



## Trip Report – Alex Durrans, Timber Rafting on Klarälven, August 2017

We loved the trip it was the perfect way to sit back and relax in beautiful surroundings for hours on end. Would recommend.

My two brothers and I did the rafting adventure. We travelled by train and bus to the start point, a journey that is easy in terms of the change at Karlstad and the walking required but does take a while. We spoke to another group who had hired a car fairly cheaply so this may be something to consider.

We arrived at the canoe centre start point at 17:00 on the Monday and after some videos on river safety and the trip in general were taken to a pre built raft and shown how to assemble one. After this we were given time to practice with the instructors who were able to answer all our questions in impeccable English.

On Tuesday we were driven 45 mins up the road to the raft assembly points. Here each group is given a pile of logs and has to sort them into different sizes for the different layers, this is hard work but the team work aspect was very enjoyable. To build the rafts two or more members of the team have to get into the water up to waist/stomach level. It was mid August when we did it and the water is chilly but very tolerable. Again the instructors are on hand to help out at all times.

For the next three and a half days we drifted along listening to audio books, fishing (unfortunately we only managed to catch three at one of the camp sites), relaxing and cooking on the raft. The sun was out and I couldn't think of a more relaxing way to spend the days when it was. I went swimming when the sun was out but my brothers didn't so I would say the water would be comfortable for most but not those who get cold easily. The river's name translates as 'clear river' so it is pleasant to swim in and very refreshing after sitting in the sun.

You will have to use the oars to manoeuvre the raft to the other side of the river to avoid sandbanks, to dock etc five or six times a day this is physically challenging but not beyond the ability of any the average person.

At night we camped in the woods next to fields. You are provided a shovel so can turnover the ground and make a fire. The campsite also sells firewood for the equivalent of £10 a bag. Sitting by the fire is a great way to spend the evening and we brought a grill along so could BBQ the burgers and sausages we bought at the shop on the first day.

Unfortunately we only saw beaver lodges and heard their slaps on the water rather than the beavers themselves but did see some stoats, an eagle and lots of different other types of bird. The scenery is also very very pretty for most of the trip and for the vast majority there was nobody else on the river!

The days require early starts (we got up and left later than most groups at 8:45-9:30 and would start setting up camp at 20:00-21:00) so as to cover the distance so the one thing I would suggest is that they add an option for an extra day.

In terms of Nature Travels themselves I found the experience of booking through them very easy (I'm a returning customer having done a canoe trip last year through them). We requested to add my middle brother to the booking the Thursday before we were due to start and they were able to sort it. The information provided pre trip on how to get there, what you need etc is comprehensive and easy to follow.

In summary, we loved the trip and would recommend it to anyone who likes being outdoors!