

Ouachita National Forest

Arkansas - Oklahoma

Ouachita River Float Trip



A River Adventure:

Canoeing the Ouachita River at any time of the year offers visitors a glimpse of the forest some never see. The pleasant temperatures and brilliant seasonal color displays of fall and spring, the cooling and refreshing effect of moving water and shade trees during the heat of summer, make April to October the most popular times to enjoy this trip. The family-friendly river flows casually past massive rock bluffs shaded by tree-lined banks and slopes. Paddle or just float as the river alternates between trickling rapids and clear, slow moving pools. In this picturesque setting, visitors can enjoy fishing, camping, picnicking, bird watching, and swimming.

Floating speed on the river averages about 1 mile per hour, varying according to river depth and flow. During periods of heavy rain, especially in the spring, the river can become fast and dangerous. In late summer and early fall, the water level is normally low.

Your float can begin at the old bridge at Pine Ridge. The river travels from here 45 miles to Lake Ouachita. The river will become wider with deeper, slower moving pools as you travel. Use mileage figures shown on the map to help you estimate travel time.

Two popular day trips are: Rocky Shoals to Fulton Branch, and Fulton Branch to River Bluff. You will need to leave a vehicle at your stopping point or have someone meet you. A short two-hour trip is from the Dragover Float Camp to the Dragover Pullout. Then you can hike back to your vehicle or drag your canoe over the trail back to camp.

There are five Forest Service Float Camps with picnic areas, restrooms, and overnight campsites. Access roads and landing sites are clearly marked.

For more information, contact:

Mena-Oden Visitor Information
and Ranger Station
1603 Hwy. 71 N.
Mena, AR 71953
(North of Mena on State Hwy 71 N.)
(479) 394-2382

Womble Visitor Information
and Ranger Station
P.O. Box 255, Hwy 270 E.
Mount Ida, AR 71957
(870) 867-2101

Practice Water Safety:

- Wear life jackets and never float alone.
- Check weather forecast and water conditions.
- Be careful not to overload the canoe. Carry an extra paddle.
- Use extreme caution after heavy rains or during high water periods.
- Examine all rapids closely. Carry canoes over low water bridges and obstructions.
- Watch for submerged logs and rocks.

Things To Remember:

- Use only dead and down wood for fires.
- Extinguish all fires with water.
- Bury human waste at least 100 feet from water.
- Pack out trash that cannot be burned. Leave the area clean and natural.
- Much of the shoreline along the Ouachita River is privately owned. Feel free to enjoy the beauty and tranquility along this river but remember to respect private property rights.

Be Prepared:

- Ideal equipment is light, compact, and waterproof.
- Pack clothing for warm days and cool nights.
- Canoe rentals are available from local river outfitters.

Recommended Items:

- Life jackets, tents, stakes and litter bags.
- Fresh water containers.
- Rain gear, sleeping bags or air mattress.
- Fully equipped First-Aid kit.
- Food supplies, portable stove and utensils.

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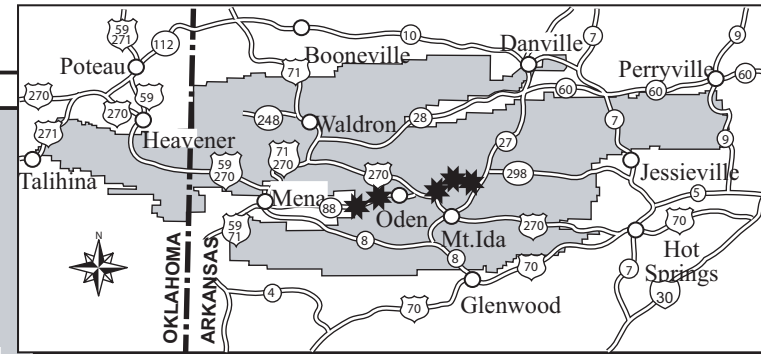
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OUACHITA RIVER FLOAT TRIP

