



Wilderness trips are an awesome way to experience nature, learn new skills, see and meet old and new friends, and build self-confidence and independence. Wilderness trips have a great mix of fun, excitement, and challenge, and go to amazing places with fascinating stories waiting to be discovered. All Wolf Ridge trips are open to campers of all backgrounds and experiences and prior wilderness tripping experience isn't required to participate, however it is important to know what to expect on a backcountry wilderness trip. Knowing what to expect as well as being prepared for your trip is essential to having a great trip experience.

What To Expect

Sea kayaking is an ancient form of travel and takes wilderness tripping to a different level, traveling on large bodies of water often inaccessible by canoe. Kayaking trips explore very unique areas on Lake Superior and Voyageurs National Park, such as rocky coastlines, sandy beaches, remote islands, and lighthouses (Apostles and Isle Royale). You can expect to experience the freedom of wilderness travel on big water, exploring new places, and time spent around the campfire with friends. You can also expect to camp and sleep in a tent for every night on your trip, and you will usually pack up and move to a new campsite most days of the trip. Daily trip mileage can vary depending on the group and trip, but groups typically travel an average of 5-6 miles a day at Voyageurs, and 8-12 miles a day in the Apostles and Isle Royale. Daily mileage is highly variable depending on weather conditions and trip itineraries.

Traveling by sea kayak can also bring its own unique challenges, mainly traveling in wind and waves, as well as being flexible with traveling when the lake and weather allow. Big water is the boss and it has the final say on if and when the group travels to the next campsite, or if the group needs to wait on land until the weather clears. Wolf Ridge trip leaders have excellent judgment in deciding if conditions are safe enough to allow for paddling, but it also means that being flexible and being willing to "go with the flow" is an important part of being a kayaker. Depending on the weather, expect to travel in wind, manageable waves, in the early morning, in the evening, and staying on land when the weather and water are too rough.



Ways to Prepare

Here are some good ways to prepare for an upcoming canoe trip:

Stay active all year round: Staying active and healthy are an important parts of having a great time on a wilderness trip. Wilderness trips can be challenging physically for everyone, but if you stay active leading up to your trip, you will be well prepared to face the rigors of trail life. Hiking, being active outside, and playing sports are great examples of getting ready for an awesome and intense wilderness trip.

Sleep out in a tent: If you haven't done it before, sleep out for night in a tent and sleeping bag, ideally with the sleeping bag you will be using on your trip. See what kind of clothing layers you need to wear in order to stay warm through the night.

Try out kayaking: If you are new to kayaking, think about giving it a try somewhere if you have the ability and opportunity. You will have plenty of opportunities to get comfortable with kayaking on your trip and you will be a pro by the end, but the more comfortable you are with kayaking before your trip the better.

Prepare your mind: Wilderness trips are always an adventure and naturally have a flow of highs and lows, from paddling in the sun on crystal clear lakes, hearing stories about the area, and enjoying good food around the campfire, to paddling in heavy winds and carrying heavy loads across portages in the pouring rain. Be ready to be flexible, think about how you want react when things get tough, and how you will support your other trip members through challenges.