



Open Canoe Festival 2026

Official Rules and Regulations

Version of October 21, 2025 – applicable to the 2026 edition of the Open Canoe Festival.

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1 / Organisation

The **Open Canoe Festival (OCF)** is organised by *Outdoor et Compagnie*, a non-profit association (law of 1901) registered with the prefecture of Drôme, whose headquarters are located at:

57C chemin de la Peyrolle, 26400 Aouste-sur-Sye (France)

Phone: +33 (0)6 63 30 17 28

Website: www.opencanoefestival.com

SIRET: 750 324 766 00013

The event takes place at **Gervanne Camping**, located at:

1175 avenue des Trois Becs, 26400 Mirabel-et-Blacons (France)

Phone: +33 (0)4 75 40 00 20

Website: www.gervanne-camping.com

Gervanne Camping provides the facilities required to host the Festival but is **not responsible for its organisation**. It has its own internal rules and policies regarding bookings, accommodation, and cancellations.

These regulations apply exclusively to the Open Canoe Festival, organised by *Outdoor et Compagnie*.

2 / Presentation of the OCF (30 April – 3 May 2026)

The **Open Canoe Festival** will take place from **Thursday 30 April to Sunday 3 May 2026** in the **Drôme Valley, France**.

It is an **international gathering** of canoe-tripping and canoe-camping enthusiasts, held over three days in the Drôme valley, France.

Although primarily focused on open canoeing, the Festival also welcomes **related paddling disciplines** such as touring kayaks, inflatable boats, packrafts, and similar crafts.

It is open to participants of **all skill levels**, from beginners to experts, provided they use their **own equipment**, as the OCF does not offer rental gear.

The **Open Canoe Festival is a fully bilingual event (French / English)**.

All official communications are provided in both languages.

Workshops and activities are conducted either in French or in English, depending on the instructor's language.

The organisation encourages a spirit of **mutual assistance and language sharing** to promote understanding between all participants.

The Festival includes:

- A **welcome pack**, containing the official programme, workshop schedule, a T-shirt and a poster.
T-shirt size is selected during registration, subject to availability.
- **Workshops** on paddling techniques, safety, and canoe-camping culture: about **35 different sessions**, most of them repeated throughout the weekend.

These workshops are led by volunteer instructors from several European countries and take place on **lake, river (Class II), or on land**.

- **Meals included** in registration: three meals (Friday evening, Saturday evening, Sunday lunch).
A **vegetarian option** (no meat or fish) can be requested during registration, subject to availability.
The Sunday “local picnic” is **not vegetarian**.
Food allergies cannot be accommodated by the organisers.
- **Evening activities:** opening film (Thursday), live concert (Friday), and a raffle (Saturday).
- **Group river run (Grande Descente):** Saturday, between Sainte-Croix and Mirabel-et-Blacons (approx. 28 km, Class II), or a shorter section depending on river conditions.
This paddle is **not guided**; each participant joins **under their own responsibility**.
- **Logistical support:** shuttles for the Grande Descente and for workshops.
- **Exhibitor area:** manufacturers and distributors of canoeing and camping equipment, and other outdoor-related brands.

The full and detailed programme is available on the official website:
www.opencanoefestival.com

3 / Participation

The Festival is **open to everyone**, of any nationality.
Outdoor et Compagnie is **not affiliated with any sports federation**.

Participants must be **self-reliant** in their canoeing or kayaking practice to take part in the activities.

This implies that each participant must:

- be able to swim,
- know how to control their craft on flat water,
- understand and apply basic river safety rules,
- use their own equipment, in good condition and compliant with current safety standards.

Minors must be accompanied by a responsible adult and provide **written parental consent** to participate in water-based activities.

The Open Canoe Festival is a **non-competitive event**: there are no timed races or rankings.

It has **no link with the French Canoe-Kayak Federation (FFCK)**.

The Festival's spirit is based on **friendship, learning, discovery, and the shared experience of canoe-tripping**.

It also relies on respect for nature and the places that host the event.

Each participant commits to an **eco-responsible attitude**, preserving the river, fauna, and flora, and **leaving no trace** of their passage.

4 / 2026 Fees

- **Participant fee:** €150 per person for three days (after 30 March 2026: €160). Includes access to all river and on-land workshops.
- **Non-paddling companion:** €130 (after 30 March 2026: €140). Includes access to on-land workshops only.
- **Children (5–12 years):** €60.
Free for children under 5.

All fees include **€30 in non-refundable booking charges per paying participant**.

These cover fixed administrative and organisational costs incurred upon registration (bank fees, management tools, communication, logistics, etc.).

Participation covers the entire duration of the Festival.

It is **not possible to register for only one or two days**.

