



Trip Summary

Paddling With Manatees

TRIP AT-A-GLANCE

Dates: January 13-16, 2011
 Location: Homosassa Springs, FL
 Cost: \$ *875
 Rating: 2
 Activities: kayaking, hiking, natural history and wildlife exploration
 Meeting Place: Tampa, FL airport or Homosassa Resort
 Arrive: 12 pm at TPA or 1:30 at resort
 Depart: 12 pm at TPA, flights for after 2pm

* Deduct 5 % for being one of the first 5 to register (by 10/13/10) and 3% of the entire trip fee when the balance is paid by check.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

- experienced guides
- three nights double occupancy lodging
- all meals from lunch on Thursday though breakfast on Sunday
- round trip transportation from the Tampa, FL airport
- kayak rental, related equipment and instruction
- entrance fees

WHAT'S NOT INCLUDED

- Transportation to Tampa
- Alcoholic beverages
- Guide gratuities

Trip Highlights

- Viewing wild manatees in the crystal clear waters of the Homosassa and Chassahowitzka Rivers from our kayaks
- Learning or reviewing basic kayak strokes and becoming confident and competent paddlers
- Viewing an outstanding array of shorebirds such as the Great Ibis, Snowy Ibis, Great Blue Heron, Anhinga, Cormorant, Wood stork, and perhaps even the Yellow Crested Night Heron
- Paddling kayaks in ancient, pristine, and unspoiled beauty
- Visiting Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park to learn more about the manatees and wildlife of the area

Trip Overview

Who can resist these gentle giants in their winter home of Florida's spring-fed rivers?? On this trip we experience the manatees up close and personal in their natural habitat, viewing them through crystal clear waters as we sit above and among them in our kayaks. This is an ideal trip both for women who know they love paddling and for those who want to give kayaking a try: you'll learn basic kayak strokes on calm waters and by the end of the weekend you will be a competent and confident paddler. Even if you discover you don't like kayaking (which we doubt), the thrill of these wondrous creatures sticking their snouts out of the water beside your kayak, as if to be petted, is simply an amazing experience.

Our Itinerary

As is true on any adventure trip, this itinerary may be modified based on weather, changes in conditions, group desires etc. While we cannot absolutely guarantee that you will see wild manatees, it is extremely likely based on experience.

Thursday: We meet at the Tampa, FL airport at 12:00 PM (if you plan to arrive that morning, please make sure your plane arrives by 11:30). Our drive to the Homosassa Riverside Resort is about 1.5 hours and we'll stop for a picnic lunch along the way. After we

CANCELLATION POLICY

In the unfortunate event that you must cancel your trip, your refund will be determined by the following formula:

Days Prior to Trip	Refund
90 + days	All but \$50
90 – 61 days	50% of deposit
60 – 30 days	50% of trip fee
29 days or less	No refund

Adventures in Good Company reserves the right to cancel or alter a trip due to unforeseen weather, unsafe conditions, low registrations or other circumstances.

On the rare occasion when Adventures in Good Company must cancel a trip, all payments received to date will be refunded, including the non-refundable portion of your deposit.

Adventures in Good Company is not responsible for expenses incurred in preparation for any canceled trips, including airplane tickets.

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 them for their efforts, a suggested rule of thumb is US \$7 to \$12 per person, per day. Oftentimes, trip members organize a group envelope (this makes it anonymous) and present it at the last shared meal.

Our Itinerary Continued

settle into our rooms, we'll head to the water for a couple of hours of instruction in our kayaks. Contrary to popular myth, sea kayaking does not require significant upper body strength; we'll teach you how to paddle safely, effectively, and efficiently so that you are not totally exhausted at the end of the day. This practice time will also help you get to know your boat and how to get it to go where you want it to. By the end of this session, you'll be ready to paddle with the manatees and enjoy your trip!! After our time on the water we'll return to our rooms and our group dining area for a hearty meal and a discussion of our plans for the rest of the trip.

Friday: We'll spend our first full day on the Homosassa River. Leaving directly from the boat ramp at our resort, we head towards Monkey Island. Monkey Island is the home to several monkeys whose ancestors were left there after a Tarzan movie was filmed on the Homosassa River in 1937. We'll take pictures but we won't venture too close as these monkeys have very nasty tempers and like to throw things at unsuspecting paddlers.

Leaving Monkey Island we'll hug the shoreline and start watching for the manatees. We'll paddle at a relaxed pace as we keep a careful watch for them. If they are curious, they may come right up to us!! Despite weighing multiple tons manatees are very gentle and slow moving so no danger to us.

