



Multi-Day Sea Kayak Trip Packet

This packet includes information that will help you prepare for your multi-day trip with Portland Paddle. Please review this packet before your trip and make sure everyone in your party sees it as well. Feel free to call or email us if you have questions. If your group has any special needs or preferences that we should know about please share this information in your pre-trip questionnaire or reach out to us directly. We are happy to work with you to ensure that the trip fits with your group's needs and goals.

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To-Do List for Trip Preparation

- Complete our [pre-trip questionnaire](#) at least **two weeks** before your trip. make sure to include information on dietary restrictions, medical/health conditions and gear rental needs/preferences.
- Sign our digital waiver. You should see a button in your booking confirmation email that says "Sign our waiver."
- Make sure each person in your party has completed the questionnaire and waiver.
- Review the packing list below and make sure you have everything you need.

PENOBSCOT TO ACADIA EXPEDITION TRIP ITINERARY

Here is a rough outline of the itinerary for Portland Paddle's 4-day sea kayaking expedition starting in Penobscot Bay and ending on Mount Desert Island. We do not usually have set routes for our trips. Instead, the guide(s) decide which islands to camp on and where to paddle based on the weather conditions and the group's interests and goals. We strive to customize every trip to make it as rewarding and fun as possible for each participant. The best thing about paddling on the coast of Maine is that the thousands of islands and peninsulas create endless route possibilities. Every trip is different!

DAY ONE

8:00 AM: Your group will gather at our main site at the East End Beach in Portland to be greeted by your guide. After taking care of any remaining waivers and payments, everyone will unload their vehicles so they can be moved to an area where overnight parking is permitted. The group will regroup for introductions and a brief discussion of any group goals and interests. Your guide will then tell you about your route and the weather conditions before offering a review of some basic kayaking skills and a safety briefing.

Then the group will load up in our van for the 3+ hour drive to the eastern shores of Penobscot Bay, near Stonington or Blue Hill. The drive starts on the highway and then gets increasingly scenic as the route follows the Penobscot River towards the ocean.

Late morning: Once you've arrived you'll get geared up and finish packing food and other items in dry bags and then in sea kayaks. Then you'll eat lunch and get your boat adjusted so it fits you just right.

Then it's time to hit the water!

Afternoon: After a couple hours of paddling it's time for your first stop on an island. Stretch your legs, observe birdlife, go for a walk and make any necessary adjustments to your kayak or gear.

You'll paddle onto more wild waters during the second half of the day, increasing the chances of seeing wildlife like seals and porpoise. Along the way your guide will tell you about the natural history and human history of the region.

By early evening you'll have arrived at your first island campsite on the Maine Island Trail. After unpacking the boats and setting up camp you can kick back and relax. Go for a swim, wander the coastline and trails, play games or just relax. Make sure you find the Maine Island Trail logbook so you can read the accounts of recent visitors and add your own entry.

Evening: A delicious and nourishing dinner is served. Dessert too! Watch the sun dip below the horizon as you finish up eating. There's nothing like watching the sun set on a Maine island! Grab a seat around the fire or consider going for a nighttime paddle with your guide to look for bioluminescence and watch the moonrise.

DAY TWO

Morning: Coffee, cocoa and tea will be ready by 7:30 am for early risers, followed by breakfast starting around 8:00 am. After eating the group will take a look at the nautical chart and discuss the route for the day and the weather conditions. Consider taking a few minutes to stretch before packing up your boat for the day.

By late morning the group will have finished packing boats and will be back on the water. Depending on the circumstances, you might return to the same campsite for the second night or you might take down camp and move to a different island.

Lunchtime: Stop on another island for lunch and a break. By this point you're likely to have reached the outer islands that offer sweeping vistas of the open ocean. Check out the tide pools and take in the ruggedness of the wild seas.

This middle day of the trip offers a great chance to work on your kayaking skills, and during your lunch break your guide may take the opportunity to offer some tips and feedback to help you improve your paddling. You are likely to be following a more exposed and potentially more challenging route on this day, so intermediate to advanced skills will be useful. That said, your guide will work with the group to choose a route that is appropriate for everyone's skill level and comfort zone, possibly staying in more protected waters if seas are rough.

Evening: Arrive at island campsite (either a new one or the same as the previous night), unpack boats and settle in. Many of the islands have extensive trail networks that lead to fascinating historic sites, hidden beaches and/or rocky headlands with incredible views. Take the opportunity to wander and explore or curl up and read a book by the ocean. Enjoy another tasty dinner and night by the fire.

DAY THREE

Morning: Coffee, cocoa and tea will be ready early and breakfast a little later, just like yesterday. After reviewing the day's route and discussing any final goals anyone has for the final day you'll prepare for the day's paddle.

This day may involve larger crossings or more exposed coastlines than previous days, so it is a great time to push your boundaries, with the support of your group and guide! This day may also bring you to more remote islands off the coast, such as Marshall or Isle au Haut. Depending on the water, you may instead head inland, towards the beautiful Eggemoggin Reach and Blue Hill Bay.

