

Packing Checklist

Haida Gwaii Kayaking Adventure

It is important that your clothing is made of synthetic materials or wool to retain their warmth when wet. Most synthetics also have the advantage of being quick drying. Avoid cotton clothing because they lack warmth if wet and take a very long time to dry.

Clothing

- 2 Pair 100% Synthetic fiber or Merino wool long underwear top and bottoms (mandatory, see notes)
- 1 Pair wool or synthetic fleece pants
- 1 Pair nylon or other synthetic fiber ("quick dry type") pants
- 1 Fleece pullover or jacket
- Waterproof rain jacket or paddling jacket
- 1 Pair waterproof rain pants
- 2 Pairs of light synthetic fiber "wick" socks
- 2 Pairs of wool socks
- Underwear
- 2 Pairs of shorts, nylon or other quick dry material
- T-shirts
- 1 Long sleeve shirt
- 1 Swimming suit
- Small Towel (Cascade Designs' Pack Towel is an excellent choice).
- Sun hat

- Wool or fleece hat
- Lightweight gloves or mittens for warmth
- Paddling gloves – fingerless; cycling, water ski or sailing gloves
- Bandana or buff
- Walking shoes (running shoes will suffice)
- Water shoes –Keen, Teva or Chaco type sandals, Crocs, neoprene boots or nylon running shoes
- High flexible [rubber boots](#) with no-slip tread sole (essential for keeping your feet dry and warm around camp — a frequent quote, “I was skeptical about the rubber boots but I’m really glad I brought them”.)

Personal toiletries and medications including:

- Biodegradable salt-water soap for bathing
- Lip balm with sunscreen
- Any personal medications (bring in your carry-on luggage) including seasickness prevention
- Extra tampons or sanitary napkins, secured in a zip-lock bag
- Wet Ones or other antibacterial wipes
- Sunscreen (waterproof)
- Insect repellent
- Alcohol-based sanitizer and face masks

Equipment

- Therm-A-Rest or similar full length back packing size closed cell sleeping pad

- Good quality sleeping bag, synthetic fill with compression stuff sac (see notes)
- 4 Waterproof Dry bags; 3 of 15 - 20 litre size plus another for your compressed sleeping bag (see note)
- Mesh duffle bag or carry sack (see notes)
- Sunglasses with 100% UV protection (Chums or Croakies type retainer highly recommended)
- If you wear eyeglasses or contacts, please bring along a spare set
- Small flashlight or headlamp
- Swiss Army type Pocketknife
- Water bottle 1-liter poly (Nalgene brand is excellent choice)

Optional

- 1 Waterproof bag or kayak deck bag (10 liter size for cockpit items i.e. sunscreen, hat, snacks)
- Camera with waterproof case or box –Pelican brand cases are best. (We have no way to recharge camera batteries on this expedition style tour so it is important that you bring any additional batteries you may need.)
- Snacks and Water Bottles: A variety of snack bars and individual water bottles are provided during the trip. We often stop for short snack and water breaks while kayaking. You are welcome to bring additional personal snacks and your own water bottles if you wish.
- Book
- Farmer Jane/John wetsuit to wear kayaking

Dry Bag #1: Sleeping Bag

A three-season synthetic bag that will fit into a 20L dry bag. Sleeping bag liner and pillow are optional.



Tip: Use a **waterproof Compression Stuff Sack** - Sleeping bags tend to be bulky even when put into their supplied stuff sacks. A compression stuff sack will do just as the name suggests and is available where sleeping bags are sold. When stuffed your bag must not be more than 9" in diameter and 20" in length. We highly recommend the Seattle Sports Compression Dry Bag. It is a highly durable and efficient combination of compression and water-proofing.

Dry Bag #2: Clothing

Please bring everything listed. There is duplication and you may not need everything, but in the event of getting wet or cold you will be glad you have it. While many people consider long underwear to be a winter item, it can make a world of difference on a cool summer evening and can double as leggings under shorts during the day. The biggest heat loss area is the head and a warm hat can add immensely to your comfort.

Dry Bag #3: Rain Gear

Rain Gear - It can rain on the British Columbia coast during the summer, although generally not for long stretches. The key to comfort is wearing a base layer of synthetic underwear and having good rain gear with sleeves that can be gathered close at the wrists. The PVC coated rain gear sold by Helly Hansen is the working standard on the coast; it's heavy but absolutely waterproof and doesn't breath. Good quality, sturdy, nylon rain gear is available from a number of sources; seams should be taped or sealed and wrists should have good closures. If you look at Gortex breathable jackets make certain they are intended for use around saltwater (salt water can damage some types of Gortex laminates) . Another option is a paddling jacket. Several manufacturers make these waterproof jackets with neoprene closures at the wrist and neck (Kokatat, NRS and Stohliquist are popular brands). Some models come with hoods, if not then a "sou'wester" style fisherman's rain hat should be added to make a good foul weather solution. What is not acceptable is light "K-Way" type, "featherweight", golfing-type rain wear, Frog Toggs® or "vintage" Goretex (as Gortex laminates age they become less effective and really cannot be relied upon to keep you dry in a place like Haida Gwaii).

Dry Bag #4: Personal Items and Equipment

Other notes on packing, gear and equipment:

Synthetic Fiber or Merino Wool Long Underwear - This is a critical element to comfort during inclement weather. The synthetic or Merino wool material “wicks” water away from the skin, keeping the layer closest to you warm and dry. It is available at any outdoors store. Garments that are any type of cotton blend or silk are not suitable.

