



Casco Bay Traverse 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

- Sign our digital waiver and pre trip questionnaire. You should see a button in your booking confirmation email that says "Sign our waiver." Make sure to include all information on dietary restrictions, medical/health conditions and gear rental needs/preferences.
- Make sure each person in your party has completed the questionnaire and waiver. This includes ensuring that dietary and medical information is provided for all minors.
- Review the packing list below and make sure you have everything you need.

Thank you for joining an island-hopping multi-day adventure with Portland Paddle! Below you'll find a sample trip itinerary that will give you a better understanding of what our trips are like, as well as information about packing so that you have everything you need.

If you have signed up for a multi-day trip with us every member of your party must fill out our waiver and multiday trips questionnaire included in your booking confirmation. This form is where we collect information about dietary restrictions, medical/health conditions, camping gear rental needs, and any other needs or preferences you may have. We are happy to work with you to ensure that the trip fits with your group's interests and goals. If you are part of a large group trip, please ask your group organizer to forward you the confirmation email, or reach out to our multiday trips manager for assistance.

Please call us at 207-370-9730 or email us at portlandpaddle@gmail.com if you have questions. For more information on the other trips we offer, visit our website, portlandpaddle.net.

CASCO BAY TRAVERSE TRIP ITINERARY

Here is a rough outline of the itinerary for a Portland Paddle's 3-day Casco Bay Traverse. 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

Morning: 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 release forms and remaining 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 it's time to get geared up, finish packing the boats and then hit the water.

Most trips begin with paddling along the periphery of Portland harbor towards the inner islands of Casco Bay. You'll soon be in more remote waters, but this initial stage of your route is a great chance to get a fascinating close look at the working waterfront of a Maine port. Check out the lobster boats hauling traps and the sight of the Portland skyline as you begin to feel the ocean swell rolling between the islands. We'll steer clear of the oil tankers, cruise ships and Coast Guard cutters that cruise Portland harbor, but it's neat to watch them from a distance and feel their wake.

Lunchtime: After a couple hours of paddling it's time for your first stop on an island. This is a great time for you to stretch your legs, observe birdlife, go for a walk and make any necessary adjustments to your kayak or gear. After guide provided snacks, and your packed lunch the group will discuss the route for the rest of the day before launching.

Afternoon: 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. Look out for lighthouses, gorgeous 19th-century forts and other historic landmarks.

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 open vistas of the open ocean. Check out the tide pools and take in the ruggedness of the open 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 more likely to be following a more exposed and potentially more challenging route on this day, so intermediate to advanced skills will be more 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 towers 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 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 get ready to paddle back to the mainland.

Afternoon: You'll visit one more island for a break and lunch. Enjoy this last taste of island life before paddling the final stretch back to the mainland. 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 the southern end of Casco Bay.

By late afternoon 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 (15L) and one small-sized (5L) dry bag per person (additional dry bags available for rent)
- Drinking water (there's no freshwater on the islands)
- First Aid kit
- Toilet paper and "wag bags" (on some islands we must carry off human waste)
- Tarp
- Small lamp
- All meals and snacks, starting with dinner of the first night
- Utensils, bowls, plates, cups.
- Stove, pots, pans, etc.
- Soap and sponge
- Lighter or matches

Available for Rent...

- Wetsuit (for warmth while paddling and in case of immersion) (\$15)
- Neoprene socks or booties (\$5)
- Drysuit (good for early and late season paddling) (\$25)
- Additional Dry Bags (\$5 each)

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 in 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 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 (no additional charge, but please let us know if you will be bringing your own or would like to borrow for your group)

SUGGESTED PERSONAL ITEMS:

- Lunch for the first day
- 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 (neoprene booties available for rent)
- 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.