



MOUNTAIN BIKING MULTI-SPORT Ozark's Syllamo & White River Adventure

The Basics

State: Arkansas
Activities: Mountain Biking, Hiking, Wild Cave Exploration and Canoeing

Inns

www.escapeadventures.com

Meeting Information

The group will meet one day one at 11am in Little Rock, Arkansas, Holiday Inn Airport East at 8:30am on the first day of the tour.

We will return to Little Rock 5:30 pm on the last day.

Rentals

Specialized and Santa Cruz bikes
Camping Gear: \$90

[Learn more about our rental gear on our website.](#)

Optional Single Supplement

A single supplement is available for solo travelers on the Inns Tour who do not wish to share a room: \$395



Deep in north-central Arkansas lays a mountain bikers' playground that is virtually unknown. Ninety-five percent singletrack, the Syllamo Trail in the Ozark National Forest spans across rolling hills and lush vegetation and features great riding and views. What's more, refreshing swimming holes and canoeing on the White River are available along the way.

Here, in the heart of the Ozarks, the White and Buffalo Rivers flow through some of the most scenic regions "The Natural State" has to offer. Starting in the western Ozarks, the White meanders through the hills some 300 miles crossing the Buffalo River - America's first national scenic river. We'll enjoy a full day exploring the river in canoes. Our Ozarks tour also stops off to explore the world-renowned Blanchard Springs Caverns.

Similar to our Grand Canyon North Rim tour, challenging sections give way to smooth, rolling singletrack, making this a great trip for a riders of various levels.

Trip Amenities and Meals

Inn Tours: Inns on this trip are often remote, appropriate to the locations in which we ride. They are chosen for comfort, scenery, and proximity to our activities. All meals are in local restaurants except picnic lunches, prepared by your experienced guides.



Fitness Level



Technical Level

Trip Includes: [See page 3](#)

Trip Does Not Include: [See page 3](#)

Contact Us: www.escapeadventures.com | 800.596.2953

Daily Itinerary

What sets us apart?

Our People: Our guides are the best in the business, hands down.

Our Commitment: We don't just preach environmental awareness, we live it! We recycle 90% of our waste, fuel our support van with recycled vegetable oil, and we are the world's 1st carbon-neutral outfitter.

Our Food: Our guides lovingly prepare meals for the trip with an emphasis on fresh, local and organic foods, ensuring you have the fuel you need to ride, and a delicious meal at the same time- including dessert!

Offset Your Airfare

We've got your trip covered, but use our online [Carbon Calculator](#) to offset your travel to and from the trip

Weather

Please use the following locations when checking the weather online:
Mountain View, AR



Day 1 | Biking - The Syllamo Trail System

After a meet-up in Little Rock, the state capital, we shuttle two hours to Mountain View: the “folk music capital”. Set deep in the highlands of Northwest Arkansas—part of the Ozark Plateau—Mountain View (pop. 2800) represents the cradle of Ozark mountain culture: from traditional-rural music to BBQ to river life. As the evenings warm, local musicians gather in the town square, performing folk and bluegrass long into the night. After lunch in Mountain View, we commence a short shuttle to The Syllamo Trail System. Just south of Mount Olive, within the 130,000-acre St. Francis-Ozark National Forest, Syllamo encompasses 50-miles of networked singletrack. Now consider the touts. Arguably the premier mountain bike trail system in the Southern U.S., Syllamo was named one of *Outside Magazine's* Top 20 Outdoor Destinations. Moreover, Syllamo can also lay claim to IMBA (International Mountain Bike Association) *Epic Ride* status, one of only 37 trails to gain the designation. Kicking it off, we lock onto the Bald Scrapy Loop. As Mountain View offers a lively if unparalleled introduction to mountain culture, Bald Scrapy does likewise to backcountry Ozark cycling. From the trailhead at Green Mountain, we'll range seven-miles over moderately challenging if lightly traveled backwoods singletrack. Climbing 927-ft while descending 916-ft, 22% of Bald Scrapy is raked at 12-degrees. A la the gripping drama seen in recent *Ozark noir* films and TV series, expect some Southern Goth type technical stretches mixed with fast and short downhill and buffed-out straights. In terms of atmospheric or extracurricular, all throughout we're immersed in the gorgeous visage and soothing vibe of the White River. Further contrasts on Bald Scrapy are lent by wildflowers, giant mushrooms, Cedar and Loblolly Pine. The latter, also known as Indian, North Carolina or Arkansas pine, can reach 115-ft. One Arkansas Loblolly is thought to be 300-years old. Apollo 14 astronauts brought Loblolly seeds to the moon; then planted them at different undisclosed locations upon their return. Closing out our first taste of the Ozarks on this cornerstone trail, we double back to Mountain View. Then settle in to a mountain music jam session at the town square.