Fleece (aka Pile) - Fleece garments are warm and dry quickly. They are available under a wide variety of brand names like: Patagonia, North Face, REI, MEC, Nike, LL Bean and Columbia Sportswear to name but a few. Some fleece is windproof and some is not. Given the option we’d suggest the windproof fabric.

Footwear - High flexible rubber boots (AKA Rain or Muck boots, Hunters, Wellington’s, Gum Boots....) are great for use around camp if it rains and for walking on the rainforest floor. Boots of this are available from wide range of outdoor sporting goods, work-wear and marine stores. For a variety of reasons this type of footwear isn’t always suitable for use while paddling. Kayakers have to be prepared to get their feet wet. You can either opt for light neoprene booties, Crocs (what the guides wear), water sandals like Tevas / Chacos or even an old pair of tennis shoes.

Mesh Duffle Bag or Carry Sack - These inexpensive duffles are widely available and a great for consolidating and moving your dry bags and other gear from camp to the kayaks (potentially a longish walk depending

on the tide) and on transports. Look for roughly a 36 inch size. Available from REI, MEC, LL Bean, NRS and other sources. An inexpensive but completely functional option is large Ikea shopping bags.

Pelican Cases - Haida Gwaii can provide some excellent photo opportunities but the environment can be tough on cameras. Over my now thirty-plus years of taking photos on kayaking trips I’ve tried a number of options to provide both protection and access. The absolute best solution I’ve found is to have my cameras in a Pelican® case lashed to the kayak deck in front to my cockpit. For SLR cameras the Pelican® case models; #1500, 1400 and 1300 are good choices. For compact cameras the model #1150 will work well. The trick is to drill a 1/4 inch hole in the flanges that support the box hinges to provide tie-down points. The case handle comes with holes to secure the end. We have cord and will assist with the rigging. I’m very happy to answer questions and discuss photo equipment choices for the trip. — Grant (Tofino Expeditions)

A Few Words About Packing

When it comes to packing kayaks “small is good, big is bad”. If you’re looking to buy or borrow some dry bags we recommend Cascade Designs Seal Line Baja bags as a relatively inexpensive option or any other similar good-quality PVC fabric river bag. Your local outdoor gear store should be able to help you sort through the many brands available. Other than a potentially slightly larger single bag for your sleeping bag we don’t want you to bring anything larger than the 20-liter size. Please ensure that your gear (with the exception of your sleeping bag) fits into a maximum of three bags, each with a final stuffed size no more than 9 inches in diameter and 22 inches in length. Keep shoes and boots out of the dry bags as they can be packed separately. Keep aside items such as water bottle, sunscreen, sun hat and glasses so they will be readily accessible in the cockpit of your kayak. (It’s a good idea to bring along an additional 10-liter bag so that you can have certain small essential items accessible while you’re paddling).

Essential Documents

- Passport: stored in a waterproof wallet/ ziplock bag (if applicable)
- Passport copies: please bring a photocopy of your passport (if applicable)
- Money: cash in local currency, credit/debit cards with pin number for cash withdrawals
- Air tickets and itinerary: your international and domestic itinerary and tickets (plus photocopies)
- Travel and Medical Insurance Documents
- Wild Women Expeditions Trip Itinerary: print it to bring with you on your trip
- Any entry visas or vaccination certificates required
- Approved Covid-19 Vaccination Certificate (if applicable)

Negative Covid-19 PCR Test Results (if applicable)

Packing Notes

Luggage Logistics

As a general rule, don't bring more than you can carry. This will help ensure smooth and efficient transfers in airports, customs, hotels, and loading vans/trailers/boats.

On adventure travel trips, it is best to travel with one larger check-in bag and one carry-on bag. These bags are easy to move around, can be toted easily, fit in boats, small planes, and van/bus roof racks. While on tour, your local guide will instruct you on how to prepare for travel between locations.

Most airlines have reduced the weight maximums for each bag to 50 pounds. Be sure to check with your airline for weight restrictions and carry-on allowances. When packing your carry-on, try to include what you would need to be comfortable your first few days in case your checked baggage is misrouted by the airline.

We recommend soft sided luggage or a medium duffle bag or backpack of 50 - 70 litres (your checked bag) and a medium daypack of 20 - 30 litres (your carry-on bag) for most adventures.

Prepare for lost or delayed luggage by wearing or carrying on the items that are essential to your adventure such as an active outfit and good walking shoes. In your day pack (your carry on), you should bring a full change of clothes, your waterproof jacket, toiletries, medications, camera and all paperwork.

While the summer months in British Columbia are mostly warm and sunny, there may still be a few cold and wet days. After all, the coast of British Columbia is the world's largest temperate rainforest. For maximum enjoyment on your trip in all types of weather please bring the items listed in the packing list above.

Resources for Buying Outdoor Gear & Clothing

- **Mountain Equipment Co-op (Canada) or REI (USA):** Membership is required for both but so worth it! Both companies have great learning resources, so check them out!
- **Borrow:** Why buy when you can borrow from a friend?!
- **Variety/Value Village, Goodwill and Salvation Army** are also great places to find second-hand items like sports shirts and fleece sweaters that are quick-drying, for a fraction of the price! Reduce, Reuse, Recycle!