We'll continue exploring the Homosassa to its end at the Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park where ill manatees are kept after rescue to be nursed back to health. The park is blocked from the water but, oftentimes, healthy manatees hang out just beside the underwater gate to the park. After lunch back at the resort, we head back to the Park, this time by land. This little gem of a park is a great place to learn more about the manatees and the other birds and mammals in the area. We'll be able to see the recovering manatees and a variety of fish through the underwater viewing station. We'll also listen to the ranger presentation on manatees and their habits.

After spending a couple of hours in the park walking among the other animals and birds that also live in this area, we'll return to our rooms for some relaxation and showers. You might opt to hang out on the deck of the group room overlooking the Homosassa River, or walk over to the decks of the Yardarm Lounge and Monkey Bar to watch the traffic on the Homosassa and the monkeys on Monkey Island. Whatever you decide to do, we'll end the day with a fabulous meal in our group dining area.

Saturday: Today we'll explore another spring fed river, the Chassahowitzka or 'the Chaz'. The Chaz is very primitive and feels ancient. You'll find yourself wondering if a T-Rex is going to stick

Our Itinerary Continued

its head over the Spanish moss draped palm trees or if a brontosaurus will be munching on the marsh grasses we paddle through. The Chaz has over 30 springs, some of which are well hidden and hard to reach. We'll pick a few and paddle to them in our kayaks in search of the manatees that like to gather in the spring's warm water. The Chaz's waters are crystal clear, abundant with colorful fish as you look towards the bottom. The springs are turquoise blue and beautiful to behold, with or without manatees. As we explore the Chaz we'll also watch for shore birds feeding in the waters. If we're lucky, we may even see a Yellow Crested Night Heron.

After our day of paddling we'll return to our resort to shower and change before our river cruise on the Homosassa. Our vessel of choice is a pontoon boat with a licensed captain who will give us narrated tour of the Homosassa. We'll explore more of the river than we were able to in our kayaks, learn more about her history, and watch the sun set on this lovely river. After the tour we'll stop at one of the local restaurants for our farewell dinner.

Sunday: After a hearty breakfast we'll leave our riverside resort for one last experience of the Chaz. This time we'll spend about an hour and half in the woods, hiking in the Chassahowitzka Wildlife Management Area. We'll follow the Cypress Circle Trail, (1.5 miles) a beautiful walk that circles a Florida landscape feature: a Cypress dome. We'll be walking on the upland sandhill, circling the wetland, and watching for birds and other creatures in this typical Florida landscape. We'll also walk the ¾ mile loop called the Wild Turkey Trace Trail. This short hike could give us good views of Gopher tortoises lumbering in these open woodlands, and their burrows off the trail and hidden from the hot Florida sun. Wild turkeys, white-tailed deer, and fox squirrels also frequent this area.

After our hike and a few last words about our adventures, we'll head back to the Tampa airport. You'll be back by noon and can fly out by 2pm.

Packing List

FOOTWEAR

- 1 pair shoes for canoeing and walking. For winter neoprene paddling booties/shoes are ideal. However, you can also wear: Solomon or Keen water shoes, Teva/Chaco sandals, lightweight hiking boots, or athletic shoes. You can expect your feet to get wet if you have to get out of your kayak.
- 1 pair of comfortable shoes for wearing around the cabin (e.g. crocs, wool clogs, slippers)
- 2 pairs hiking socks (these should fit comfortably in your paddling shoes, you may need to wear them if the weather is cold)
- 1 pair neoprene socks (optional, but nice to wear with sandals if the weather is cold)

CLOTHING

- 1 pair comfortable, lightweight pants (light wool or Supplex/nylon material). Zip offs work well.
- 1 pair of shorts (optional)
- 2 T-shirts or short-sleeved shirts, preferably synthetic or lightweight wool
- 1 long-sleeved, lightweight shirt for protection from sun, button up is ideal
- 1 pair lightweight long underwear top and bottoms: silk, wool or synthetic equivalent (Capilene, Thermastat, MTS, or polypropylene)
- medium-weight top layer: wool shirt/pull-over or synthetic equivalent (“expedition weight” long underwear, microfleece). A fleece or wool vest can work for this layer as well.
- 1 fleece jacket
- 1 rain parka and rain pants: coated nylon or a **waterproof**/breathable fabric like Gore-tex. Some people like a a rain hat as a substitute for wearing their hood while paddling.
- Underwear/nightwear
- 1 wide-brimmed hat for sun and high fashion!
- comfortable clothes to wear around the cabin (sweats, jeans, sweater, shirt)
- 1 pair paddling gloves (padded bike gloves work well unless it is cold, then neoprene gloves are a plus – see optional list)

TOILETRIES (small everything)

- Toothbrush, toothpaste, dental floss, shampoo, contact lens paraphernalia, and sanitary supplies
- Sunscreen and lip protection with sunblock of at least SPF 15
- personal “patch kit”: Band-Aids, 1 safety pin, moleskin, , cloth athletic tape, ibuprofen, personal medications, if any. **Individuals allergic to insect bites must bring an anaphylactic kit.** Please consult your physician.

