



SEA KAYAK CLUB

Sea Kayaking in the Polar Regions with *Sea Spirit*

Kayaker Booking Packet

Dear kayaker,

Thank you and congratulations for adding Sea Kayak Club to your polar voyage with *Sea Spirit*! In order to confirm your spot in the program, there are just two more things we must ask you to do.

Firstly, please have a look through this packet. This is your definitive source for information on Sea Kayak Club in three sections:

The **Preparation Notes** (page 2) section describes what you can expect while in Sea Kayak Club and how you can best prepare yourself for this extraordinary adventure.

The **Terms and Conditions** (page 6) section explains in plain language all the rules governing your booking, membership and participation in Sea Kayak Club, including our refund policy. There is also detailed information about the waiting list.

The **Frequently Asked Questions** (page 10) section offers detailed answers to all your additional questions, including those related to Sea Kayak Club membership requirements.

Finally, once you have reviewed this packet to your satisfaction, please take a moment to complete the **Kayaker Statement** (attached). We kindly ask you to submit this required form via email at your earliest convenience. Soon after we receive your form, you can expect to receive a letter confirming your spot in Sea Kayak Club.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office or your travel agent with any questions you may have.

Happy paddling!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ian Jansma". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Ian Jansma
Sea Kayak Club Coordinator



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Preparation Notes

What to expect

In **Sea Kayak Club** you can expect a unique and world-class paddling experience. The polar regions offer some of the most interesting, demanding and rewarding sea kayaking opportunities in the world. Our seasoned expedition team and professional sea kayak guides are at your service to deliver the adventure of a lifetime. As with any genuine adventure, what you get out of the program will depend partly on what you bring and put into it. Please read on to discover what you can expect from us and what we will expect from you.

Small group experience:

Sea Kayak Club is limited to 8 participants per voyage in the Arctic and 16 participants per voyage in Antarctica. You will get to know your kayak guides and your fellow kayakers well. Your safety and enjoyment will be enhanced by teamwork and mutual respect.

Uncompromised safety:

On the water you will be part of a guided paddling group in our exceptionally stable double sea kayaks. You will have one or more qualified sea kayak guides leading your group and helping you in and out of the kayaks at all times. The guide to kayaker ratio will always be at least one to eight (1:8). In addition, there will always be a dedicated safety Zodiac (rescue boat) accompanying your paddling group on the water. Safety gear is carried in the Zodiac to ensure a speedy recovery in the unlikely event that a kayak capsizes. Your kayak guides will give a comprehensive Sea Kayak Club orientation before your first paddle and safety briefings throughout the voyage.

Quality equipment:

We provide all the specialized sea kayaking equipment and paddling gear you will need to have a safe and enjoyable time in the polar environment. Our Prijon double sea kayaks are extremely tough and stable. We also provide high-quality Kokatat paddling suits and PFDs, as well as other gear (more below). All of our kayaks and gear are well organized and maintained in excellent condition. We carry enough of all sizes to ensure that everyone feels safe and comfortable in our gear. You will be encouraged to help us care for and clean the gear you use.

A variety of conditions:

Paddling conditions will vary. Calm conditions are likely to exist in some of the protected bays and fjords we visit. However, it is also possible to encounter strong winds and seas with moderate chop and swell. Water and air temperatures will both be around 0°C (32°F). Kayaking will not be initiated if conditions seem to pose an unacceptable risk, but in the polar regions there is always the possibility of rough weather and seas developing suddenly without warning.



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A real workout:

Paddling times and distances will vary between voyages and between excursions. On any given kayaking session you will be on the water for between one and three hours and you may paddle as much as six nautical miles (10 kilometers). Our purpose will not be to paddle a marathon, but the more we paddle the more we will see and experience. Your kayak guides will discuss anticipated times and distances prior to each paddling excursion. However, your kayak adventures may end up being unscripted and spontaneous, depending on ice, weather and wildlife.

Choices:

Sea kayaking is offered at the same time as other activities, such as Zodiac cruising and shore landings. Occasionally kayaking can be combined with these activities; other times you will have a choice to make. On excursions where it is offered, kayaking is optional to each participant individually. Your kayak guides will hold pre-excursion meetings to help you choose your activity, with the aim that over the course of the voyage you will achieve your preferred balance of shore landings, Zodiac cruises and kayaking sessions.

