

# Paddling the Alton Lake Loop

## Adventures in Good Company's General Information

Welcome to Adventures in Good Company's canoe trips in Minnesota! We think the BWCA is one of the most beautiful areas in the country and we're excited to share it with you. We have compiled some information that may be helpful as you prepare for your journey. Please feel free to contact the Adventures in Good Company office if we can provide any additional information.

### Emergency contact information

It will be very difficult to contact you in the BWCA. Leave our office number (877/439-4042) as your emergency contact and we will do everything we can to get in touch with you.

### Weather

We've given up trying to predict Minnesota weather. It may be hot, cold, rainy, dry, humid – or all of those! Call us with questions about the packing list.

### Conditioning

Additional aerobic conditioning is unnecessary for anyone who already exercises regularly. If you don't, you will probably find that you have more energy during the trip if you start a moderate exercise program a couple of months before your trip. For example, you might start walking 3 or 4 times a week for half an hour, at a pace that is brisk enough to make you breathe deeply. Hills are good for this. Other options are working out at a health club on a stairmaster or treadmill, aerobics classes, cross country skiing or any activity that makes you breathe deeply.

You will also benefit from shoulder and arm strength. Weight training with light weights can be useful. Focus on building endurance rather than strength, meaning that more repetitions with light weights is preferable to fewer with heavy weights. Give us a call if you need more specific guidance.

What if you don't have time to start an exercising program? Don't worry, you'll be fine – just a little more tired than usual at the end of the day!

### Portaging

During a portage, the group carries the canoes, paddles, life jackets and gear along a trail connecting lakes or navigable rivers. Each woman carries what she can, and we take as many trips as necessary so that everything is moved safely. The skill of portaging requires learning to balance the canoe on one's shoulders as well as supporting the weight of the canoe. The guides provide instruction for carefully lifting a canoe and placing it on one woman's shoulders. Different canoes have different advantages and ours will weigh from 40 to 70 pounds. With different canoes and many smaller loads to carry, each woman can choose to portage whatever weight is safe and comfortable for her.

### Some fun pre-trip reading

The following may serve to whet your appetite.

*Woman of the Boundary Waters* by Justine Kerfoot-fascinating account by a woman who has lived in northern Minnesota since the 30s

*The Singing Wilderness*, by Sigurd Olson. Widely considered the poet laureate of the BWCA. Anything by him is worth reading.

*Rivers Running Free: Stories of Adventurous Women* edited by Judith Niemi and Barb Weiser. A wonderful anthology of stories both old and new.

*A Women's Way Through Unknown Labrador* by Mina Benson Hubbard. When her husband died, she had to complete his journey

*The Spirit of Canoe Camping* by Harry Drabik. A how-to-do book with good advice and appreciation of the area.

*The North Woods of Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota: A Sierra Club Naturalist's Guide*, by Glenda Daniel and Jerry Sullivan.

### Some useful web sites

Boundary Waters Journal: This journal celebrates and provides information about the Boundary Waters. Their website is also informative. You may want to look at it before your trip and subscribe after it ([www.boundarywatersjournal.com](http://www.boundarywatersjournal.com)).

Lutsen-Tofte Tourism Association: A good place to find info on accommodations in the Tofte area. ([www.61north.com](http://www.61north.com))

Ely Chamber of Commerce: A good place to find info on accommodations in the Ely area ([www.ely.org](http://www.ely.org)).

Friends of the Boundary Waters: The BWCAW has been the site of intense controversy over the years. These folks have been at the forefront of protecting it ([www.friends-bwca.org](http://www.friends-bwca.org)).

## Tipping Guidelines

Tipping at the end of the trip is optional. If you feel your guide(s) did an outstanding job and would like to reward him or her for their efforts, a suggested rule of thumb is US \$5-\$10 per person, per day. Oftentimes, trip members organize a group envelope (this makes it anonymous) and present it to the guides at the last shared meal.

## Getting here

Northwest is dominant air carrier servicing Duluth. Midwest airlines also has a few flights in and out of Duluth a day. Northwest (800-225-2525 or [www.nwa.com](http://www.nwa.com))

*If you are flying:* Since we want to be in Tofte by 4 p.m., we need to leave Duluth at 1 p.m. Depending on flight schedules you may be able to fly in the day of the trip, but some people will need to fly in the day before.

