

# Canoe & Kayak Magazine's 2009 Beginner's Guide Issue Featuring the NRS Universal Frame



## \*RAFTING // GEAR

### \*GEAR ESSENTIALS

Now all you need is the frame to rig the oars to. Consider a frame you could use on both cataraft tubes and a raft, should you ever want to diversify your inflatable fleet and on-river skills.

**Pictured:** NRS makes a universal frame (their lightest cat frame) with the requisite oar mounts and a high-back seat, plus breakdown rails for easy transport.

NRS UNIVERSAL FRAME (\$885, NRSWEB.COM) L: 108"; W: 66"; 102 LBS

#### \*GEAR ESSENTIALS



As a rafting beginner, don't invest in expensive paddles. They're the first thing to go should a passenger swim or a boat flip. That's why if you spend enough time on popular rivers, you're sure to find a durable, all-purpose, aluminum-shafted, plastic-bladed paddle. And that's all you need to get out on the water. **Pictured:** DURABLE TURNUP PADDLE, 20 1/2", \$125.95, NRSWEB.COM

oar (11.13 ounces) with removable 6-inch and 6.5-inch blades. **DURABLE HEAVY DUTY RAFTING OAR, \$125.95, NRSWEB.COM**

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When it's time to tow your own boat, don't skip on the cart. You need a solid set that can handle the inevitable abuse of transport and still allow you to keep an oar in a paddle every season. **Pictured:** Cart-tubes have long ridges on the back, tempered-aluminum Caribee



#### \*RAFT FUNDOS

Although canoes can stake the claim to a classic form both historic and beautiful, it's the diverse inflatable armada that provides the modern and democratic means for giving most people their first bit of whitewater—whether it's from a commercial raft ride or a basic in-river adventure. For hauling camping gear to family members and then doubling the load for the big home, two tubes have a few types of craft to pick from before they can leave and go.

#### RAFT

The classic and versatile 14-foot raft is ideally suited for a group of four to six paddlers (plus the most experienced boatman or guide steering from the back chamber), leaving extra space between the thwarts to rig day-tripping gear. **Pictured:** For nearly 25 years, Auer's top-selling Adventurer has been known the world over as a classic, 14-foot whitewater performer, with a self-bailing floor (typical in most rafts), two thwarts, and a protective bottom layer of polyurethane fabric. **AUER ADVENTURER, \$1,599.95, \$1,199.95 (SALE), NRSWEB.COM** L: 14'; W: 7'; 105 LBS

#### CATARAFT

For those who don't have ready access to a team of paddlers, the cataraft offers an efficient alternative, gear-hauling option. Although

two or four paddlers could paddle the dual tubes rigged to a central frame, catarafts are most often rowed solo by a rafter using a pair of oars attached to the frame. **Pictured:** A mid-size cataraft like the NRS River Cat can handle plenty of overnight camp and perform on solo-run whitewater with its stackable 25-inch diameter, multi-chamber tubes. **NRS RIVER CATARAFT, \$1,199.95, NRSWEB.COM** L: 10'; W: 10'; 105 LBS

#### INFLATABLE KAYAK

Inflatable craft suitable for the rigors of prolonged whitewater are heavy, Shamu pool toys don't cut it; one made of durable materials coated in all-weather synthetic rubber (go with Hypalon) or PVC plastic. If you choose to go with an inflatable kayak, commonly known as an IK or sometimes a ducky, make sure it's made of one of these materials. In learning to paddle rivers and to control your own craft, it's better to start in a solo IK rather than worrying about being on the same page as a boat partner—there's a good reason tandem Iks are jokingly called "divorce boats." **Pictured:** consider Tributary's line of sturdy Iks with five-year warranties and ball designs to move you from fastwater to whitewater. **TRIBUTARY DUCKY, \$899.95, \$699.95 (SALE), NRSWEB.COM** L: 10'; W: 11'; 105 LBS