Trustworthy paddling companions:

All participants in Sea Kayak Club are required to have appropriate fitness, good health and previous kayaking experience. Participants are also expected to demonstrate team spirit and an attitude of cooperation. This is for the safety and enjoyment of everyone in the group. For more information please see our *Sea Kayak Club Terms and Conditions*.

How to prepare

Please read on to discover how you can best prepare for a safe and satisfying adventure with us.

Your mind:

Perhaps the most important preparation you can make is to prepare your mind with the right attitude. Although there will be many safeguards in place, you will nevertheless be embarking on a *real adventure*. Participation in Sea Kayak Club will often be relaxing and carefree; at other times it may be challenging and even stressful. It will always require your full engagement, concentration, cooperation and flexibility. Each excursion will be different and we must all do our best to make the most of every situation. Although we have tried here to provide you with appropriate expectations, you are asked to put aside any preconceptions you may have.

Your skills:

The best way to prepare yourself for Sea Kayak Club is to practice your kayaking skills beforehand. All participants are expected to have some experience in a sea kayak and basic paddling skills. The more comfortable and confident you are in a kayak, the more you will enjoy your time with us.



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If you have no kayaking experience at the time of your booking, you will need to acquire some before you join the ship. This is important not only for the safety of yourself and the group, but also for your enjoyment. We recommend, regardless of your previous experience, that you rent a sea kayak or, better yet, take sea kayaking lessons for at least two days before you join us. Even if you only have access to a lake, be sure to go out in a proper sea kayak (as opposed to a “sit-on-top” kayak or canoe) with a spray skirt and preferably a foot-controlled rudder system for steering. Practice basic paddle strokes and make sure you can perform an emergency “wet exit” if the need arises. Practicing self-rescue techniques will boost your confidence, though we do not require you to have these skills. You do not need to know how to perform an Eskimo roll.

Your body:

Sea Kayak Club members are expected to have appropriate fitness and good health. As a practical benchmark for fitness, you should have the strength and agility to lunge yourself out of a pool without the use of a ladder. You must also be able to swim. Acquire fitness, experience, and skills—and have fun—all at the same time by going out in a sea kayak as much you can before joining us!

What we provide

You will be pleasantly surprised by the quality and condition of our gear as compared to other sea kayak programs and rental outfitters you may have experienced.

Sea kayaks:

On board *Sea Spirit* we have Prijon Excursion EVO double sea kayaks with rudder steering. These tough, stable kayaks are ideal for occasional rough conditions and paddling through brush ice. Please note that the maximum hip width accommodated by our kayaks is 45 cm (17¾ in) and the recommended paddler weight range of these kayaks is 70 to 110 kg (154 to 242 lbs). Our rugged Prijon Bora paddles are fixed at 225 cm, the ideal length for our relatively wide kayaks.

Paddling gear:

You will also be outfitted with top-quality, extreme-weather kayaking gear, including a Kokatat paddling suit (unisex sizes: S-XXL), spray skirt, paddling-specific PFD (life jacket), unisex paddling booties (EU sizes 39-48, equivalent to US men’s sizes 6-14) and neoprene pogies.

How to pack

You will need to bring the clothes that you will wear under your provided paddling suit. Appropriate inner layers for kayaking can also be used underneath your rain pants and parka while on deck, in the Zodiacs or on shore. So you do not necessarily need to pack twice the gear to go kayaking.



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Dressing for the conditions:

What you wear inside your paddling suit will depend on the conditions, which can vary substantially between excursions. Air temperatures will normally range between -5°C (23 °F) and +10°C (50°F). Cloud cover, wind and precipitation can dramatically affect how it feels outside. On cloudy, breezy days with freezing rain or snow, it can feel brutally cold. But remember also that you will be engaged in a strenuous physical activity in a paddling suit that uses trapped air as insulation. So the possibility of overheating and becoming wet (and then cold) from perspiration must also be considered. The layering principle should be observed, but keep in mind it will not be possible to add or remove layers while on the water inside your paddling suit.

