



Cold Climate Paddling

The thrill of visiting wild and remote regions on an expedition to Antarctica, Patagonia, the Arctic and the scattered isles of western Scotland is elevated when you're actively engaged in the environment. In our inflatable kayaks, you can paddle safely among brash ice and along rocky shorelines where penguins and fur seals might be sunning themselves.

'Getting out amongst it' is our philosophy, and that is exactly what we do. When you sign up for our Paddling activity, you join in our shore landings, and have the added bonus of being able to get out and explore in a kayak.

In a small group of up to six paddlers, you will have a Zodiac dedicated to your group and two guides to look after you and to scout out ideal locations to enjoy a fun and calm paddling experience.

Our stable and sturdy inflatable kayaks are the ideal craft to explore hidden bays, beaches and rocky shorelines looking for wildlife going about their daily activities. You might see Adélie penguins darting around you or, perhaps, an Antarctic fur seal slipping off its rock as you glide past a touch too close for its liking. Your experienced guides will look for wonderful opportunities for you to enjoy a paddle, and safely explore these stunning locations.

When we visit the polar regions, the elements play an important role. Our Paddling program is suitable for most beginner paddlers, and we will only offer a paddling excursion in calm conditions. Bring along your adventurous and positive attitude and you will have an unforgettable experience.



Required experience

Our Paddling Activity is suitable for novices and no prior experience is required to participate. However, you must be able to swim comfortably in deep water.

Fitness requirements

You must be able to walk on loose, uneven surfaces such as gravel or pebble beaches. You must also be able to get into your inflatable kayak at knee level. Although our Paddling activity requires no prior experience to participate, you are more likely to enjoy the experience more if you are moderately fit and undertake some regular gentle exercise at home, such as walking and biking.

Number of outings per voyage

Our Paddling activity is done as a part of our regular Zodiac landings, and when the weather is suitable for the activity, you can choose to paddle or spend your time ashore. We aim to have you paddling once per day, perhaps twice, depending on the conditions and what other thrilling outings the expedition team have in their plans for the day.

Group size

Our guide to paddler ratio is 1:6, and we provide an accompanying safety Zodiac.

There is a maximum of 6 places available for Paddling.

Age limit

Paddlers should be aged 14 or over.

Our guides

Our guides have many years of kayaking experience and are some of the best in the field. They will guide the group both during regular landings ashore and while paddling.

The inflatable kayaks

We use expedition inflatable kayaks by Advanced Elements that are designed for recreational use in coastal/open water environments. Our inflatable kayaks accommodate two paddlers.

The kayaks are extremely stable and we generally launch from the safety of the shore, in shallow water.

In the unlikely event that you fall into the water, your guide is on hand to assist. With drysuits and warm clothing underneath you will always be comfortable in cold water.

Booking allocation:

Each paddling spot is allocated to one person only.

Passengers are unable to 'share' a paddling place as the kayaks and drysuits are distributed individually for the duration of the voyage.



Equipment included

- Inflatable kayaks
- Carbon composite paddles
- Male and female goretex dry suits with waterproof socks attached
- Safety equipment
- Male and female life jacket
- 15-litre dry bag
- Neoprene boots (available sizes 4-14)
- Pogies (insulated mittens that attach to your paddle)

What to bring

You will be required to bring your own clothing to wear under your dry suit. We recommend:

- Thermal top and bottoms: one light-weight and one medium-to heavy-weight. Wool is excellent.
- Two pairs of pile or polar fleece pants
- Gloves: two pairs, one thin and one thick. Note: pogies are provided for use during paddling but we recommend a pair for underneath and/or on shore landings during the activity.
- Socks: Heavy thermal socks (2 pairs)
- Head gear: Warm cap, beanie or balaclava
- Waterproof sunscreen blockout and lip balm

- Sunglasses with side visors and tie or string for attaching them to prevent loss
- Water bottle: 1 to 2 litre capacity. Note: complementary water bottles available upon request.
- Waterproof binoculars: Recommended for wildlife viewing from the kayak
- Drybag, waterproof bag or Pelicase for camera/phone

.Wind, ice and weather

During summer the air temperature in the Antarctic Peninsula is generally above freezing, but can range from -4°C to +5°C (24.8°F to 41°F). The water temperature in the polar regions is close to freezing. In combination with the winds that sweep off the glaciers, paddling can be a thrilling yet chilling experience. Scotland, Iceland, Norwegian coasts are warmer with water temperatures around 12 °C (53.6°F).

If the weather changes during our outing the excursion, we may cancel the paddling activity and continue with the shore landing or return to the ship. The ship's captain, expedition leader and kayak guide always maintain close contact to ensure a safe paddling experience.

Activity Surcharge

The Paddling activity is available for an additional surcharge and includes the services of two guides, a safety zodiac and kayaking equipment. Please refer to our website for the cost of Paddling on your chosen voyage.



Frequently asked questions

Can I carry anything in the inflatable kayak?

Yes, you will be supplied with a drybag for extra clothing, binoculars and anything that needs to be kept dry. You should also carry a water bottle. You are also welcome to bring along your own 5-10 litre drybag for personal items.

Can I bring my camera?

Yes, but we highly recommend a waterproof camera or phone, or a good quality waterproof case. Pelican cases are highly recommended for good cameras. A 1300 or 1400 model Pelican case is well suited for this activity if your camera and lens combination fit. However, you may be able to strap a larger case onto the back deck of the kayak.

What if the weather changes during an outing?

Our paddling activity is generally done in combination with a shore landing and we paddle close to shore. Your group will have a dedicated safety Zodiac, and your guide will be in constant radio contact with our ship captain and expedition leader if additional support is required.

What about paddling through ice?

The inflatable kayaks are made of a soft multi layer pvc plastic and are easily paddled through small patches of brash ice. We manoeuvre around the larger ice chunks and floes.

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance including emergency evacuation coverage, is mandatory on all Aurora Expeditions voyages. You will need to ensure that your insurance policy covers you for your activity and any related equipment. An additional policy or premium may be required to ensure you have adequate coverage. Please contact Aurora Expeditions if you need assistance with your insurance policy.

Can I share my paddling place?

No. Each paddling place is for one person only. Passengers are unable to 'share' a kayaking place as the kayaks and drysuits are individually issued and fitted for the duration of the voyage.

What if I decide I don't want to paddle?

It is your choice how often you want to paddle. If you decide to spend more time during a landing to explore ashore, you just need to let your guide know in advance. However, we do encourage you to get out as much as you can! Please note that the activity surcharge is non-refundable and we are unable to assist you if change your mind once on board. If you decide to fully cancel your participation in the activity during the voyage, please be aware that you will not be entitled to a refund - neither partially nor fully. Contact our team for further details on our kayaking cancellation policy.

For more information please contact your travel agent, or Aurora Expeditions on:

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