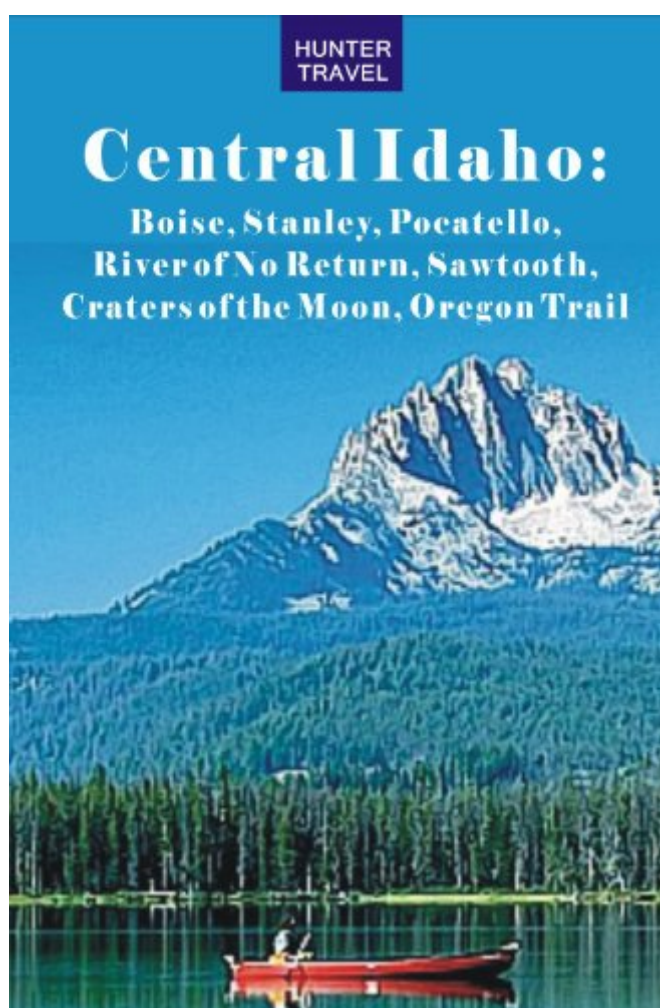


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# Central Idaho: Boise, Stanley, Challis, River Of No Return, Pocatello, Craters Of The Moon, Sawtooth, Oregon Trail (Travel Adventures)



## Synopsis

Right in the center of Idaho is the 2.3-million-acre Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness. Central Idaho offers the Gem State's most exciting, most literally down-to-earth, splash-and-dash adventures. The two big rivers running through it, the Salmon and the Middle Fork of the Salmon, attract adventurers from the world over. Ketchum/Sun Valley, Idaho's oh-so-trendy resort area, and the North Fork Road, an on-the-edge throwback to times past, point up the contrasts you will find here. This region's western border skirts the eastern edge of hourglass-shaped Region 1. The northerly line follows Hwy 12, the Wild & Scenic Lochsa River Corridor, described in Region 2. Adventure tourism drives scattered towns such as Salmon, Challis and Stanley, situated between the Snake River Corridor and the vast wilderness areas of the Salmon, Challis, Sawtooth, Boise, Payette and Nezperce National Forests. The folks you will meet here differ from Snake River Corridor residents. They are descended from early prospectors and settlers or have come in search of a frontier lifestyle. Many live by guiding visitors on river running, horse packing, fishing, hunting and other backcountry adventures. Life in the open, doing exactly what they want to do where they want to do it, gives these hardy folk a wry sense of humor and a homespun philosophy. Another brand of tourism drives the Wood River Valley, where Ketchum and the Sun Valley Ski Resort hold sway. Scratch the surface of this area's self consciously Western ethos and you'll find Madison Avenue. This huge chunk of Rocky Mountain splendor is an enormous, tantalizing saddlebag crammed with surprises. Its stunning beauty will emblazon unforgettable images on your memory; its quiet beauty will steal into your soul. This is the ancestral home of the Lemhi Shoshone, Sheepeater and Nez Perce Indian tribes. These people took sustenance from the land on which they lived and from the rivers running through it, in return treating the land with thankful reverence. Today, the Nez Perce occupy a reservation on the Camas Prairie (see Region 1), while the Lemhi Shoshone and remnants of the Sheepeater tribe share the Fort Hall Reservation with the Bannocks of Southeastern Idaho. Between 15,000 and 2,000 years ago, the area between the northeastern edge of the Snake River Plain and the thrusting Sawtooth Mountain Range experienced a series of violent, earthshaking volcanic eruptions. Lava seeping from fissures flowed south to the Snake River Canyon, creating a weird landscape comprised of layer upon layer of cooling lava. The heart of this volcanic jumble has been preserved as The Craters of the Moon National Monument. The deep volcanic ash layering the Snake River Plain is today's fertile soil. Idaho 75 slices southward through the lovely Sawtooth Valley. Granite snow-frosted peaks, stretching over 10,000 feet to grab the azure Idaho sky, march in jagged procession on the west. On the east, the less imposing White Cloud Peaks rumble off into the Challis National Forest. The young Salmon River frolics through the

Valley, having been spawned beneath 10,225-foot Bromagnin Peak. And then there are the majestic Sawtooth Mountains. The Tetons are famous for the profile presented from Wyoming's Jackson Valley, but their majesty doesn't approach the grandeur of these jagged sawtoothed peaks. Keep a southerly eye open for a tantalizing glimpse of this giant's ripping saw about five miles before Stanley Basin heaves into view. Numerous mountain lakes lie cuddled in mountain declivities. Most are accessible only via foot or horseback. Stanley Lake is an exception. Turn right at the Stanley Lake sign, drive a short way and here, glistening in a deep dish, reflecting McGown Peak, is the most charming mountain lake you'll find anywhere. You can camp here and hike a trail to Bridalveil Falls. This guide has all the details you need to know for a visit to Central Idaho - the hotels, the restaurants, what to see and more.

## **Book Information**

File Size: 2002 KB

Print Length: 160 pages

Simultaneous Device Usage: Unlimited

Publisher: Hunter Publishing (July 21, 2013)

Publication Date: July 21, 2013

Sold by:Â Digital Services LLC

Language: English

ASIN: B00E3D66MQ

Text-to-Speech: Enabled

X-Ray: Not Enabled

Word Wise: Enabled

Lending: Not Enabled

Screen Reader: Supported

Enhanced Typesetting: Enabled

Best Sellers Rank: #984,741 Paid in Kindle Store (See Top 100 Paid in Kindle Store) #7 inÂ Books > Travel > United States > Idaho > Boise #387 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Travel > United States > Regions > West > Mountain #869 inÂ Kindle Store > Kindle eBooks > Nonfiction > Sports > Outdoors & Nature > Hiking & Camping > Excursion Guides

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