Clothing:

Nylon, polyester (fleece), polypropylene and merino wool are the preferred fabrics for paddling. Cotton is not appropriate due to poor heat retention when damp (e.g., from perspiration). Your base (regulation) layer should be moisture-wicking thermal long underwear (lightweight for bottoms, medium-weight for top). Your insulating layer should be comfortable non-cotton trousers/pants and a medium-weight, non-bulky, long sleeve fleece top, preferably without a hood. The provided paddling suit will be your waterproof layer. Air trapped inside the suit will provide additional insulation.

For your head:

A fleece or tight knit wool hat (beanie or tuque) is essential. Bring an extra in case one gets wet. In addition, a neck tube or balaclava will protect your face and neck against the cold polar winds. A wide-brimmed hat or cap is advisable for UV protection on sunny days. Donning and removing your headwear will be your primary method of thermoregulation while kayaking.

For your feet:

Your feet will be completely dry in your paddling suit and special socks are usually not necessary. However, thick socks (preferably wool or fleece) are recommended if your feet are prone to cold.

For your hands:

The purpose of our neoprene pogies (paddling mittens) is to provide protection from the elements for your hands without compromising your grip on the paddle shaft. In very cold and/or windy conditions you may be more comfortable wearing fleece or wool glove liners inside your pogies. You should bring an extra pair of these in case your first pair gets wet. Durable dishwashing gloves with a tactile grip also make good liners that have the benefit of keeping your hands dry.

For your eyes and skin:

UV (ultra-violet light) protection is essential in the polar regions, even on cloudy days. Bring polarized sunglasses, a wide-brimmed hat or cap, plenty of waterproof sunscreen and lip balm.



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Terms and Conditions

Please read this document fully and carefully. Your participation in Poseidon Sea Kayak Club is conditional upon your agreement to the provisions herein.

I. Booking

Sea Kayak Club is limited to 8 participants on Arctic voyages and 16 participants on voyages to Antarctica. Sea Kayak Club is filled on a first-come, first-served basis. It is highly recommended that you book your spot in Sea Kayak Club at the time you book your voyage. You are welcome to request a spot on Sea Kayak Club after booking your voyage, but this will be subject to the availability at the time of your request. With the exception of those joining the Waiting List and last-minute bookings, payment of the fee for kayaking is due no later than the time of final cruise payment. The fee for kayaking is refundable in some cases (see Section XVI below).

II. Kayaker Statement

To confirm your booking, you are required to complete and submit our *Kayaker Statement* indicating that you meet the membership requirements that have been established for the safety and enjoyment of all participants in Sea Kayak Club (please see Section VI below). After requesting your spot on Sea Kayak Club, you will have 30 days to submit the *Kayaker Statement*. If, for whatever reason, you do not submit the *Kayaker Statement* in that time, you risk forfeiting your spot in Sea Kayak Club. With the exception of last-minute bookings, you are required to submit the *Kayaker Statement* before joining the vessel.

III. Medical Information Form

If you have one or more of the medical conditions or problems listed in Section 1 of Poseidon Expeditions' required *Medical Information Form*, then you must get a statement from your doctor indicating that you are able safely to engage in sea kayaking activities and that your medical condition(s) will not in any way affect your participation in Sea Kayak Club. Please use the *Sea Kayak Club Preparation Notes* as a reference for what participation in Sea Kayak Club will involve and entail. Your kayak guides will have access to your *Medical Information Form*. Regardless, prior to commencement of any kayaking activities, you are required to declare to your kayak guides any medical issue, condition, problem or illness you may be experiencing.

IV. Letter of Confirmation

Upon our receipt and review of your completed *Kayaker Statement*, you will be confirmed. You may be sent a personalized *Letter of Confirmation*. Please be aware that possession of a *Letter of Confirmation* does not necessarily guarantee your suitability for participation in Sea Kayak Club (more below).



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V. Assumption of Risk and Liability Waiver

Prior to commencement of kayaking activities, you will be required to sign a legal document whereby you acknowledge and assume all risks associated with Sea Kayak Club.

