

Autumn Paddling

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 lightweights 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).

Ely Chamber of Commerce: A good place to find info on accommodations in the Ely area (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.friend-bwca.org).

Tipping Guidelines

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

Getting here

Northwest Airlines (1-800-225-2525 or www.nwa.com) is the most frequent carrier flying into Duluth airport. Midwest Airlines also has flights to Duluth. Non-stop flights are rare.

Transportation to Ely is not included in the trip price. There are three ways to get to Ely: 1) drive your car or carpool with someone local who is on the trip; 2) rent a car in Duluth; or 3) sign up for our cost share transportation. This means that everyone shares the cost of the rental car and the gas. If you choose either of the first two options, you will also be responsible for your transportation during the trip. If you choose the third option, the van will leave Duluth at 10:00 a.m. so that we have time to stop for lunch. Therefore most people who come from out of town will need to fly in the day before. If you are driving, we will send directions in the pre-trip letter.

Lodging

Please note: that is a popular tourist destination, especially in the summer. If you plan to spend a night in Duluth, reserve a room well ahead of time.

If you have any gambling spirit, the cheapest way to find a hotel room is to go through Priceline (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 few hotels in Duluth have 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):

If you wish for us to make a pre-trip hotel arrangement for you, the ** denotes the hotel we will use. Please indicate your preferences on the Travel Form.

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

4257 Haines Rd.

Nightly rates: \$149

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) 727-898 1505 West Superior Street

Single: \$139-189

Located in the heart of downtown Duluth, 6 blocks from Lake Superior and Canal park. Airport shuttle by arrangement, restaurant, heated 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, Continental breakfast, extended cable TV, 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.

For general info, check out: www.visitduluth.com

Museums:

Great Lakes Aquarium <www.glaquarium.org>

William A. Irvin <www.williamairvin.com>

Lake Superior Marine Museum <www.lsmma.com>

Stores that sell outdoor gear and/or clothing:

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

Trailfitters <trailfittersduluth.com>

Wintergreen Northern Wear

<www.wintergreendesigns.com> (local)

Frost River Outfitters <www.frostriver.com> (local)

Located in Canal Park:

Midnight Sun Adventure Company

<www.midnightsunsports.com>

Duluth Pack <www.duluthpack.com> (local)

Art: Sivertson's Gallery in Canal Park has paintings, prints, cards, ceramics, and sculpture by regional and Canadian artists <sivertson.com>.

Food: 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: Pizza Lucé
- In Fitger's: Fitger's Brewhouse, Lakeview Coffee Emporium (it does have a great view!)

Outdoor activities:

- Walk or bike along the Lakewalk, which begins in Canal Park as a boardwalk and continues for several miles northeast along Lake Superior.
- Midnight Sun Adventure Company (in Canal Park) rents bikes and offers guided kayak tours on Lake Superior
- <www.midnightsunsports.com>
- Duluth has many miles of trails, including a section of the Superior Hiking Trail