

***Raft Guide Training
Information 2009***

Guide Training Information 2009

General Information

Kumsheen offered the first Guide Training Course in Canada back in 1975 when Bernie Fandrich, founder of Kumsheen Raft Adventures Ltd., taught a River Running Course through the Continuing Education Center at Langara College in Vancouver, BC. Recognizing the need for and importance of formal guide training, he began an in-house training program each spring at the Kumsheen Rafting headquarters in Lytton, BC. The Kumsheen Raft-Guide School has been in operation every year since.

A Respected Guide School

Kumsheen's Raft Guide Training School is known and respected the world over. We're proud to say that graduates of our 12-day Raft Guide School are working as commercial rafting guides in many countries around the world including the USA, New Zealand, Australia, Zimbabwe, Nepal, Iceland, Italy, Indonesia and Japan. For many of our students the goal is to become a professional raft guide; others come to the Guide School to learn in a fun and exciting environment, and go on to pursue whitewater rafting as a personal hobby.

Government Rafting Regulations

British Columbia is well known in the world rafting community as one of the safest and well-regulated industries in the world. Since 1980, when Provincial rafting regulations were first introduced, Bernie has played a major role in the development of these regulations, and the Guide Training School at Kumsheen prides itself in exceeding the standards set out in the Provincial Regulations.

Graduates of our 12 day Guide Training School are issued a certificate and licence from Kumsheen stating they have successfully completed the course and passed their exams in accordance with the 2002 BC River Rafting Guide Certification Manual.

Kumsheen is a member of the British Columbia River Outfitters Association (BCROA) and all of our commercial guides are licenced through that organization.

The Kumsheen Difference - Check & Compare

Kumsheen Raft Adventures is Western Canada's premier and high-end whitewater rafting company. We pride ourselves in giving our rafting guests an experience which exceeds their expectations, and we treat our guide-school trainees with that same goal.

High Pass-Rate

Our courses strive to bring all our Guide-Trainees to a skill level which exceed both the Provincial Standard and the proposed Federal Standard.. We can proudly say that over the last 10 years, our students exceeded a 90% pass rate on provincial-standard exams. We do this through the use of our top instructors and equipment.

Top Instructors

Our Instructors pride themselves in their jobs, and are truly Professional Guides. All of our Instructors work full-time as whitewater rafting guides, are Trip-Leaders at Kumsheen, and have a genuine "Love of the River". Our 2009 Guide School Instructors are Ryan Gray and Braden Fandrich.

Top Equipment

Kumsheen prides in having the top equipment in the rafting industry; Guide Training equipment is the same as is used for our Commercial Rafting trips, for our Guide School we use three (16 foot) AIRE rafts and our AIRE cataraft.

Pre-School Employment

We offer our Guide-Trainees the opportunity to work before the commencement of the guide training school around the Kumsheen Resort. This gives us a good opportunity to get to know you as an employee, or to pay off some of your training fees.

Subsidized First Aid and River Rescue

We offer an in-house Wilderness First-Aid course and an in-house Swiftwater Rescue Technician course for our guides and trainees at subsidized prices. Both of these courses are strongly recommended for anyone interested in whitewater rafting and are a requirement for employment as a Guide at Kumsheen. By taking these courses in-house with Kumsheen you save about \$250.

The Finest Facilities

Another thing which sets Kumsheen's Guide Training School apart from the others is the use of our resort facilities. Resort facilities include beach volleyball courts, 3-on-3 basketball courts, Pine Tree disc-golf course, the Cutting Board Restaurant, Gilligans poolside bar, swimming pool and our giant hot-tub.

While at Kumsheen during the Guide-School, trainees stay in our staff accommodation. The “Staff House” has free internet service, free laundry facilities, and a fully equipped kitchen for you culinary explorations.

Instructors

Braden Fandrich is our head instructor. He grew up on the rivers of British Columbia. His first rafting trip was when he was three years old, and he is now a Swiftwater rescue instructor, a sponsored whitewater kayaker, and has guided, traveled and competed on rivers around the world. His photos and articles have appeared in Paddler magazine, Kayak Session Magazine, Kayak Magazine, and Rapid Magazine, and he is featured in numerous kayaking videos and on television as a kayaker and rafter.

