

Dogsledding in the Northwoods of Minnesota

Adventures in Good Company's General Information

Welcome to Adventures in Good Company's dogsledding trips in Minnesota! Your friends probably think you're crazy; we think you show uncommonly good sense. We have compiled some information that may be helpful as you prepare for your journey. The front of this page has information that will be useful for everyone; the back will be primarily of interest to our out of state visitors. Please feel free to contact the Adventures in Good Company office if we can provide any additional information.

Emergency contact information

We will send you the contact information for the lodge before the trip starts. You can always call the Adventures in Good Company office (877-439-4042) and we will do our best to get a message to you.

Weather

We've given up trying to predict Minnesota winter weather. Be prepared for anything from 40 degrees below (in which case we'll be inside) to 40 degrees above. Call us with questions about the packing list.

Conditioning

Many women find that dogsledding is a more vigorous activity than they had anticipated. In addition to standing on the sled, at times you run behind it, pedal with one leg, and help the dogs get the sled up hill. In addition you are often dealing with colder temperatures and wearing more clothes than you may be used to. On the other hand you will be sharing the sled with another person, so you can switch off who is mushing and who is riding cozily bundled up in the sled bag.

Given those considerations, additional conditioning is unnecessary for anyone who already exercises regularly, including some aerobic exercise. 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 fast 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 harder. The key is to exercise at a rate that makes you work, but not so hard that you are unable to talk or gasping for breath. Aerobic conditioning is much more important than strength training.

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!

Some fun pre-trip reading

The following are easy and informational, and will serve to whet your appetite.

"Winterdance" by Gary Paulsen- anything by him is worth reading

"My Lead Dog was a Lesbian" by Brian Patrick O'Donohue. A total novice runs the Iditarod. As funny as the title suggests.

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

"Running North: A Yukon Adventure" by Ann Mariah Cook. A journalist's account of the year she and her husband moved to Alaska to run the Yukon Quest.

"Race Across Alaska: the First Woman to Win the Iditarod Tells her Story" by Libby Riddles, Tim Jones. A professional dog musher's look at the great race.

"Wolves: Behavior, Ecology and Conservation" edited by L. David Mech and Luigi Boitani. The most comprehensive wolf book ever, written by 22 world-class wolf experts and

Some useful web sites

Sled dog central (www.sleddogcentral.com): widely regarded as one of the most comprehensive dogsledding sites on the web. It's aimed primarily at mushers but has useful info for everyone

Minnesota Tourism: (www.exploreminnesota.com) There's more to Minnesota than snowflakes and mosquitoes. This web site can help if you want to extend this trip or plan future trips

International Wolf Center: (www.wolf.org). This site, in addition to giving you more information about the Center, is a great place to start learning about wolves.

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 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

If you are flying in from out of town, Northwest Airlines is the dominant carrier in the market in Minnesota (1-800-225-2525 or www.nwa.com). Midwest Airlines also has a couple of flights a day. 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 10:30 a.m. so that we have time to stop for lunch and allow for winter driving conditions. Therefore most people who come from out of town will need to fly in the day before.

Lodging

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 and do not include taxes): If you plan to spend a night in Duluth, reserve a room well ahead of time.

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 (800) 456-4000**

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.

Best Western Edgewater (800) 780-7234 or (218) 728-3601

131 West 2nd St, 2400 London Rd

Single or Double: \$152 - \$289

Located on Lake Superior, indoor water park, pool and sauna. complimentary continental breakfast. airport

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.

General visitor information:

<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> (Their clothing is designed and made in nearby Ely, MN)
- **Frost River Outfitters** <www.frostriver.com> (Made locally.)

Art:

- Sivertson's Gallery in Canal Park has paintings, prints, cards, ceramics, and sculpture by regional and Canadian artists <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 (6th Ave. East & Superior St.): Fitger's Brewhouse, Lakeview Coffee Emporium (it does have a great view!)