Total Mileage | 8 miles
Inns | Inn at Mountain View

Elevation Gain- 954 ft

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Specific Trip Tips

- Little Rock, Arkansas is the closest city with a major airport and car rentals.
- We recommend arriving in Little Rock at least 12 hours prior to your departure time in order to have time to rest before the tour.

Use our [Pre-Trip Information Center](#) for packing lists, how to prepare, FAQ and more!

Day 2 | Biking - Branch Loop

The deeper you go, the greater the experience. That's the animating notion behind today's enterprise, locking onto the Branch Loop. An all-day classic, Branch Loop covers between 19.5 and 23-miles (depending on tack-ons' and detours). Half pleasantly agreeable/non-technical, Branch Loop's other half personifies the term rock and roller. Reaching 990-ft at its zenith, Branch Loop's profile climbs 2372-ft, contrasted with 2454-ft of descent. Fast and dense, lush and misty, this is where local razorbacks and discerning bikers from all over the South come to get their groove on. Today we'll carve out three connecting loops: a trifecta of scintillating singletrack. With each ascent, the views of the Blue Mountains, a sub-range of the Ozarks become ever more profound. Of course you can do as little or as much riding as you wish with your two highly experienced Escape adventures trip leaders leading the way. Departing the trail, we retire to Mountain View. Time permitting; we stop for a dip in the White River, soothing limbs and joints in no less than a world-class trout fishery. Browns north of 30-lbs, as well as 18-19-lb Rainbows loom beneath the 720-mile long White River's towering limestone bluffs.

Total Mileage | 2-23 miles
Inns | Inn at Mountain View

Elevation Gain-370-2350 ft

Day 3 | Canoeing - Buffalo National River

Today it's a swap of pedals for paddles. After a 75-minute shuttle to St. Joe, Arkansas, a real charmer of a recreation destination, we reach the dazzling Buffalo National Scenic River. A 95,00-acre expanse of undammed river—among a rare few in the Lower 48—the 120-mile Buffalo provides habitat for elk, deer and Black bear. Its whitewater and calmer stretches sweep past canyons layered in sandstone and limestone, only to pause in contemplative sections: those defined by natural springs, caves and natural bridges. Passing great stands of Willow, Sycamore and River Birch, we'll canoe the section between Baker Ford and Gilbert, a 19th century settlement turned Arkansas' smallest municipality (pop 28). This 10-mile paddle trip is as easy on the eyes as it is feature rich. From the water, we'll take in and interpret historical structures, unique landscape features, not to mention regional artifacts. At Tyler's Bend—a wonderfully low-key National Park Service visitors center—you can choose to kickback and sunbathe on the riverbank, or indulge in a two-mile hike. Reaching a 440-ft bluff overlooking the Buffalo River, the trail opens onto the truly picturesque Collier Homestead. Closing out a four-and-a-half to five-hour cruise, our day on the water ends at Gilbert. Founded in 1902, Gilbert answers to “best location on the Buffalo River”, by virtue of its broad sand and gravel bar beyond town. Town being a general store, its façade faded red brick over a corrugated tin, plus a sweet, honky tonk café. In lieu of a valet, or parking attendant, we're met instead by any one of Gilbert's local dogs, resting in the shade. Shuttling back to Mountain View, we'll enjoy a dinner that showcases authentic Arkansas cuisine.

