TRENDING

How to Celebrate Pride Outside

Yes, there’s the 50th anniversary of Stonewall this summer. But the rainbow flag will also wave proudly in the great outdoors, at a variety of backcountry trips, hikes and tours.

By Miles Griffis

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This June, the L.G.B.T.Q. community and allies will celebrate WorldPride and commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Stonewall rebellion in New York City. But the festivities won’t be contained to that urban jungle: The rainbow flag will also wave this summer and fall in the great outdoors, in a variety of backcountry trips, hikes, festivals and tours.

Below are some standout events organized for adults, youth and families to celebrate pride with the emerging queer outdoor industry.

Adventure Trips for Adults

The queer-run wilderness education organization, The Venture Out Project, has operated L.G.B.T.Q.-specific backpacking trips around the country for teens, adults and families since 2014.

This summer, the nonprofit offers excursions for adults that include, in late June, the Queer & Trans, Black, Indigenous, People(s) of Color Classic Backpacking trip on Vermont’s Long Trail. A Queer Arctic Adventure on the shores of Hudson Bay in northern Manitoba, Canada, is planned for August. The nonprofit also organizes day hikes, queer youth trips, a family campout and service work projects throughout the year.
For those interested in white-water rafting, take pride to the river this August with the gay-owned Canyons River Company, a rafting company based in McCall, Idaho. Each year the company organizes a River Pride excursion: This year, the six-day trip, which includes wine-tasting, will weave along the Middle Fork of the Salmon River.

National Outdoor Leadership School has organized a queer trip, LGBTQ+ Canyonlands Backpacking — Prime, from Nov. 2 to 10. The nine-day backpacking adventure for adults ages 23 and up, through the ravines and slots of Utah's colorful canyonlands, will be led by L.G.B.T.Q.-identified instructors.

Around the same time, Safari Surf Adventures offers its first Surf Pride Surf Camp at Noosa Heads in Queensland, Australia. The weeklong camp is led by the openly gay professional surfer, Serena Brooke.

**Adventure Trips for Youth**

Teens can also take their pride to the river with Oregon Rafting and Service for LGBTQ Teens trip, from June 7 to 17, on Oregon's Deschutes River. The adventure ends with volunteer work at the Portland Pride Waterfront Festival and Parade. The inaugural trip is organized by Out There Adventures, another queer-run wilderness education program and Northwest Outward Bound School.

Out There Adventures will also run, working with Outward Bound California, a 12-day Yosemite Backpacking to San Francisco Urban Service for LGBTQ Teens trip from July 30 to Aug. 10. O.T.A. also partners with the Northwest Youth Corps and the National Park Service for two separate monthlong LGBTQ Inclusion Crew programs — a paid conservation service opportunity for those ages 16 to 19 in Mount Rainier National Park, Wash.

Another opportunity for teenagers in August is the Queer Wilderness Quest, an 11-day backpacking trip, including a 48-hour solo, in Olympic National Park, Wash. The adventure, from Aug. 11 to 21, is a joint collaboration between the “nature connection and ancestral skills group” Queer Nature and the Rite of Passage Journeys nonprofit.

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**Other Queer Outdoor Happenings**
Interested in climbing? Homoclimbtastic, a free four-day climbing festival outside of Fayetteville, W.Va., will run from July 18 to 21. Now in its 12th year, the event will feature daily climbing excursions on the hard-packed Nuttall sandstone of the popular New River Gorge area.

Rendezvous: Wyoming's LGBT Camping Event takes place in Medicine Bow National Forest between Laramie and Cheyenne Aug. 7 to 11. The event began as a small collection of friends camping in 1992, but now more than 500 attendees come for car, tent and mobile-home camping, as well as workshops on topics like PreP, and wet T-shirt contests.

New York City’s Get Out and Trek (GOAT) organizes events, day trips and overnight trips throughout the year. For Pride month, they offer Wet and Wild PA June 22 to 23. The trip in eastern Pennsylvania begins with a day of river drifting on the Delaware River — with white unicorn rafts — followed by a morning of hiking and waterfall repelling.

Meetup.com is another way to connect with local L.G.B.T.Q. outdoors groups for day, overnight and adventure travel trips; these include New York’s BLAZE, San Francisco’s Rainbow Sierrans, and Lez Hike, based in Redondo Beach, Calif.

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