



Downeast Ramble 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.

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 [Multi-Day Trip Questionnaire](#). 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.

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.

DOWNEAST RAMBLE TRIP ITINERARY

Here is a rough outline of the itinerary for our 5-day trip on the Downeast coast of Maine. This itinerary is flexible and subject to change based on the weather conditions and the group. 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. The Downeast coast is especially rife with 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. 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 to review a gear checklist to ensure everyone has what they need. Then everyone will get in the van for the 3-4 hour drive northeast, with a couple stops along the way for lunch and leg-stretching. Along the way your guide will tell you about the region and your paddling plans for the days ahead. If you would prefer to meet us at our put in sight or somewhere along the route this may be possible, but must be coordinated ahead of time.

AFTERNOON: Eventually you'll arrive at a working saltwater farm at the end of a peninsula on Cobscook Bay. After a tour of the farm and a snack the group will head onto the water for an afternoon paddle on the bay. This is a great time to make sure that your kayak and all your gear is sized properly and working well. It's also a chance for your guide to offer you some instruction that will support you in developing your paddling skills in the days ahead.

EVENING: Your farmer hosts will provide a dinner made with many ingredients they've grown. After eating, the group will pack for tomorrow's camping trip, review the route and weather forecast. and then settle in for the night.

DAY TWO

MORNING: After breakfast the group will load into the van for a drive along the Bold Coast to the launch site your guide has chosen. Then you'll pack the kayaks, launch and paddle for a couple hours to an island where you'll eat lunch.

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.

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. Watch the sun dip below the horizon as you finish up eating. There's nothing like watching the sun set on a Maine island!

DAY THREE

MORNING: Coffee, cocoa and tea will be ready 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.

AFTERNOON: Stop on another island for lunch and a break. 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 trails or beaches to wander, and it's always fun to walk all the way around an island if its size makes that possible. Enjoy another tasty dinner, watch the sunset and swap stories with your fellow paddlers around a fire.

DAY FOUR

MORNING: After breakfast the group will review the day's route and discuss any goals anyone has for the final days of your time Downeast. Then you'll prepare for the paddle back to your next island campsite.

AFTERNOON: You'll visit another island for a break and lunch. Want to learn or develop navigation skills? Consider asking your guide for a chart and compass so they can help you plot the next leg of your paddle.

EVENING: Another delicious island dinner and sunset. Enjoy your last night Downeast!

DAY FIVE

MORNING: After breakfast the group will pack the kayaks for the last time. Then you'll start the paddle back to the mainland.

AFTERNOON: You'll visit one more island for a break and lunch before paddling the final stretch back to the mainland, where the van will be waiting for you, with whatever items you left behind inside. The group will make at least one stop on the drive back to Portland, with the goal of arriving back at Portland Paddle by 6:30pm.

PACKING LISTS

PORTLAND PADDLE PROVIDES

- Paddling Gear
 - Sea Kayaks (most boats are from Boreal Design or Seaward)
 - Paddles
 - Personal flotation devices (PFDs, otherwise known as lifejackets)
 - Spray Skirts
 - One medium dry bag per person
 - One small dry bag per person
- Camping Gear
 - Tents
 - Toilet paper and "wag bags" (on some islands we must carry off human waste)
 - Tarp
 - Small lamp
 - Lighter or matches
- Cooking Supplies
 - All meals and snacks, starting with dinner on the first night
 - Utensils, bowls, plates, cups.
 - Stove, pots, pans, etc.
 - Soap and sponge
- Drinking water (there's no freshwater on the islands)
- First Aid kit

Additional Items for Rent

Portland Paddle has cold water paddling gear and additional dry bags available for rent. If you would like to rent these items from us please indicate so in the [Multi-Day Trip Questionnaire](#). The rental cost covers the use of the item for the length of the trip.

- 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)

CAMPING GEAR RENTAL

Most participants bring their own sleeping bags and sleeping pads. However, we do have a limited supply of these items to rent. If you would like to rent these items from us please indicate so in the [Multi-Day Trip Questionnaire](#). The rental cost covers the use of the item for the length of the trip.

- Sleeping Bags (\$20)
- Sleeping Pads (\$15)

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.

SUGGESTED PERSONAL ITEMS:

- Camping Gear
 - Tent. We encourage you to bring your own, but we can provide a tent for free if you need one.
 - Sleeping Bag. We can rent you one for a fee if you don't have your own (see above)
 - Sleeping Pad. We can rent you one for a fee if you don't have your own (see above)
- Lunch and snacks for the first day
- Water bottle
- Sun protection -- sunscreen, sunglasses (w/ tether), hat with visor
- Headlamp, or other type of small flashlight
- Personal hygiene/health items (toothbrush, toothpaste, contact solution)
- Any necessary medications or other health-related items
- Clothing
 - Fleece or wool top
 - Non-cotton long underwear tops and bottoms or similar items to keep warm
 - Swimsuit
 - Rainjacket

- o Rain pants (or quick-drying pants of some sort)
- o Extra pants and shirt to wear while on land
- o Warm hat
- o Warm socks (a couple pairs)
- o Watershoes, sandals or an extra pair of shoes that can get wet

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.

***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.