

Riviere Blanche

Vitals

Locale: Riviere-a-Pierre, Quebec

What It's Like: A short run jam packed with good slides.

Class: IV-V pool-drop

Scouting/Portaging: Easy. Thick forest.

Level: Visual at put in.

Time: 1-2 hours.

When To Go: Peak snowmelt or after a healthy rainfall.

Info From: Many visits.

Other Beta: None.

Description

The Blanche River is a short section of whitewater found fairly deep in the forest of Quebec between Trois Rivieres and Quebec City. A bit of an anomaly for the area, the Blanche is a small stream where almost every rapid is a slide, some of them quite big. While not quite on par with the granite that makes places like California famous it is a trip worth checking out, particularly if you run multiple laps or tack it on to another nearby river trip.

The Blanche is closest to a town called Riviere-a-Pierre, which is quite a ways north off of highway 40. Check out the map linked above to get your bearings - there are many ways to drive to this town. Driving along the Batiscan River allows you to check out some of the big waterfalls along the way. When the Blanche is in, these drops are massive. From Riviere-a-Pierre you'll find the Blanche along the only road that heads north out of town - follow the main road which will turn to dirt. After entering the ZEC stay on on the main logging road and you'll eventually come to a Y-intersection and a bridge over the river marked point C on the map. Staying on river left heading upstream will bring you to the takeout (which is marked with the 24 km distance marker) where the river is flat and braided. About 2 km upstream you'll come to another bridge over the river below a small dam. Put in here. Plan on a 2 hour drive from highway 40 to the put in.

There is no gauge on the Blanche, but it is fair to say it runs during peak snowmelt in the spring, and after a good rain other times of the year. Look for spiking or high flows on the Batiscan as an indication that it will have water. It may also be appropriate to guess off the Neilson gauge - any time the Neilson was at least at 30 cms the Blanche was ok. This way if you do get skunked you can abort the Blanche plan and save your day by running the Neilson instead.

The Blanche is straightforward on the water and everything is easy to scout and portage. The first rapid is a slide to boof directly under the bridge at the put in. Starting from the eddy below the dam you have about 3 strokes before you're committed. While the line is obvious, don't drift right or you'll have a bad day. After the first flat section is a twisting flume rapid that's tricky to get right.

Next up is the first massive slide - it's called "Le Z". Scout on the left - if you're running at high water this drop gets dicey as the bottom ledge develops a bad hole backed up by a pile of rocks. Below this is another slide that drops into a short mini-canyon. There are multiple lines to be had - scout on the left or right, but if you portage it is best carried on the left.

Soon after you'll be faced with one final big horizon line. The last big one is a long, low angle slide. It's very shallow. A few more rapids will quickly end in a flat pond and after a few minutes you'll be at the takeout, ready for another lap or to head on to the next run. Have fun exploring - rumor has it there's a section lower down on the Blanche as well.

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