*If you are driving:* From Duluth – Take 35N to Hwy61N. Follow 61 about 80 miles to the town of Tofte. On the N side of Tofte (it is very small) you will see the sign for Hwy 2/Sawbill Trail. Turn R onto the Sawbill Trail. Take it to the end (about ½ hour), which will be Sawbill Outfitters. They have a parking lot – we will meet at the Outfitter building at 4pm.

## Lodging

If you have any gambling spirit, the cheapest way to find a hotel room is to go through Priceline ([www.priceline.com](http://www.priceline.com)). You cannot specify that the hotel is near the airport and thus you risk having to take a taxi from the airport to your hotel. However, since no hotel in Duluth (with the exception of the Radisson and Country Inn & Suites North) has an airport shuttle, this should not be a major deterrent.

If you prefer to know what you're getting into, the following are a sample of the possibilities (prices are approximate and do not include taxes)

### Country Inn and Suites – Duluth North (888) 201-1746 or 218/740-4500

4257 Haines Rd.  
Nightly rates: \$169

Located one mile from the Duluth airport and offers an airport shuttle. Other amenities include: all non-smoking rooms, pool area, exercise room, continental breakfast.

### Days Inn-Duluth (800) 329-7466 or (218) 727-3110

909 Cottonwood Ave  
Nightly Rates: \$89 - \$110

Located within walking distance to the Miller Hill mall, and 5-miles from Lake Superior. Amenities include: whirlpool, exercise room, continental b-fast, tennis, A/C, microwave.

### Econo Lodge Airport (218) 722-5522

4197 Haines Rd.  
Nightly Rates \$97.74 - \$124.99

Located one mile from the airport near the Miller Hill mall. Amenities include: free wireless high speed, continental b-fast, fitness center and indoor pool.

### Radisson Hotel Duluth-Harborview (888)201-1718 or (218) 727-8981

505 West Superior Street  
Single: \$100-\$140

This hotel is located in the heart of downtown Duluth, and 6 blocks from lake Superior and Canal park. Airport shuttle by arrangement, restaurant on premises, heated indoor pool, sauna, whirlpool

### Hampton Inn (800) 445-8667 or (218) 720-3000

310 Canal Park Drive

Single or Double: \$84-179

Near Canal Park area. 3 stories, interior corridors. Free continental breakfast, extended cable TV, small heated indoor pool, exercise room, whirlpool

## What to do in Duluth

Here are a few suggestions for spending time in Duluth before or after your trip. Everything listed is within walking distance of the Canal Park/downtown area.

Please note that Duluth is a popular tourist destination, especially in the summer and for special events throughout the year. If you plan to spend a night in Duluth, reserve a room well ahead of time.

## General visitor information:

### Museums:

Great Lakes Aquarium <[www.glaquarium.org](http://www.glaquarium.org)>

William A. Irvin <[www.williamairvin.com](http://www.williamairvin.com)>

Lake Superior Marine Museum <[www.lsmma.com](http://www.lsmma.com)>

### Stores that sell outdoor gear and/or clothing:

Located in the Fitger's building (6<sup>th</sup> Ave. East and Superior St.):

**Trailfitters** <[trailfittersduluth.com](http://trailfittersduluth.com)>

**Wintergreen Northern Wear**

<[www.wintergreendesigns.com](http://www.wintergreendesigns.com)>

**Frost River Outfitters** <[www.frostriver.com](http://www.frostriver.com)> (Made locally.)

Located in Canal Park:

**Midnight Sun Adventure Company**

<[www.midnightsunsports.com](http://www.midnightsunsports.com)>

**Duluth Pack** <[www.duluthpack.com](http://www.duluthpack.com)> (Made locally.)

### Art:

Sivertson's Gallery in Canal Park has paintings, prints, cards, ceramics, and sculpture by regional and Canadian artists <[sivertson.com](http://sivertson.com)>.

**Food:** There are numerous places to eat in Duluth, these are some of our favorites

- In Canal Park in the Dewitt-Seitz building: Lake Avenue Café (lunch & dinner), Amazing Grace (coffee, soup, sandwiches)
- Downtown (corner of Lake Ave. & Superior St.): Pizza Lucé
- In the Fitger's building (6<sup>th</sup> Ave. East & Superior St.): Fitger's Brewhouse, Lakeview Coffee Emporium (it does have a great view!)