VI. Membership Requirements

In consideration of the fact that the polar regions are among the most remote and inhospitable regions of the world, and of the fact that sea kayaking is an inherently risky activity, we have established the following requirements for participation in Sea Kayak Club to help ensure the safety and enjoyment of all participants. At the time of your participation in Sea Kayak Club:

- a) you must have a level of physical fitness appropriate for sea kayaking (including the ability to swim),
- b) you must be in sufficiently good health for sea kayaking (please see Section III above),
- c) you must have previous experience in a sea kayak,
- d) you must be able to understand and respond to kayaking instructions in English, and
- e) you must be at least 16 years old (kayakers under age 18 must be accompanied by a parent or representative during all kayaking activities as per our *Child Policy*).

VII. Refusal of Participation

Passengers who do not meet the membership requirements in Section VI may pose an unacceptable safety risk to themselves and others and are therefore asked not to join Sea Kayak Club. Meeting the requirements is a good indication that you will have a safe and enjoyable time with us, though it is not a guarantee. Your kayak guides and expedition leader will have the ultimate right and responsibility to judge your suitability for participation in Sea Kayak Club. Please be aware that you may be refused the right to participate in Sea Kayak Club if it is deemed that your participation would expose you, your fellow paddlers or your guides to an inappropriate or unacceptable level of risk to safety. The judgment of the responsible staff on board the ship will be final. If you are refused participation in Sea Kayak Club before commencement of kayaking activities, then you will be issued a full refund of your kayak fee but we will not otherwise be liable.

VIII. Limitation of Participation

Your kayak guides have the right and responsibility to limit your participation in Sea Kayak Club for reasons of safety, as in Section VII. Based upon the degree to which you meet the requirements in Section VI and/or your proficiency as observed by your guides, you may be refused the right to participate in certain kayaking sessions as dictated by the location, weather, paddling conditions or other factors that may increase the safety risk posed by your participation. If it is determined by your guides before commencement of kayaking activities that you may not be fit for some of the kayaking locations and conditions that may be encountered over the course of the voyage, you will be advised accordingly and given a chance to withdraw from the program for a full refund of your kayak fee. If you choose to continue with the program, even if you are not so advised, you will not be entitled to a refund if you are not able to participate in any/all kayaking sessions.



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IX. Your Responsibilities

Your membership in Sea Kayak Club comes with certain responsibilities. At all times while participating in kayaking activities, whether on the water or on land:

- a) you must not behave in an unsafe or disruptive manner,
- b) you must not be intoxicated,
- c) you must comply with any and all instructions given by your kayak guides, and
- d) you must be respectful of your fellow participants.

If you do not uphold these responsibilities—or if indeed, for any reason, your participation is deemed to increase the group’s risk to safety or to be a significant detriment to the success or enjoyment of the group—then your kayak guides and expedition leader have the right and responsibility to limit or revoke your right to participate in Sea Kayak Club at their discretion. The judgment and decision of the responsible staff on board will be final. No refund will be issued if the limitation or revocation of your right to participate is based upon your failure to uphold your responsibilities.

X. Additional Responsibilities

- a) If you wish to participate in kayaking activities on excursions where it is offered, you must attend pre-excursion information and safety meetings held by your kayak guides.
- b) Before each kayaking session, it is your responsibility to tell us about any condition (e.g. fatigue, hangover, seasickness, sore muscles, illness, etc.) that may affect your performance.
- c) For your safety, while kayaking you must wear the paddling suit and life jacket provided; if you bring such gear of your own it must be approved by your kayak guides.
- d) You must alert your kayak guides immediately if you ever notice a problem with your kayak, equipment or any paddling gear you are using.

XI. Kayaking Opportunities

The number of kayaking opportunities on your voyage will depend on the itinerary, as well as weather and ice conditions. The expedition leader and kayak guides will determine which excursions are appropriate for kayaking based on observed and expected conditions, site suitability and other factors. Kayaking is not intended to take place during every excursion. A reasonable expectation would be around three to five kayaking opportunities on your voyage, but there are no guarantees. No refund will be issued if we are unable to provide you with a full kayaking experience due to weather, ice conditions, medical emergency or any other circumstances beyond our control.

