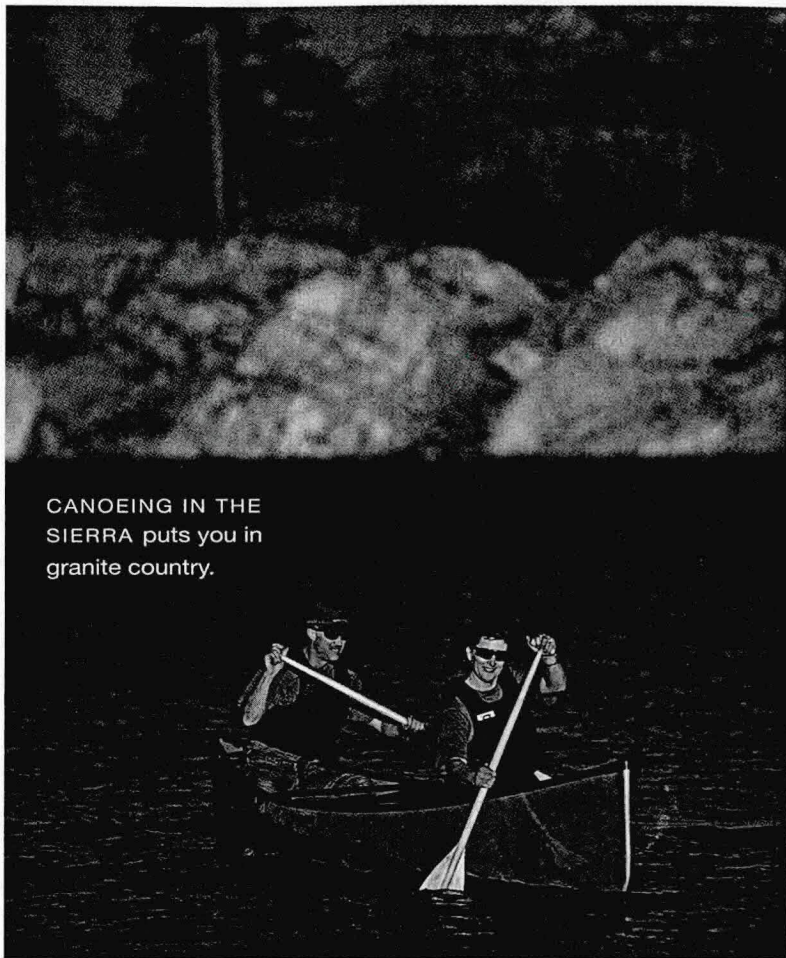


## CLASSIC CANOE ADVENTURE



CANOEING IN THE SIERRA puts you in granite country.

### Spicer Meadow Reservoir

Bear Valley, Northern California

■ Lying near the Sierra Nevada's Bear Valley, 6-mile-long Spicer bans motorized boating for more than half its length as it narrows and becomes surrounded by the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness.

You're up in granite country, with its particular rough charms, and as a bonus, a group of peaks known as the Dardanelles preside here. Enjoying a cup of camp coffee while watching the late-afternoon light set them ablaze is worth a few hours of paddling.

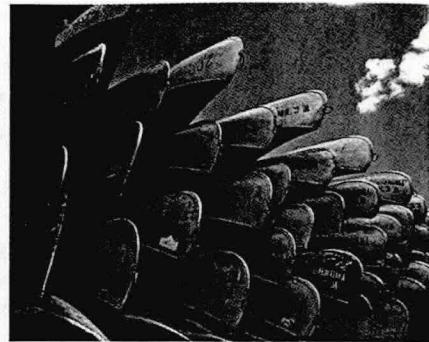
**WHERE:** From State 99 in Stockton, take State 4 east past Arnold toward Bear Valley. The exit to Spicer Meadow Reservoir is well signed, about 18 miles past Arnold.

**WHEN:** Late spring through early fall is best; you can get some wonderful days even into mid-October, and while the drawdown can leave a bathtub ring, it exposes lots of great beaches for camping.

**LOGISTICS:** Starting this season, Bear Valley Adventure Company (209/753-2834) rents canoes for \$45 a day, as does Sierra Nevada Adventure Co. (795-9310) in Arnold, for \$45-\$55 the first day, half-price each additional day. Both have foam blocks and straps for transport.

**PERMITS:** A free permit is required from the Carson-Iceberg Wilderness if you set up camp at water's edge. Permits can be obtained in Hathaway at the U.S. Forest Service office; (209) 795-1381.

**TIP:** Return in the morning to avoid strong afternoon winds. — Dale Conour



DAVID ZAITZ

### Fun day-paddles

For more day-paddles around the West, check out [www.sunsetmagazine.com](http://www.sunsetmagazine.com).

**Lake Washington, Bellevue, Washington.** Sheltered waters around Enatai Beach Park are the gateway for a 4-mile loop through the wetlands of Mercer Slough Park—expect muskrat, turtles, and nesting great blue herons in spring. Return in August for blackberries. **RENTALS:** Cascade Canoe & Kayak Centers rent canoes starting at \$10 an hour or \$25 for a half-day midweek; (425) 637-8838.

— Bonnie Henderson

**Smith and Bybee Lakes, Portland.** Near the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia rivers in otherwise industrial north Portland is the largest urban wetland in the country; sneak up on painted turtles sunning themselves on snags. **RENTALS:** By prearrangement, Alder Creek Kayak & Canoe delivers canoes to a boat access for the wetland for \$30 per half-day; (503) 285-0464. — B.H.

**Willamette River, Eugene, Oregon.** A 3-mile canoe canal fed by the Willamette winds through the old filbert orchards and open fields of Alton Baker Park—easy paddling to the accompaniment of songbirds. **RENTALS:** River Runner Supply, on a side creek a short paddle from the canal, rents serviceable canoes for \$6 an hour or \$20 a day; prospective buyers can demo the latest models; (541) 343-6883. — B.H.

#### LEARNING THE STROKES

**Seattle Area.** Cascade Canoe & Kayak Centers (operated by Dan Henderson), located in Bellevue and Kirkland; (425) 637-8838.

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