Total Mileage | 10 miles opt 2 mile hike
Camp | Blanchard Springs Campground

Inns | Inn at Mountain View

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Day 4 | Biking - Scrappy and North Syllamo Creek Valley

Returning to the saddle today, we'll engage the northern end of 1047-ft Scrappy Mountain. From a variety of vantage points, the aforementioned trail lends great optics onto the North Syllamo Creek Valley. The majority of those riders who've posted rate Scrappy 4.5-5-star quality. From Meta to not quite micro, while a fair portion of the 11.8-mile trail is punctuated by small to medium-sized rocks, one can expect more than a number of outcroppings; the type with which to hone skills, or navigate for thrills. Forasmuch, those who like it on the rocks will absolutely dig Stairway to Heaven: something of an earthen escalator characterized by staggered capstone or thick slabs. Peaking out at 935-ft, the Scrappy Mountain trail gains 1324-ft of elevation with 1322-ft of drop; about 18% of which is pitched at a ten degree maximum grade. Considered the most technical asset in Syllamo's portfolio, this standout singletrack nonetheless packs rather reasonable climbs into a succession of rippin' descents as well as offers the less technically inclined riders optional riding on tamer trails. After a hearty trailside lunch, the rest of the day is yours to: I) continue riding; II) take five in Mountain View; III) or swim the White River.

Total Mileage | 2-17 miles
Inns | Inn at Mountain View

Elevation Gain-332-2164



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Day 5 | Spelunking - Blanchard Springs Cave

Just as the White River represents a little-known if magnificent trout fishery, so does the Blanchard Springs Cavern system meet the measure of world-class spelunking. Located 14-miles north of Mountain View, within the Ozark National Forest, the Blanchard Springs Caverns were shaped, and continually altered, by a mountain spring. The latter pours forth—at a constant 58-degrees—from Mirror Lake, called “the prettiest three acres in all of Arkansas”. In a gorgeous thrush, the water cascades from the trout pond-sized lake, over the top of a low dam: an equally humble if handsome stone catchment built by the CCC in the 1930s. Prior to our subterranean experience, we’ll take in a short film. Matching the array and feature options of the aboveground Syllamo network, Blanchard Springs offers three different underground realms. Though the degree of intensity varies from one to the other, the constant is fantastic, truly out-of-this-world formations: from mesmerizing stalactites and stalagmites, hollow soda straws up to massive flowstones. One cavern, the size of three football fields, is believed to be 350-million years old. Today, you can go with either the less strenuous Cave Tour, or scale up to the Wild Cave Tour. The all-inclusive Cave Tour features dramatically lit sections that ultimately resolve into smaller rooms, then XS caves; all skill levels welcome. Conversely, The Wild Cave Tour comes as advertised: three to four hours of climbing, crawling and pushing through an undeveloped cavern section. If you relish the intimacy of tight spaces, and a red clay mudslide, meet your match. Bear in mind, this tour has certain protocols: I) good physical shape; II) sturdy boots; III) no dirt issues or aversions; IV) age ten and up. Spoiler alert: The Wild Cave tour climaxes at The Titans, an assembly of slender columns, as tall as they are spectacular. Leaving the fantastic underworld beneath the Ozarks, we shuttle back to Little Rock. En route we might cite our favorite song by an Arkansas native son: be it Johnny Cash, Glenn Campbell, Charlie Rich, Al Green, Conway Twitty, Sonny Burgess to Sonny Boy Williamson.

This is a general itinerary and may vary from the above itinerary. Escape Adventures reserves the right to make changes due to weather, local conditions, government intervention, or any unforeseen reasons that may affect the quality of this tour and/or safety of the participants.

Trip Cost Includes: Two guides, all meals starting with lunch on the first day through lunch on the last day, support vehicle, snacks, first-aid, bike maintenance, community gear, and a souvenir shirt.

Gratuities to local restaurants, hotels, transportation, and additional activities mentioned on this itinerary are paid by Escape Adventures. If you engage in an activity that is not part of this trip as outlined, then you are responsible for tipping.

Trip Cost Does Not Include: Airfare to and from our departure point, lodging before or after the tour, personal camping gear, rental bike, or gratuities to Escape Adventures guides. Tips to the guides are given at your discretion and based on the quality of your experience. We suggest 10-20% of your trip cost to be divided between the guides.

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For additional information please do not hesitate to call one of our experienced trip planners, and visit the [Pre-Trip Information](#) section of our website.
Please call 800-596-2953 Monday-Friday, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. Pacific time.