XII. Your Experience

We will do our best to provide you with a kayaking experience as described in Poseidon Expeditions’ brochures, website and other promotional material. However, because our ability to do so is heavily dependent on weather and other factors outside of our control, we do not guarantee any particular outcome with regard to location, wildlife, weather, ice or anything else.



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XIII. Non-transferability

Once on board the vessel, your spot in Sea Kayak Club or the Waiting List cannot be transferred to any other person. Also, your spot in Sea Kayak Club cannot be shared with any other person(s).

XIV. Emergency Evacuation Insurance

You must ensure your emergency evacuation and medical insurance coverage does not exclude adventure activities such as sea kayaking. You may be asked to provide proof of coverage appropriate to your planned activities. Regardless, you will be held fully responsible for any and all medical and evacuation expenses incurred as a result of insufficient insurance coverage.

XV. Waiting List

If the maximum number of participants allowed for your voyage have already booked Sea Kayak Club (that is, if the Kayaker List is full) at the time of your request, you may have the opportunity to book a spot on the Waiting List. All the terms, conditions and requirements (such as booking, confirmation and membership requirements) outlined in these *Terms and Conditions* apply to the Waiting List and its members. As such, before joining the vessel, Waiting List members must be confirmed by submitting a signed Kayaker Statement. The only exception is that you are not required to pay the kayak fee until such time as you move onto the Kayaker List. Your position on the Waiting List will be based upon the date you book your spot. As space in the program becomes available, you will progress toward the Kayaker List in order of your Waiting List position. If you are still on the Waiting List when your voyage begins, then you should still attend the Sea Kayak Club orientation meeting with those on the Kayaker List. If space in Sea Kayak Club becomes available before the commencement of kayaking activities, then passengers on the Waiting List will have the chance to take the spots in order of their position on the Waiting List. Once kayaking activities have commenced, the Kayaker List is finalized and no additions or substitutions will be made.

XVI. Refunds

Even if you have been confirmed in Sea Kayak Club, you have the option, at any time before commencement of kayaking activities, to withdraw from the program for a full refund of any kayak fee paid. You will also receive a refund of your kayak fee if, before commencement of kayaking activities, you are refused participation in Sea Kayak Club. If your participation is denied after commencement of kayaking activities, you may not be entitled to a refund depending on the circumstances as per Section IX. If your participation in Sea Kayak Club is limited for any reason, you will be issued neither a full nor a partial refund.

XVII. Document Version

This document may be changed without notice. In case of any discrepancy, the version of *Sea Kayak Club Terms and Conditions* most recent at the time of your voyage will apply.



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Frequently Asked Questions

What is Sea Kayak Club?

Sea Kayak Club is the name of the sea kayaking option offered on selected *Sea Spirit* voyages with Poseidon Expeditions. Participants have the opportunity to experience the thrill and tranquility of sea kayaking in the polar regions as part of a guided paddling group. Sea Kayak Club is a genuine small-group experience and a memorable adventure in a unique and stunning wilderness setting.

How amazing is sea kayaking in the polar regions?

Totally amazing. Words are insufficient to describe it. The Arctic and Antarctica offer some of the most interesting, demanding and rewarding sea kayaking opportunities on the planet. If you enjoy sea kayaking, then sea kayaking in the polar regions is an experience not to be missed. However, contrary to what some people say, it is not “the only way to experience the polar regions”. Whatever way you choose to experience these incredible places, it will be totally amazing.

Is Sea Kayak Club right for me?

Sea Kayak Club is designed for recreational sea kayakers who are ready to challenge themselves in an extreme environment under the supervision of our professional sea kayak guides. With adequate preparation, just about anyone possessing a reasonable level of fitness and coordination, a positive and flexible attitude, and a passion for real adventure will find value in the program.

How many people can join?

Sea Kayak Club is limited to 8 participants per voyage in the Arctic and 16 participants in Antarctica.

When should I sign up?

Space in the program is limited, so to secure your spot we recommend that you sign up at the time of booking your voyage. The option can be added after booking your voyage, but there is the chance it will already be sold out by then.

Is sea kayaking in the polar regions safe?