5 / Registration

Registration for the Open Canoe Festival 2026 is carried out **exclusively online**, within the dates indicated on the official website.

Payment is made by **credit card via a secure system**.

The number of participants is limited. The organisation reserves the right to **close registrations** once the maximum capacity has been reached.

No medical certificate is required, as the Open Canoe Festival is **not a competition**.

However, each participant declares that they:

- are medically fit to practice canoeing or kayaking,
- can swim,
- and hold **personal insurance** covering canoeing or kayaking, in compliance with the French Sports Code (articles L321-1 and following).

The organisation is **not responsible for verifying these declarations**.

Registration does **not include accommodation or equipment rental**. Each participant must come with their own equipment.

Workshop registration

Since 2023, registration for river workshops has been carried out separately, online, at a later stage.

Participants receive an email indicating the opening date for workshop registration.

On-land workshops can be selected directly on site during the Festival.

Each workshop has **limited capacity**, and availability cannot be guaranteed.

No refunds will be issued in case a workshop is full.

Registration deadline

The registration deadline for the 2026 edition is set to **15 April 2026**.

The organisation reserves the right to extend this date depending on the number of participants.

6 / Health measures and force majeure

If the French authorities require the cancellation of the event for sanitary reasons, or in the event of **force majeure** (as defined by article 1218 of the French Civil Code), the organisation will refund the registration fees.

Refunds will be made within a reasonable time, not exceeding two months, **minus the non-refundable booking fees of €30 per paying participant**.

These cover fixed organisational costs already incurred before cancellation.

No further compensation or indemnity can be claimed.

7 / Camping reservation

Booking a camping pitch is **not mandatory** to participate in the Festival, except for fixed accommodations (chalets, mobile homes, etc.), which require **advance booking** due to limited availability.

Given the large number of participants, **individual camping pitches cannot be guaranteed** per family or group.

Participants will be asked to **share pitches** to ensure everyone can be accommodated.

Bookings must be made **directly with Gervanne Camping**:

www.gervanne-camping.com

The internal rules of Gervanne Camping apply to all participants staying on-site, and each participant agrees to comply with them.

Outdoor et Compagnie is **not responsible** for the management of the campsite, booking issues, or accommodation-related disputes.

Booking, cancellation, or refund policies fall under the **exclusive responsibility of Gervanne Camping**.

8 / Cancellation policy

a) Cancellation for medical reasons

Participants who provide a **medical certificate** confirming an inability to attend may request a refund, **minus the €30 non-refundable booking fee per paying participant**. The certificate applies only to the named participant. Other members of the same family or group must each provide their own medical certificate.

The organisation reserves the right to refuse or verify any request deemed abusive.

Refunds will be made by bank transfer to the account used during registration, within **20 business days** after receipt of the medical certificate.

b) Cancellation for other reasons

Cancellations for any other reason are subject to a **partial refund** according to the following conditions:

- until **15 April 2026 (15 days before the Festival)**: **50% refund**,
- until **22 April 2026 (7 days before the Festival)**: **20% refund**,
- after **22 April 2026**: **no refund** will be issued.

The **non-refundable booking fee of €30 per paying participant** is included in these amounts.

These conditions take into account the **non-recoverable expenses** already incurred by the organisation (shuttles, meals, logistics, T-shirts, communication, administrative costs).

c) Transfer of registration

A participant who needs to cancel may **transfer their registration** to another person, provided that person meets all participation requirements and belongs to the same fee category (participant, companion, or child).

Transfers must be notified to the organisation **no later than 24 April 2026**.

9 / Weather conditions: resilience and adaptation clause

The Open Canoe Festival is an **outdoor event for nature and river enthusiasts**. Since its creation, it has faced all kinds of weather: floods, droughts, rain, cold, heat — and many sunny weekends.

Based on this experience, the organisation has proven its ability to **adapt the programme to any situation**, maintaining both the quality and safety of activities.

Consequently, the Festival is **never cancelled or refunded** due to weather or river conditions.

The **water level, temperature, or weather forecast** cannot be used as valid reasons for cancellation or refund requests by participants.

In the event of high water, river workshops will be **relocated or replaced** by activities on **lake or land** (technical, educational, or safety workshops).

Thanks to the large number of land- and lake-based workshops, the programme remains **complete and coherent**, even without river navigation.

If flooding or any other condition makes paddling unsafe, the organisation may cancel the planned river descents and suspend shuttle services.

In such cases, **no total or partial refund** will be issued, as the Festival is still held in full.

River navigation is **always under the responsibility of each participant**.

In the case of flood warnings, the organisation may officially request that participants do not paddle.

Participants must respect this directive. The organisers decline any responsibility in the event of non-compliance.