Afternoon: You'll visit one more island for a break and lunch. There may be opportunities to hike the trails here, to visit the campus of Maine's Wooden Boat School, or take some time for a swim. Depending on your route and the group's preference, you may camp here, or make one final push to your evening campsite, where you will settle in for another evening of delicious dinners and relaxation.

DAY FOUR

Morning: Coffee, cocoa and tea will be ready early and breakfast a little later, the final iteration of a now familiar morning routine. After reviewing the day's route and discussing any final goals anyone has for the last day you'll prepare for the paddle to the take out. Your paddle today will most likely involve crossing the open waters of Blue Hill Bay towards the peaks of Acadia. Our most common ending point is Seal Cove on the western shores of Mount Desert Island.

Afternoon: You'll visit one more island for a break and lunch. Enjoy this last taste of island life. As you land you'll be greeted by our van and driver ready to help you load up and hit the road for the drive back to Portland.

By late afternoon or early evening you'll arrive back at the East End Beach. It's time to say goodbye to everyone, take a group photo and head back to regular life. Look out for an email from your guide with photos of your trip – and please send us your photos too!

PACKING LIST

Portland Paddle will provide...

- Sea Kayaks
- Paddles
- Personal flotation devices (PFDs, otherwise known as lifejackets)
- Spray Skirts
- One medium-sized dry bag (15 liters) and one small-sized dry bag (5 liters) per person
- Drinking water (there's no freshwater on the islands)
- First Aid supplies

- Toilet paper and "wag bags" (on some islands we must carry off human waste)
- Tarp
- Small lamp
- All meals and snacks, starting with dinner the first night
- Utensils, bowls, plates, cups.
- Stove, pots, pans, etc.
- Soap and sponge
- Lighter or matches

Participants should pack...

When packing keep in mind that the coast of Maine is a rugged environment that is subject to extreme weather conditions that change quickly. You should be prepared for hot and humid weather as well as cold and rainy weather. You might experience both extremes on the same day. In general it's best to avoid cotton clothing, which won't keep you warm when wet.

CAMPING GEAR:

Most participants bring their own tents, sleeping bags and sleeping pads. However, we have a limited supply of these items to rent . If you aren't able to provide your own let us know in advance. The rental costs listed below cover the use of the item for the length of the trip.

- Sleeping bags (available to rent for \$20)
- Sleeping pad (available to rent for \$15)
- Tents (available for no additional fee, but please tell us ahead of time whether you would like one or will bring your own)

SUGGESTED PERSONAL ITEMS:

- Lunch and snacks for the first morning
- Sun protection -- sunscreen, sunglasses (w/ tether), hat with visor
- Water bottle
- Fleece or wool top
- Headlamp, or other type of small flashlight
- Non-cotton long underwear tops/bottoms or similar items to keep warm.
- Swimsuit
- Rainjacket
- Rain pants (or quick-drying pants of some sort)
- Extra pants and shirt to wear while on land
- Warm hat
- Warm socks (a couple pairs)
- Watershoes, sandals or an extra pair of shoes that can get wet
- Personal hygiene/health items (toothbrush, toothpaste, contact solution, medications).

OPTIONAL ITEMS:

- Gloves (to keep warm and/or avoid blisters from paddling)
- Waterproof binoculars
- Camera (with batteries & memory cards)
- Book to read (or nature guidebook)
- Small towels
- Insect repellent
- Mosquito netting
- Frisbee, ball, cards, portable board games, etc.
- Any necessary medications or other health-related items

***Let us know if you are missing any gear that's needed for the trip. We may be able to provide what you need. ***

A FEW TIPS ON PACKING A SEA KAYAK

We will provide one dry bag per participant plus a few larger dry bags for group gear. We suggest that you pack anything that should not get wet in a dry bag and leave out anything that can get wet. We will offer advice on packing the boats when you arrive, but here are a few thoughts to get you started:

- Weight is less important than volume when packing a kayak. Try to keep things as compact and small as possible so they easily fit into a kayak.
- Keep in mind that it may be best to pack some large items outside of your dry bags. For example, it's okay if a container of sunscreen gets wet as long as it's tightly sealed, so it does not need to take up valuable space in a dry bag.
- Kayaking is inevitably a wet sport and you can assume that you and everything in your boat will get damp or wet from dripping and splashing. Items that should stay dry must be in a dry bag or in a rugged plastic garbage bag or zip-loc bag.
- If your sleeping bag stuff sack is not waterproof, place a plastic garbage bag inside a stuff sack and then stuff the sleeping bag inside both. Make sure it is compact and sealed well. This can also work for any other gear you want to keep dry.
- The clothes you wear while paddling will likely get damp, so bring something else comfortable to wear on the island.
- Separate your items into things you need easy access to while paddling (water, camera, snacks, etc.), and those you only need while camping on the island. You can keep the first group of items between your legs or behind your seat while paddling.