Ryan Gray is a New Zealander and has worked year-round in the rafting industry since 1995. Ryan is Kumsheen’s River Safety Manager, a role he shares with Andrew Fandrich. Ryan spends half the year in New Zealand, and the other half in Canada. He is as at home rafting over the 20 foot waterfalls of the Kaituna (NZ) as through the 20 foot waves of the Fraser River.

Adam Forseth is our former Head Instructor and developed and led the Kumsheen Raft Guide Training program from 1998 to 2004. In addition to being in charge of guide training, he was Kumsheen’s River Safety Manager and Trip Leader. He is still a Swiftwater Rescue Instructor. In the off-season he is an ambulance attendant and ski patroller.

Andrew Fandrich grew up rafting on the Thompson and Fraser rivers. He is one of Kumsheen’s top-guides and shares the River Safety Manager position with Ryan Gray. On his days off during the summer Andrew can be found rafting privately on rivers around BC; in the winter season he travels South to the warm parts of the world.

Schedule for 2009

The Guide School begins May 4, 2009 and finishes fourteen days later on May 17. The training time includes twelve days of on-the-water instruction, including our written and practical exams for both oar and paddle rafts. Typically, training days start at 8 am in the classroom and end after a river session, sometime between 5 and 6 pm.

Most dry-land training and lectures take place at the Kumsheen Resort Classroom. Rafting practical training occurs mainly on the Thompson, Nicola, Nahatlatch and Chilliwack Rivers, (at the discretion of the Instructors).

May & June Training Schedule (subject to minor changes)

May 4 - 8	Training on the Nicola and Thompson Rivers
May 9-10	Days Off
May 11-16	Road trip to the Nahatlatch and Chilliwack Rivers
May 17	Practical and written paddle & oar exam
May 18	End of training session and offers-of-employment handed out
June 8, 9, 10	SRT (In-House for Trainees/Employees \$295 (\$395 retail))
June 16,17,18	Wilderness First Aid + CPR (\$195 trainees/employees (\$275 retail))

Employment At Kumsheen

We don't promise full time employment then hire you on an occasional weekend. We respect your need to earn an income and do our best to accommodate this need. Our guides return season after season because they are treated well by our company. At the end of the two week training school we discuss your employment with you, and whether or not you will be hired.

Considering our Rafting Resort is a seasonal business with a staff of over 50, Kumsheen fortunately has very little employee turnover. However, we are always on the lookout for a few quality river guides to replace the ones that must leave us every year.

Although we don't guarantee employment to anyone prior to completing the guide school, we do our utmost to hire participants that we feel would be a valuable addition to our guide team. Then, we do our best to provide each employee with as much work as possible.

All of our River Guides are hired full-time: that is approximately 5 days of work per week. All of our guides supplement their work week with "Shop-days" (general work around the resort) when there aren't any clients to take rafting.

For people hoping to work at Kumsheen who aren't hired to be a Whitewater Guide for the upcoming season, we do sometimes have positions available in other departments around Kumsheen (office, restaurant etc). This is a great way of increasing guiding skills throughout the summer and spending a lot of time on the water!

Hiring Criteria

Our criteria for selecting guides are based as much on personality, amiability, and people skills as on whitewater skills and experience. We are always looking for bright, honest, conscientious, affable guides to work both full time and part time. We want the best.

Our Raft Guide Training School provides us with the opportunity to get to know you, and to evaluate your skills. It's important to us that we hire team players and the guide school allows us to choose the best team possible.

Although we don't promise employment at Kumsheen, if we are impressed with you and your performance after the two week school you can rest assured we will invite you for further free training and offer employment

Additional Training for Hired Guides

The main reason our guides are able to work five months a year is because we operate two rafting styles – paddle and motorized (power) rafts. – our season extends from May 1 until the end of September. We also have “shop days” that are non-river work days somewhere in the resort or around the operations building.

After the initial two week training school, we assess each trainee and those that we feel would be an asset to our guide team are invited to two weeks further training on our motorized rafts. There is *no charge* for this additional training. Following both the paddle/oar and the motorized training, we require trainees to complete familiarization trips with both an experienced guide on board as well as commercial guests. This polishes the skills learned in training school, and prepares the guide for that first “solo” commercial trip. Generally our hired guides have their first “solo” commercial trip around the first or second week of June.