10 / Safety, liability and participant insurance

Participants paddle **under their own responsibility**, including during workshops and group descents.

By registering, they acknowledge and accept that the organisers cannot be held liable for any accidents or incidents occurring on the river or on site.

Each participant agrees to:

- know how to swim,
- master basic canoeing or kayaking techniques,
- follow all safety instructions given by the organisers and instructors,
- use appropriate, well-maintained equipment,
- wear mandatory safety gear, including:
lifejacket, helmet, suitable clothing (thermal and protective), closed footwear, buoyancy bags, first aid kit, throw rope, spare paddle, and waterproof phone case.

The organisation is not responsible for **natural or artificial obstacles** present on the river, even if information or advice is provided.

Outdoor et Compagnie holds **event liability insurance** in accordance with French law.

Each participant must have **personal insurance** covering canoeing and kayaking in Class II whitewater, such as an FFCK licence, Vieux Campeur insurance, or an equivalent policy.

As the OCF is **not a competitive event**, it has **no link** with the FFCK, and federation insurance applies only to licensed members.

The organisation is **not responsible for loss, theft, or damage** to personal belongings, nor for accidents resulting from failure to follow safety instructions.

Each participant remains responsible for their equipment and behaviour throughout the event.

The Festival promotes **responsible and safe paddling practices** and encourages a spirit of vigilance and kindness among participants during workshops and shared activities.

11 / Raffle rules

A **raffle** is organised during the Festival, open only to registered and paying participants. Each participant receives a **personalised ticket** upon arrival and check-in.

To win, the ticket holder must be **present under the main tipi** at the time of the draw and within hearing distance of the announcer.

The number is called **three times**; if no one responds, another ticket is drawn.

Staff members, exhibitors, sponsors, and organisers are **not eligible** to participate.

Prizes are provided by Festival partners and exhibitors.

They are **non-exchangeable, non-refundable**, and cannot be redeemed for cash. The full list of prizes is displayed at the raffle location.

12 / Image rights

By participating in the Open Canoe Festival, each participant **expressly authorises** the organisers and their partners (sponsors, exhibitors, media, institutions, or authorised service providers) to capture and use photographic or video images in which they appear.

These images may be used for:

- promoting the event,
- institutional or tourism-related communication by partners,
- on all media (print, web, social networks, video, posters, press, TV, etc.), and for an **unlimited duration**, in compliance with applicable laws.

This authorisation is granted **free of charge**, without geographical limitation or financial compensation.

It applies to both individual and group images taken during the Festival.

In accordance with the **General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR)**, participants may request the **removal or non-publication** of any image where they are clearly identifiable, by contacting the organisation at: **paul@villecourt.com**

13 / Personal data (Data Protection Act – GDPR)

Information collected during registration is recorded in a **secure database** managed by *Outdoor et Compagnie*, solely for the purposes of:

- managing registrations,
- communicating information related to the Festival,

- and, if applicable, sending updates about future editions or activities of the association.

Data are retained for **a maximum of three years** after the last participation, then permanently deleted.

No data are sold, transferred, or shared with third parties.

Technical providers (payment platform, website host) act in compliance with the GDPR.

All data are **hosted within the European Union**, and *Outdoor et Compagnie* ensures their **confidentiality and security** in accordance with legal requirements.

In accordance with the French Data Protection Act (Law of 6 January 1978) and the **EU Regulation 2016/679 (GDPR)**, each participant has the right to:

- access, modify, or delete their personal data,
- object to or restrict processing,
- and request data portability.

These rights can be exercised at any time by contacting: **paul@villecourt.com**

14 / Amendments to the regulations

The present regulations may be **modified at any time** by the organising team before the event.

Any substantial modification will be published on the official website:

www.opencanoefestival.com

The **latest version available online** supersedes all previous versions.

It is the responsibility of each participant to read the final version before attending the Festival.

15 / Informed consent

By confirming their registration, each participant declares having read and accepted the present regulations in full.

They certify that they:

- have read and understood all participation conditions,
- accept without reservation the safety and liability rules,
- can swim,
- are physically fit to practice canoeing or kayaking on flat or moving water,
- hold valid personal accident or paddling insurance,
- possess equipment compliant with safety standards,
- and have read the safety and organisational instructions provided by the Festival.

Participation in the Open Canoe Festival takes place **under each participant's own responsibility**, in a spirit of **respect, camaraderie, and goodwill**.

In the event of a dispute, **French law applies**, and the **competent courts are those of Valence (Drôme)**.

The English version of these regulations is provided **for information purposes only**. In case of discrepancy or interpretation differences, **the French version shall prevail**.

Thank you for reading these regulations — we look forward to welcoming you to the Open Canoe Festival!

Outdoor et Compagnie

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