ESSENTIALS

- Sunglasses (100% UV protection) w/ retention strap
- 2 one-quart water bottles or hydration system
- headlamp or flashlight with fresh batteries
- 1 daypack (lined with a garbage bag) or medium sized dry bag - large enough to hold your supplies for the day (water, snacks, raingear, extra layer, etc.)
- Bandana(s)
- Binoculars (highly recommended)

OPTIONAL

- Book, notebook, journal, pencil/pen
- Ear plugs (for a good night’s sleep!)
- Camera (extra battery) and film/memory card
- waterproof or neoprene paddling gloves (will be good if the weather is cold)
- Your favorite snack (we will also provide snacks during the day)
- wristwatch with an alarm or travel clock
- Playing cards/small game

Notes on the Packing List

CLOTHING: Layering is the most practical and efficient method of insulating the body. Several layers of varied weight materials provide better insulation than one thick layer of clothing. Also, adding or subtracting layers allows you to adjust to the temperature at your particular level of activity. The layering procedure begins with a BASE LAYER of silk or “lightweight” synthetic long underwear and liner socks. These materials draw moisture away from the skin (this is called “wicking”) and help keep you dry and therefore warmer. Some synthetic materials that we find work well include Capilene, Thermastat, polypropylene, Driclime, Helly Hansen, and Ultrawick. Over the base layer wear a second, MEDIUM-WEIGHT layer on your upper body such as “expedition-weight” Capilene or Polartec, and wool pants or a synthetic equivalent such as Polartec or Capilene fleece. Over the second layer, add a third HEAVY-WEIGHT layer. This should be a thick material such as wool, or fleece. The fourth and final layer is called the OUTER LAYER. This layer is for protection from wind and rain. Put it on over your layers, can you still move your arms for paddling? Lastly, the rain pants. They should also be comfortable, allow enough room for your layers, and permit free movement of your legs (for example, can you crouch comfortably?).

FABRIC NAMES: There are many other patented brand names used by different manufacturers, which can make it all seem even more complicated

Basically, they all have one thing in common: The synthetics do not absorb much water compared to cotton—thus, they continue to provide warmth when wet. The specific fabric name is not as important as having material with these qualities and having a variety of weights available to you as your layering system. They really *are* miracle fabrics. Wool is also a very good choice, especially some of the new clothing made by Ibex or Smartwool. It is 100% merino wool, keeps you warm and dry and is not itchy. It also doesn’t absorb the odors the way many synthetic materials do. You can also buy less expensive wool clothes at a second hand or Army/Navy store Cotton is not! **Wet cotton (even heavyweight sweats) will rob you of your body heat faster than if you were wearing no clothing at all.**

RAIN GEAR: This could be your most treasured clothing. We recommend a **two-piece rain suit**. Vinyl, coated nylon, or a waterproof/breathable fabric (such as Gore-Tex, HellyTech, Ultrex, E-vent, etc.) will do fine for this canoe trip. The advantage to having a waterproof/breathable rain suit is that as you paddle and work up a sweat, your body’s moisture is able to escape through the fabric to the outside. This will keep you much drier than a non-breathable rain suit (vinyl, nylon). If your rain gear is breathable it can double as your wind proof layer. We do not recommend a poncho because it flies about in the wind and lets water run down your paddling arms. Before making this important purchase, be sure that it fits you properly. It should be large enough to fit over all your layers. In particular, the hood needs to be effective. It should shield your face from the rain and turn with your head. Movement of your arms must not interfere with the hood. Partial or full-length leg zippers are useful for easily putting your rain pants on over your boots.

SHOES/BOOTS: Bring shoes or boots that can possibly get wet and we recommend ones that can protect your toes when we hike, such as Solomon or Keen water shoes. Lightweight hiking boots or athletic shoes are also an option, as are Teva/Chaco sandals (though it may be cool weather, so bring socks). Aqua socks could work well for the paddling portion of this trip because we don’t do any hiking. You’ll want shoes or light hikers for the last morning’s hike. This hike is flat and short in duration.

Items on your packing list can be purchased through a number of outdoor outfitters including:

Recreational Equip. Inc (REI)
800-426-4840
www.rei.com

Eastern Mountain Sports (EMS)
603-924-7231
www.ems.com

Sierra Trading Post
800-713-4534
www.SierraTradingPost.com

Also check out the websites on the Affiliate page of our website (under Resources)

Additional Trip Preparations

HELPFUL WEBSITES

Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park:

<http://www.hswsp.com/main.html>

Manatees Educators Guide (good basic information about manatees):

<http://www.hswsp.com/manatees/extensive.html>

Friends of Chaz (good info on wildlife and the Chaz National Wildlife Refuge):

<http://friendsofchazz.org/>

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.

