

Isle Royale 2008 Itinerary

September 7 – 15 (Sunday – Monday)

Sunday Sept. 7th – Meet at 5 p.m. at our motel in Grand Portage, MN. If you are flying in, the closest airport is Duluth (DLH) and we can pick you up there at 12 pm. We'll start with a discussion of what to leave behind and then share dinner and introductions. We'll spend the rest of our evening getting ready for our adventure.

Monday Sept. 8th – This will be an early morning as we pack up and head to the ferry that will take us to Isle Royale. We board the Voyageur II at 8 am and take it to Rock Harbor, about a 6.5 hour ferry ride. Once at Rock Harbor, we will walk to the camp (about ¼ mile) set up camp and if time permits go for a hike. Mileage 1-3 miles

Tuesday Sept. 9th – After a hearty breakfast we will pack up and head out on our first day of backpacking. Today we will follow the Rock Harbor Trail that parallels Lake Superior. The first three miles of our hike is one of the prettiest sections of trail on the island and is mostly within view of Lake Superior. At about mile 6 we'll pass remains of the Siskowit Mine, which was in operation from 1847 to 1855. The last couple of miles before reaching our shoreline campsite is fairly level. Hike from Rock Harbor to Daisy Farm -7.3 miles

Wednesday Sept. 10th – Our trail today takes us from the Rock Harbor Trail to the Greenstone Trail in the center of the island. We will hike past some lovely interior lakes. Once we reach the Greenstone Ridge Trail, we'll pass through thick forest and bog as well as open ridges that provide good views of Canada to the north. At the East Chickenbone Trail junction we'll turn and head to the beautiful campground at McCargoe Cove. 8.7 miles

Thursday Sept. 11th – Today we will hike the North side of Isle Royale, traversing along the scenic Minong Ridge. In the afternoon we will turn inland again and back to the Greenstone Trail via the Hatchet Lake Trail. We will camp at Hatchet Lake. 10.5 miles

Friday Sept. 12th – We now follow the Greenstone Trail – the one trail that traverses the entire length of the Island. The inland trail is quite different from the shore trails. There will still be plenty of ups and downs, but we will hike through deciduous forests that at this time of year should be turning exquisite colors. Our destination is South Lake Desor campsite – 8 miles

Saturday Sept. 13th - We will need to get an early start today as this is our longest day. Today we will hike from Desor Lake to Windigo. The trail winds through beautiful maple and birch forest, where we may possibly see moose. We will spend the night at the Washington Creek campground. Distance – 11miles

Sunday Sept. 14th – We have the morning free to pack up camp, take a short hike, and relax. We will take the ferry at 12:30 today from Windigo Harbor back to Grand Portage. We should arrive by 4pm. We will then drive to Grand Marais (about 40 minutes) where we will check into our hotel, have hot showers and then share a final dinner together at a local restaurant. Grand Marais is a charming town on the shores of Lake Superior, known for its artistic community and art galleries.

Monday Sept. 15 - You are free to leave anytime this morning. If you flew into Duluth, you can plan to fly out after 1 pm.