Raft Guide School 2009 - Fee Structure

1. Full Fare - \$1750 + gst

This category is for participants who have:

- little or no prior experience as a whitewater rafting guide
- no previous guiding experience in any whitewater craft

Fee Reimbursement**

Graduating trainees who have paid \$1750 may be offered employment with Kumsheen. If they complete one full season as a Kumsheen raft guide, they are eligible for reimbursement of \$500 of their training fee at the end of the first season. Upon completion of a second full season of employment with Kumsheen, another \$500 of their training fee will be reimbursed. In other words, after completing two full seasons working for Kumsheen, full fare-paying trainees will have paid only \$750 for their paddle, oar and motor training.

**Trainees who do not receive employment with Kumsheen have no repayment options available to them.

2. Reduced Rate - \$1150 + gst

This category is for participants who would like to work for Kumsheen and have:

- experience as a whitewater rafting guide
- experience as a guide in other whitewater craft
- other relevant training or experience, at the employer's discretion

Fee Reimbursement**

Graduating trainees who have paid \$1150 may be offered employment with Kumsheen. After completing one full season as a Kumsheen raft guide, they are eligible to receive \$400 back. In other words, after one season of working for Kumsheen, these trainees will have paid \$750 for their training.

**Trainees who do not receive employment with Kumsheen have no repayment options available to them.

3. Reduced Rate - \$750 + gst

This category is for participants who have:

- whitewater raft guiding experience from other countries or jurisdictions with qualifications equivalent to BC's Trip Leaders
- previous work experience in another Kumsheen Raft Adventures department and an invitation to attend the guide school

Fee Reimbursement

Experienced Guides: Once candidates have completed at least one week of Kumsheen's guide training school, have passed the written and practical exams administered by Kumsheen, and have the required number of river familiarization trips on our rivers, they are eligible for work as Trip Leaders.

Upon completion of one season of guiding for Kumsheen, these Trip Leaders are eligible for a full refund of their \$750 training fee.

Previous Employees: Former Kumsheen staff who have previous work experience with Kumsheen in other departments and are employed full time as raft guides are not eligible for a refund of fees.

Frequently Asked Questions

Do I have to be in good shape? How about swimming ability?

During an average day of Guide Training, expect to spend up to 6 hours per day on the river, paddling and rowing. Being in good physical shape prior to Guide Training is recommended, good swimming ability and being comfortable in the water is mandatory.

What's the weather like during Guide Training?

Although you can expect the weather in the Lytton area during summer to be 30-40 C. consistently, in May it is not nearly as reliable. Expect everything from rain and snow to hot and sunny. Bring clothing and gear for cold water and mountain weather conditions, and be aware that it will probably be quite windy on the river, so even on sunny days, good wind protection is needed to stay warm on the water. Don't forget your sunscreen – just in case!

What Gear do I need for Guide Training?

- -camping equipment, including tent, a warm sleeping pad, sleeping bag (or you can rent these for \$33) bed sheet, pillow for the Road-Trip to Chilliwack
- -appropriate clothing for staying warm in cold, wet conditions (fleece, wool, polypro, synthetics)
- -wetsuit or drysuit - used farmer john wetsuits are available for purchase (\$20)
- -river booties or appropriate cold-weather/cold-river footwear
- river knife and whistle (available for purchase at our cost: \$39 + \$6)

Are there any prerequisites for the Guide School?

- must be 18 years of age
- must be a competent swimmer
- must be in good physical health

What should I expect for Accomodation during the Guide School?

While at the Kumsheen Rafting Centre...

- Room provided in the staff house, trailer, or cabin tent
- use of the staff house
- on-site heated showers, hot tub and washroom facilities

While on road-trip away from Kumsheen...

- tent sites at a commercial campground
- use of the Kumsheen Camp Gear

What should I expect for Food during the Guide School?

While at the Kumsheen Rafting Centre...

- on-river lunches provided during training trips
- -use of the staff house cooking facilities for on-site meals (you provide the food)

While on road-trip from Kumsheen...

- on-river lunches provided during training trips
- use of the Kumsheen Overnight-Kitchen
- usually communal meals (shared food cost about \$8 per person (per day))

Can I pay all or a portion of the Guide School Fee by working for Kumsheen?

Should you be interested in working for a week or two prior to our guide training school let us know. We usually have some work available around the resort. We will pay you for your labour but you must pay us the full amount of the training fee in advance.

