



OPEN CANOE EXPEDITION IN ASSYNT

Overview

This trip provides a self sufficient, wilderness journey by canoe through one of the UK's remotest areas. Assynt, in North West Scotland, is a sparsely populated land of moors and lochs hemmed in by fortress like Torridonian mountains. It is unique in providing the opportunity to travel remote from habitation and roads for an extended period. It is quite possible that we will encounter no-one else during our journey. It is a brooding and spectacular landscape, perfect for reconnecting yourself to the 'real world.' It is suitable for novices and competent paddlers alike.

Date: As Advertised

Staff: **Steve Banks** BCU Level 5 Coach (Canoe & Kayak), Level 4 Coach Sea Kayak. Steve works in a very person centred and holistic manner; he is very keen to look after people so that they gain maximum benefit from their experience.

Steve is an extremely experienced and well qualified outdoor educator and has been running this amazing trip for 10 years; he knows Assynt intimately. Steve was the keynote speaker at the most recent BCU Level 5 Coach conference. You are in very good hands.

Cost: as advertised on the website

This covers the staffing and organisation of your trip. You do not have a place until you have paid. The price does not cover transport, equipment, food and any accommodation.

Experience:

This is not a technically challenging trip and novices are welcome if paddling tandem with someone with some experience. A reasonable fitness level is needed to gain maximum benefit from the week. Parents are welcome to bring along a child if they're confident they will enjoy this type of adventure. 3 children have completed this journey so far, the youngest being a girl of 8 – all have had a wonderful experience. Steve will be able to advise you if you are unsure.

Content:

The itinerary below is possibly the one to be followed though in adverse weather conditions a late change of route may be necessary. **Please note, this is primarily an adventure journey, not a coaching course or a high performance trip.**



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We will typically aim to be ready to start by 10am on paddling days with the exception of the first day or in adverse weather conditions. It is clearly not possible to be exact as so many decisions are based on conditions and client needs at the time.

Potential Itinerary:

Day 1: Meet in Assynt. Vehicle shuttle if required. Paddle on Cam Loch and portage onto Loch Veyatie. Paddle to a suitable camp.

Day 2: Paddle and explore westwards along Loch Veyatie to campsite under Suilven on the Fionn Loch.

Day 3: A day to savour your wild retreat. You can walk - Suilven, Cul Mor, Canisp etc. will be arrayed around you, or you can fish, read, canoe or just relax and enjoy the fabulous surroundings.

Day 4: Paddle/sail and portage West and South into Loch Sionascaig. Camp under Cul Mor and Stac Pollaidh - feel free to climb one if you have the energy!

Day 5: Explore Loch Sionascaig heading West towards Boat Bay. Load equipment, travel to Ullapool to camp/hostel/hotel, shower and enjoy an evening in the pub regaling each other with tales of derring do!

Transport: You can be put in touch with each other, if requested, to facilitate car sharing and to network about any aspect of the trip.

Accommodation: This is a wild camping, adventure journey for all except the final evening. In Ullapool you will be able to choose any accommodation you wish from campsite and Youth Hostel to hotel – though the latter two may require advance booking. This cost is not included in the trip price.

Equipment: You will need to provide your own equipment for this trip though before buying anything you should seek Steve’s advice. A comprehensive kit list is attached below though Steve will discuss all aspects of this trip with you to ensure you are properly prepared.

- Open Canoe with secured buoyancy
- Bow line (20m x 9mm floating polypropylene)
- Paddle and spare
- Pole





Buoyancy Aid

Knee protection (either knee pads or a foam mat)

Anything you can make a sail with and extra lines

Range of outdoor clothing for possible weather conditions and falling in - you must have 2 complete changes of dry and warm gear!

Any extra gear you need for mountain walking, fishing etc.

Camping gear i.e. tent, stove, lighter, sleeping bag and mat

Food and drink, water containers – the platypus/flexiflask type are best.

Head Torch and spare batteries

Sunglasses, suncream and lip protection

Map 1:50,000 Landranger No. 15 Assynt, Map case, Compass.

Personal 1st Aid kit and medication

Washing kit and towel (please bring biodegradable soaps etc).

Trowel and toilet roll

Stowage systems:

There are several ways to tackle this though a very good one is to use two small waterproof barrels (approx 2' high x 1' diameter) – not the larger barrels. Place all equipment which must remain dry in these. Everything else can be placed in a variety of small dry bags which then go into a large portage sack or rucksack with shoulder straps. By this method everything fits easily into the boat and all gear can be portaged, when necessary, in one go. Barrels can often be obtained freely, ask Steve about this.

Questions and Comments:

If you have any questions or other thoughts on this exciting trip please do contact Steve to discuss them – he will be very pleased to hear from you and will do everything possible to assist.

Contacts:

All numbers and email address at foot of page.

Due to high staff/client ratios and the highly disruptive effect of late withdrawals, any course cancelled within 30 days of the start will incur loss of all fees. If you have any concerns regarding your ability to participate in a course on which you have enrolled you are strongly advised to take out appropriate insurance. Steve Banks Outdoors is not in a position to indemnify clients against any illness, injury or other misfortune which may affect attendance. If a course has to be cancelled a full refund will be given.

