

Inflatable boats

By Martin Straka



I used to be a keen whitewater kayaker, one of those guys who swore on his high performance hard-shell plastic kayak, and laughed when he saw 'rubber duckies' on the river.


The seeds of my conversion to inflatables were sown during a three day kayak trip down the Motu years ago. There were just two of us. Our tiny kayaks could not take all our gear and we had to leave behind stuff like mattresses and nice food in favour of safety gear, spare paddle and other essentials. Full on Spartan, but I loved it nevertheless.

The next step was later when I started taking my kids out on the river. I bought an inflatable canoe and so far all four of us have paddled some of the beautiful scenic stretches in the European Alps and most recently on rivers around Murchison. My boat packs into a compact 80 L bag that I smuggle into the boot every time when heading out for a family weekend or holiday. No roof rack, and the folded paddles fit inside, together with a pump and the life jackets. We have been enjoying our summers so much all together in my boat!


I love multiday trips and now that the kids have grown a bit, we are planning a big adventure - an overnight trip on Rangitikei. If we pack modestly we will fit with our gear into the canoe and enjoy the great outdoors all together. And this is only the beginning!



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