How much does a first year guide earn?

A first year Kumsheen guide can expect to earn \$7000 - \$7500 in the first year. This includes guiding days as well as "shop days".

How much does an experienced guide earn?

A second year guide earns on average \$9500 - \$11,000 and our Senior guiding staff earn \$15,000 and up during the rafting season.

I've worked as a Rafting Guide before, why do I need to take your training school?

Before we hire anyone to drive one of our buses, we check them out carefully, take them for a test drive, evaluate their driving skills, and get to know them.

Our river guides must be the best. There is no way to ensure this without getting to know them, their skills, their attitudes, their values. We have found our guide school is the best way to make this assessment. That's why it is our policy that all our full time guides must attend our school before we make the final decision about employment.

I'm an International Guide - will you supply a work visa for me?

This varies depending on what particular arrangement your country of origin has with the Government of Canada. Contact your local Canadian Consulate for details. Kumsheen Raft Adventures is able to provide a working Visa for a maximum of three International Trip Leaders during a season. Returning guides receive first priority.

If I bring my bicycle, kayak, etc., is there somewhere I can store it?

An indoor storage room for bicycles is located in the lower level of the staff house. Kayaks, canoes or other large outdoor equipment can be stored outside in our Kayak-Shed.

What about parking for my car?

A parking area located behind the staff house is provided for employees and trainees.

While I'm at Kumsheen, how do people contact me by phone?

The phone number in the staff house is (250) 455-0060. Note that out-going long distance calls from this phone are restricted to Calling Card calls only. There is also a payphone at the office which can be used for other types of long distance calls.

Is Internet service available?

Free internet service is available in the staff house for trainees and Kumsheen staff.

How do I get to the Kumsheen Rafting Center?

By Road - Kumsheen Rafting Center is located 5 km east of Lytton, BC, on the Trans Canada Highway (#1). It's about a 3 hr drive from Vancouver, or a two hour drive from Kamloops.

By Bus - ask the Greyhound Bus driver to drop you off at the Kumsheen Rafting Resort, 6 KM east of Lytton

There are two buses from Vancouver daily:

a) Leaves Vancouver 7:30 am, arrives at Kumsheen 11:55 am

b) Leaves Vancouver at 5:45 pm, arrives at Kumsheen 10:20 pm

When should I arrive?

Depending on how far you are travelling, you may elect to arrive a day before training/work or so you can get groceries and orient yourself to the resort. Just let us know your approximate time of arrival so someone can show you around and help you find your accommodations.

What kind of banking facilities can I find in the Lytton area?

Lytton - Bank of Nova Scotia. Cash machine available.

Where do I get my groceries?

The town of Lytton is 5 kms west of the Kumsheen Rafting Resort. There are two grocery stores in Lytton, one about 3 km away and one in the Village Center.

I'm on a restricted diet - where do I get what I need?

Lytton's grocery stores carry soy products, including Soymilk, tofu and soy cheese. Rice milk is also available. The nearest gluten-free, wheat-free food products are in Kamloops, 2 hours away, so come supplied!

If I'm hired, do you provide accommodation?

We provide onsite accommodation to all employees for \$80 a month. Cooking facilities in the staff house include: cooking equipment, eating utensils, pots and pans, stoves, fridges, microwave – basically everything you need. Staff house laundry facilities are available at no cost to all staff and trainees.

I want to stay active with other recreational pursuits. What kind of recreational opportunities are available?

There are many options available in and around the Lytton area:

- Large volume and small volume rivers for kayakers and canoeists of all levels
- Rock climbing areas
- Great mountain biking
- Trails for cross-country running, hiking
- Beach volleyball courts
- Local ranches with trail riding programs
- Street hockey league

BOOKING INFORMATION

Registration - To register for the Kumsheen Raft Guide Training, call our office at 1-800-663-6667 or email rafting@kumsheen.com. A deposit of \$100 CDN is required to confirm your booking. The balance of the registration fee is due 30 days prior to the commencement of the Guide School.

Cancellations - Deposits are fully refundable if cancelled in writing a minimum of 30 days prior to the commencement of the Guide School. NO REFUNDS WILL BE REIMBURSED FOR ANY REASON FOR CANCELLATIONS REQUESTED AFTER THE 30 DAY DEADLINE.