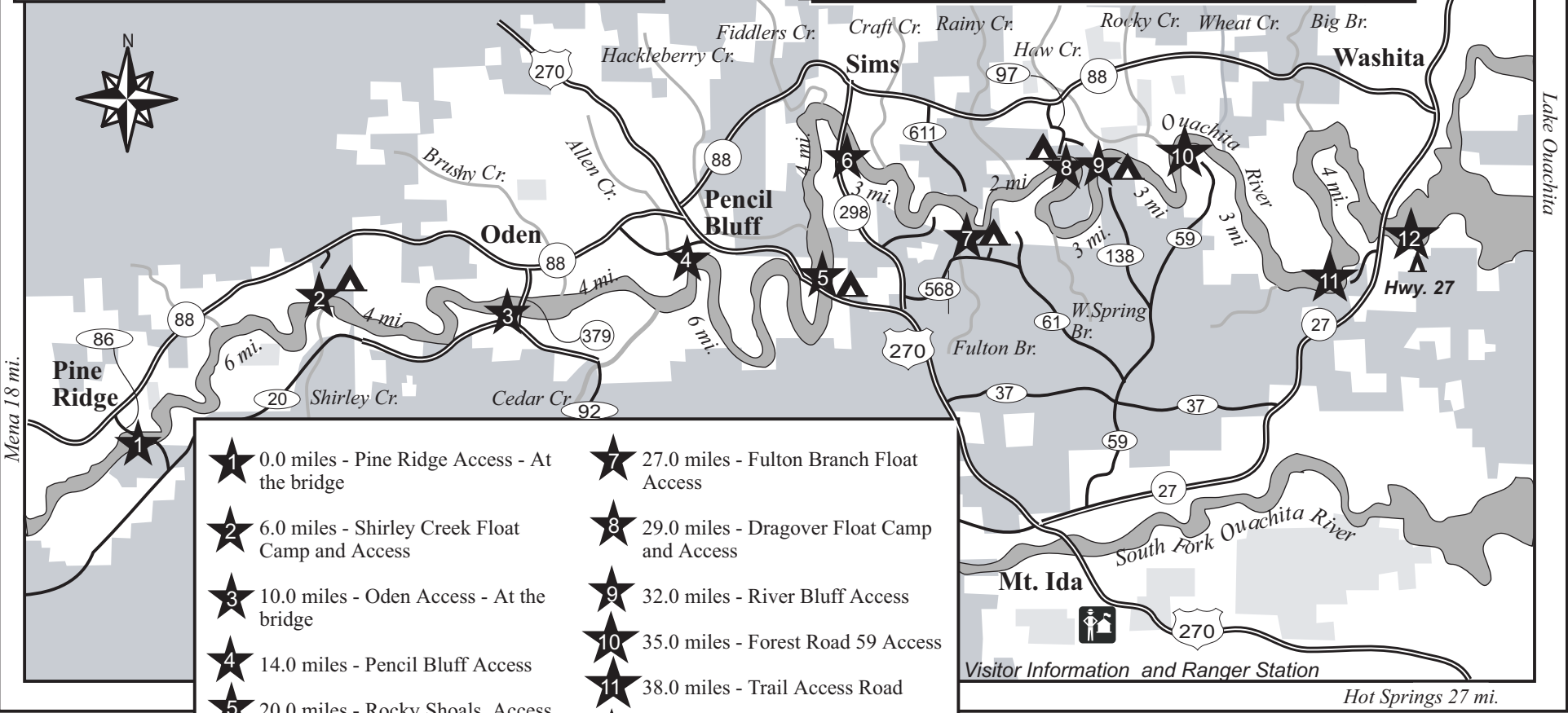


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	Gravel or Dirt Road		Access Point
	Paved Road		State Highway
	Creek or Stream		County Road
	National Forest		Federal Highway
			Forest Road



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| | 0.0 miles - Pine Ridge Access - At the bridge | | 27.0 miles - Fulton Branch Float Access |
| | 6.0 miles - Shirley Creek Float Camp and Access | | 29.0 miles - Dragover Float Camp and Access |
| | 10.0 miles - Oden Access - At the bridge | | 32.0 miles - River Bluff Access |
| | 14.0 miles - Pencil Bluff Access | | 35.0 miles - Forest Road 59 Access |
| | 20.0 miles - Rocky Shoals Access | | 38.0 miles - Trail Access Road |
| | 24.0 miles - Simms Access | | 42.0 miles - Highway 27 Recreation Area - Army Corps of Engineers |

Mena 18 mi.

Danville 35 mi.

Lake Ouachita

Hot Springs 27 mi.

Visitor Information and Ranger Station