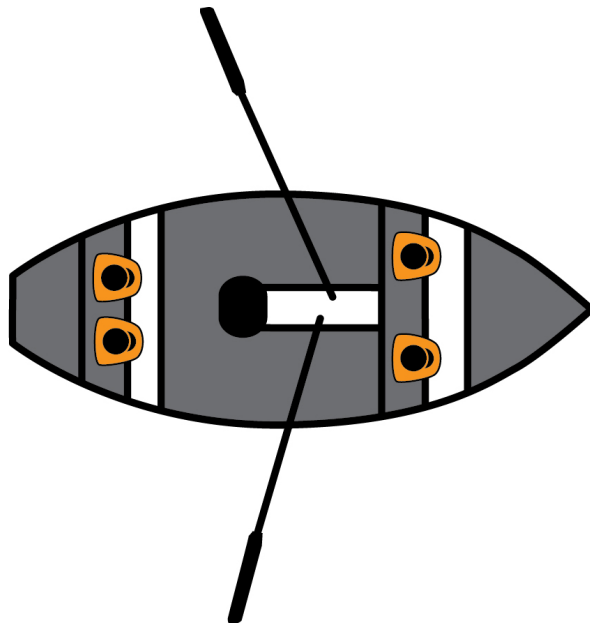
THE OAR BOAT

Oar boats are rubber, inflatable boats that carry up to 4 passengers and 1 river guide. The guide is fully responsible for navigating the boat.



THE PADDLE BOAT

Paddle boats carry up to 6 passengers and 1 guide. Passengers are responsible for propelling the boat, while the guide navigates from the stern. There are only a few all-paddle trips and hybrid trips (a mixture of paddle and oar boats) offered in Grand Canyon.



THE DORY BOAT

Dory boats carry up to 4 passengers and 1 guide and are the rarest type of non-motorized trips. The guide is responsible for navigating the boat. Dorries are classic wooden, hard hulled and only a handful of trips are offered in Grand Canyon.



Are you ready for adventure?

We hope this guide helped you gain a better understanding of the different types of whitewater boats and what is the best option for you. No matter which trip you choose, rest assured that the Grand Canyon never fails to touch the heart and inspire a deep longing to return.

Still have questions? Give us a call - we'll guide you through!

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Photos: National Park Service, John Andrew Rice, Paxton Woelber, Robb Hannawacker, Paul Hudson, Jonathan Fox

