

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Arrive in Tampa, head to the lodge, and participate in kayak instruction and practice

We will meet at the Tampa, FL airport at 10:15 a.m. (If you plan to arrive that morning, please ensure your flight lands by 9:45 a.m.) The drive to the Chassahowitzka Hotel will take approximately 1.5 hours. After settling into our rooms, we will enjoy a welcome lunch before heading to the water for a couple of hours of kayak instruction.

Contrary to popular belief, kayaking does not require significant upper-body strength. We will teach you how to paddle safely, effectively, and efficiently so you won't feel completely exhausted at the end of the day. This practice time will also help you get comfortable with your kayak and learn how to maneuver it where you want it to go.

Our paddle will take place on the Homosassa River, leading to the back side of the Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park. We will stay close to the shoreline and watch for manatees, learning to spot them by the soft exhalation of air as they lift their snouts above the water to breathe and by their shape just below the surface of the clear water. If they are curious, they may even approach us! Despite their massive size, manatees are gentle and slow-moving, posing no danger to us.

After our time on the water, we will return to the hotel and gather in the group dining area for a hearty meal and a discussion of plans for the rest of the trip.

- Included Meals:** Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations:** The Chassahowitzka Hotel
- Travel Time:** Driving (1.5 hours)
- Daily Activities:** Kayaking (2 hours)

DAY 2

Kayak on the Homosassa River and visit Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park

Today, we return to our outfitter, but instead of heading up the Homosassa River, we'll turn left and paddle up the Halls River. Exploring this scenic river will enhance our kayaking skills as we spend more time on the water. Depending on conditions and where the manatees have been spotted, we may choose a different destination.

After lunch back at the hotel, we'll visit Homosassa Springs State Park—this time by land. This hidden gem of a park is an excellent place to learn more about manatees and other native birds and mammals. The park serves as a sanctuary for rescued wildlife that cannot be safely returned to the wild. We'll have the opportunity to see recovering manatees and a variety of fish through the underwater viewing station.

After spending a couple of hours in the park, we'll return to the hotel for some relaxation. You might choose to unwind on the porch or take some quiet time to yourself. Whatever you decide, we'll end the day with a delicious meal in our group dining area.

- Included Meals:** Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner
- Accommodations:** The Chassahowitzka Hotel
- Travel Time:** Driving (50 minutes)
- Daily Activities:** Kayaking (4 hours), Walking in Homosassa Springs State Park (2 hours)

DAY 3

Kayak on the Chassahowitzka River and visit Three Sisters Springs

Today, we'll explore another spring-fed river: the Chassahowitzka, or "the Chaz." The Chaz is a primitive, ancient-feeling river that transports you back in time. You might find yourself wondering if a T-Rex will peek over the Spanish moss-draped palm trees or if a brontosaurus will appear, munching on the marsh grasses as we paddle through.

The Chaz boasts over 30 springs, some of which are well-hidden and difficult to reach. We'll select a few to paddle to in our kayaks, searching for manatees that gather in the springs' warm waters. The Chaz's crystal-clear waters are teeming with colorful fish visible as you look toward the bottom. The springs, with their vibrant turquoise blue hues, are stunning to behold, whether or not manatees are present. As we explore the Chaz, we'll also keep an eye out for shorebirds feeding in the waters. If we're lucky, we may even spot a Yellow-Crested Night Heron.

After our day of paddling, we'll return to the resort to shower and change before heading to Three Sisters Springs. There, we can stroll along a boardwalk to view three different springs where manatees often gather. Tonight, we'll cap off our adventure with a memorable farewell dinner together.

Included Meals: Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner

Accommodations: The Chassahowitzka Hotel

Travel Time: Driving (1 hour)

Daily Activities: Kayaking (3 hours), Walking at Three Sisters Springs (2 hours)

DAY 4

Pack up, hike the Salt Marsh Trail, and return to the airport

After a hearty breakfast, we'll pack up and leave our riverside resort for one last experience in the area. This time, we'll spend about an hour hiking the Salt Marsh Trail. The trail and its observation tower offer sweeping views of an expansive salt marsh—a perfect way to stretch our legs before heading home.

After our hike, we'll make our way back to the Tampa airport. You'll arrive by 1:00 p.m., allowing for flights departing after 2:30 p.m.

Included Meals: Breakfast

Travel Time: Driving (1 hour)

Daily Activities: Hiking (1 hour)