Safety is our top priority. We have a comprehensive Risk Management Strategy that exceeds industry standards. An important component of this strategy is our policy requiring that kayakers meet certain fitness, health, experience, age and language requirements. However, we would be remiss not to mention that the polar regions are some of the most remote and inhospitable environments on Earth, and that sea kayaking is an inherently risky activity.



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What is the fitness requirement?

Sea kayaking is a physical activity that requires strength and stamina. Therefore, Sea Kayak Club participants are expected to be reasonably fit. As a general rule, anyone who engages regularly in physical outdoor activities, such as hiking and paddling, will meet the requirement. As a practical test, make sure you have the strength and agility to lunge yourself out of a pool without the use of a ladder. You must also be able to swim.

What is the health requirement?

Good health is necessary for your safety and enjoyment in Sea Kayak Club. If you have any of the medical conditions or problems listed in our “Medical Information Form”, please get a statement from your doctor indicating that you are able safely to engage in sea kayaking activities.

How much previous kayaking experience do I need?

All participants are expected to come with at least some relevant kayaking experience. By “relevant” we do not necessarily mean experience kayaking on the sea. Rather we simply mean experience in a sea kayak, even if it was in fresh water. A “sea kayak” is a sit-inside kayak where you wear a spray skirt to prevent water from entering your cockpit—as opposed to a “sit-on-top” kayak or canoe. You do not necessarily need to have experience on coastal waters or in rough conditions. We simply expect you to be familiar and confident with paddling a sea kayak. If you feel safe and confident in a sea kayak, and you genuinely enjoy paddling for its own sake, then you are ready for Sea Kayak Club. Even still, it cannot hurt to get more experience. The more skill and experience you have, the more you will get out of your adventure with us. We recommend, regardless of your previous experience, that you refresh and improve your skills by taking sea kayaking lessons appropriate to your level. Practice basic paddle strokes and make sure you can perform an emergency “wet exit” if the need arises. Learning self-rescue techniques will boost your confidence, but we do not require you to have these skills. You do not need to know how to perform a roll.

What if I have no previous kayaking experience?

If you have no kayaking experience at the time of your booking, you will need to acquire some before you join us. If you are reasonably fit and in good health, then you should be able to meet the experience requirement quickly. The quickest and most effective way to gain experience and skills is to take sea kayaking lessons. Be sure to learn basic paddle strokes and how to perform an emergency “wet exit”. The more experience you get, the more you will enjoy your time with us.

What is the language of Sea Kayak Club?

Sea Kayak Club is conducted in English only. For the safety and enjoyment of the entire group, it is required that all participants be able to understand and respond to kayaking instructions in English.



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What is the minimum age allowed?

Sea Kayak Club participants must be at least 16 years old at the time of their voyage. Children who are under age 18 at the time of their voyage are allowed to participate in Sea Kayak Club only if they are accompanied and supervised at all times during kayaking activities by a parent or representative as per Poseidon Expeditions' *Child Policy*.

How often will we go kayaking?

The number of kayaking opportunities on your voyage will depend on the itinerary, as well as weather and ice conditions. Your expedition leader and kayak guides will determine which excursions are appropriate for kayaking based on observed and expected conditions, site suitability and other factors. A reasonable expectation would be around three to five opportunities during your voyage, but there are no guarantees.

How long will we typically be out on the water?

Paddling times and distances vary between voyages and between excursions. On any given kayaking session you will be on the water for between one and three hours and you may paddle as many as six nautical miles (10 kilometers). Our purpose will not be to paddle a marathon, but the more we paddle the more we will see and experience. Your kayak guides will discuss anticipated times and distances prior to each paddling excursion. However, your kayak adventures may end up being unscripted and spontaneous, depending on ice, weather and wildlife.

Will I get the chance to experience ice from a kayak?

Sea kayaking is a great way to experience ice in the polar regions. On most of our polar voyages ice is encountered as a matter of course, especially in Antarctica. However, be aware that ice is not encountered in the Falkland Islands and only rarely around South Georgia Island. If you are interested in seeing large icebergs, then the Antarctic Peninsula, as well as Greenland, will likely have what you are looking for. Spitsbergen does not have many large icebergs but it is a place where you may see calving glaciers and sea ice.

Will I be able to get close to icebergs and glaciers?