Paddling primarily works the upper back, arms and torso/core muscles. Weight training with lightweights will be useful. Focus on building endurance rather than strength, meaning that more repetitions with light weights is preferable to fewer with heavy weights. Yoga can also be an added benefit for overall strength and stamina. Give us a call if you need more specific guidance.

WEATHER

The weather at this time of year is typically lovely winter weather. Highs are usually in the 60s or 70s during the day and lows in the 40s-50s. Occasional cold fronts do move through the area and temperatures could be in the 30s. While precipitation is less common at this time of year, it definitely could still rain.

RECOMMENDED PRE-TRIP READING

Citrus County (FL) (Images of America) by Lynn M. Homan and Thomas Reilly. Utilizing vintage images from the varied collections of the Citrus County Historical Society, the Florida State Archives, the Citrus County Tourist Development Council, and several local sources, the authors present the nostalgic and informative story of Citrus County from its earliest day to the present.

The Manatee (remarkable Animal Series) by Jean Sibbald. Written for a high school reader, this book nevertheless is a great introduction to the manatee and its habits.

EMERGENCY CONTACT INFORMATION

We will be staying at Homosassa Riverside Resort. The front desk number is: (352) 628-2474. We also advise leaving the Adventures in Good Company office number and we will do our best to get in touch with you: 877/439-4042.

Getting There

OUR TRAVEL AGENT

If you need assistance with making your travel plans, call Sara Schuitemaker at Scan East West Travel. Her toll-free number is 800-727-2157 and her email is sara@scaneastwest.com.

TRAVEL INSURANCE

We highly recommend travel insurance. We know that women never want to cancel their trips, and the reasons for doing so are always excellent. Occasionally it's a sudden illness; even more frequently it's the illness of someone they care about. Trip insurance at least minimizes the disappointment and expense during what is often a difficult time. In addition insurance covers the cost of lost baggage; medical expenses during your trip, including emergencies, repatriation, and evacuation; and trip delay. If you decide to purchase insurance, you can secure a policy through your own insurance company or enroll with the company we use, Travelex Insurance. Call 1-800-228-9792 or visit www.travelexinsurance.com. The location code is 20-0016.

TRAVEL

If you are flying, you will fly into the Tampa airport (**TPA**). It is serviced by most of the major U.S. airlines including: Delta, Continental, and American airlines. Depending on where you are traveling from, low cost competitors you might consider include: Air Tran, Jet Blue, Sun Country, Frontier and Southwest.

Please make sure your flight is scheduled to arrive by 11:30am in order to make our 12pm meeting time. You can book a flight out on January 16th after 2pm.

If you are driving to Tampa and taking our transportation form there, you can park your car in long term parking at the airport for \$15 per 24-hour period.

LODGING

Depending on your connections, you should be able to fly into Tampa the day of the trip. If not, here are some possible lodging options. Prices were current at the time, but may have changed, and do not include taxes. AAA rates may be lower. Let us know if you're interested in finding someone on the trip to share a room with and we'll try to hook you up.

If you have a gambling spirit, the cheapest way to find a hotel room is to go through Priceline (www.priceline.com). When you have a choice of area, choose the airport area. All, or almost all, of the hotels in this area offer an airport shuttle. Our guides have stayed at very nice places for \$25 or \$30 a night, a bit more with service fees and taxes but still a bargain).

If you prefer to know what you're getting into, the following are a sample of the possibilities:

Howard Johnson Express Inn and Suites – South Tampa Airport

3314 S Dale Mabry
Phone: 813-832-4656
Avg price: \$58-\$89

Newly renovated, located a few minutes from the airport. Amenities include: fitness center, heated pool, free wireless internet, and complimentary breakfast.

Getting There Continued

Country Inn and Suites Tampa Airport N

8109 Benjamin Road

Tampa, FL 33634

Phone: (813) 881-1800

Avg price: \$82-\$108

Amenities include: fitness center, heated pool, free wireless internet, airport shuttle, and complimentary breakfast.

Sailsport Waterfront Suites

2506 Rocky Point Drive Tampa, FL 33607

Phone: 866-538-0187

Avg Price: \$82-\$102

Overlooking the harbor of Tampa Bay and located four miles from the Tampa International Airport. Amenities include: outdoor, heated pool, outdoor recreational area with beach volleyball, tetherball and horseshoes and complimentary high speed wireless internet access. Complimentary gourmet coffee and Danish breakfast served each morning and free airport shuttle.