Icebergs and glaciers are spellbinding natural features of incredible beauty. They can also be deceptively enormous and highly unstable. Despite their apparent serenity and repose, they present the most formidable hazard encountered by sea kayakers in the polar regions. Therefore, there will be strict limits on how close you are allowed to approach icebergs and glaciers. Staying safe around ice is a matter of careful judgment which will be the responsibility of your kayak guides. You will be required to stay with your paddling group and to obey all instructions given by your



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guides. All that being said, you do not have to be very close to these features to appreciate their immensity and otherworldly beauty. You will get plenty close enough.

Will I have close encounters with whales and other wildlife in a kayak?

One of the objectives of Sea Kayak Club is to encounter unique polar wildlife in its natural habitat. Seeing a whale or other marine mammal from a kayak is an unforgettable experience. However, kayakers do not necessarily get closer to wildlife than do other cruise passengers. The chances of having a close encounter with a whale or seal are about the same whether you are in a kayak or in a Zodiac. Kayakers simply tend to have more intimate and personal experiences. Kayakers are required to follow IAATO / AECO guidelines concerning distances to wildlife. Under no circumstances will we approach a polar bear in the water.

Will I be able to paddle off on my own?

You will be required to stay with your paddling group. Together you will have the freedom to explore a wide area and to take advantage of good kayaking locations and conditions that may exist away from the ship. We realize that solitude and quietude are important aspects of the paddling experience for many kayakers. When deemed safe and appropriate by your guides, you may be given leave to venture farther away from the group. In addition, on various other occasions, “quiet time” will be established so that everyone can appreciate the remarkable peace and quiet of the polar wilderness.

Will I have to choose between landings and kayaking?

Sea kayaking is offered at the same time as other activities, such as Zodiac cruising and shore landings. Occasionally kayaking can be combined with these activities; other times you will have a choice to make. On excursions where it is offered, kayaking is optional to each participant individually. Your kayak guides will hold pre-excursion meetings to help you choose your activity, with the aim that over the course of the voyage you will achieve your preferred balance of shore landings, Zodiac cruises, and kayaking sessions.

What kind of paddling conditions might we face?

Paddling conditions will vary. Calm conditions are likely to exist in some of the protected bays and fjords we visit. However, it is also possible to encounter strong winds and seas with moderate chop and swell. Water and air temperatures will both be around 0°C (32°F). Kayaking will not be initiated if conditions seem to pose an unacceptable risk, but in the polar regions there is always the possibility of rough weather developing suddenly and without warning while you are out on the water.



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What kind of kayaks will we use?

Participants use Prijon Excursion EVO double sea kayaks with rudder steering. These tough, stable kayaks are ideal for occasional rough conditions and paddling through brash ice.

Will I be able to take photos from my kayak?

Sea kayaking will give you a unique perspective from which to capture incredible photos of polar scenery and wildlife. You will be provided with a small waterproof dry bag so you can take your compact digital camera with you kayaking. Large SLR cameras are cumbersome to carry and difficult to keep dry inside a kayak, and are therefore not recommended for use while kayaking. If you have a small waterproof camera, consider bringing a pole attachment that allows you to operate your camera underwater while keeping your hands dry. You will have many chances to take photos from your kayak, but please keep in mind that the best use of your camera will be to record the adventure and to capture magnificent moments as they come. There will be plenty of time to organize professional photo opportunities during your voyage while on the ship, on shore or on a Zodiac cruise.

What is the best time to go kayaking in Antarctica?

Each part of the Antarctica season has something special to offer kayakers. The early summer months (November and December) see the most ice. The late summer months (January and February) are the best months to see whales. Inclement weather in March can make for less frequent kayaking, but the whale watching is at its prime. Seals and penguins can be encountered all season.

What is the best time to go kayaking in the Arctic?

Sea kayaking in the Arctic is equally amazing all season long (May through September).

Do I need to get special insurance to join Sea Kayak Club?

All passengers on Sea Spirit voyages to the Arctic and Antarctica must purchase travel medical insurance, which should include emergency evacuation and repatriation. We recommend coverage of at least USD 200,000. Passengers participating in Sea Kayak Club must ensure that their policy does not exclude adventure activities like sea kayaking.