

SEA *Kayaking*



One of the best things about a voyage to Antarctica is that you're never done exploring! Even if you think you have climbed every mountain, walked every shore and visited every penguin rookery, there is still a whole other world to explore on the water.

In our Sea Kayaking Program, you will have the chance to experience the unforgettable thrill and serenity of kayaking in Antarctica as part of a small, expertly guided paddling group. Enjoy towering icebergs, crackling brash ice and spectacular landscapes from our stable and stealthy sea kayaks! So if you enjoy sea kayaking, then don't miss your chance to paddle the world's most interesting and rewarding sea kayaking destination!

Is Sea Kayaking for you?

If you're looking for a unique and intimate way to experience Antarctica, Sea Kayaking is for you! An adventurous attitude is a must, and it's important to understand that conditions play an important role with this excursion.

While kayaking occurs only when the sea is calm, a good level of experience and fitness is a requirement as conditions can change quickly – we are in Antarctica after all! Even if your experience is limited, we'd encourage you to speak to your booking agent to discuss your suitability as there is often ample time to gain the experience you need before you depart.

What to expect

For a kayaking excursion, you'll be split into small groups and get into Zodiacs (with the kayaks being brought behind you). Each kayaking expedition generally runs for between two and four hours, depending on the weather. The weather will also impact the number of kayaking opportunities you will have throughout the voyage.

Safety precautions

You will be guided by a minimum of one cold-water kayak instructor per group and a safety Zodiac will always be close by. All kayakers will be provided with detailed information before the first excursion and will need to carefully follow their guide's instructions. For your own safety, you will need to verify that your travel and medical insurance covers kayaking and sign a waiver before embarking.

The minimum age for participants is 16 years, must have prior experience and be an efficient swimmer.

Clothing and equipment

All equipment, guides and a dry suit are provided for every traveller who has booked Sea kayaking. If you bring your own dry suit, it must be checked by the kayaking guide before the activity begins to ensure it is safe. You will be guided as to what to wear under your dry suit before the first excursion.

Secure your place

Sea Kayaking places are limited, so we recommend booking sooner rather than later to avoid disappointment.



Most travellers head to Antarctica for the once-in-a-lifetime experience of getting up close to some of the natural world's most unique and striking wildlife. Sea kayaking is one of our most popular adventure travel options, and it's no wonder. The vantage point offered as you sit just above the surface of the Southern Ocean and its many Antarctic Peninsula bays is spectacular.

With our kayak master, Brandon, you'll have the chance to paddle around the edge of glaciers and past icebergs of white, green and blue. Brandon developed an intense interest in adventure and the natural environment from an early age. Growing up in Cape Town, South Africa Brandon's passion for both water-based activities and ocean conservation came from his childhood surrounded by the sea. As an APA certified Sea Kayak Guide, he has spent the last few years fulfilling this enthusiasm in the slightly cooler waters of Antarctica, Northern Europe and the Arctic. Having studied Environmental Management, Ecotourism and Disaster Risk Management, he hopes to combine his studies with travel and share his passion for the natural world as an Antarctic kayak guide.

What can you expect from Sea Kayaking?

Adding Sea Kayaking to your Antarctic adventure means that you will be part of a small team that breaks off from the main group and paddles together as often as possible. You will have a different experience from your fellow travellers: while they will split their excursions between zodiac cruises and shore landings, as kayakers, you will head out for a long paddle and a shorter shore landing.

Do I need to be an experienced kayaker? How physically fit should I be?

The most challenging part of Sea Kayaking is usually getting into the kayak itself. After you have mastered that, you will learn how to keep a rhythm going through the icy water. Antarctic Sea Kayaking does require some previous kayaking experience as you need to be comfortable doing a wet exit. Conditions can also be

unpredictable so be prepared for changes to weather and sea conditions. The ability to do a kayak roll isn't required but you should be able to demonstrate that you're comfortable in a sea kayak. A moderate level of fitness is required as kayaking can be demanding on your arms/core and you should also have a good sense of balance.

How big are the groups?

Each group excursion involves up to 16 kayakers.

How many times will I go kayaking?

Each kayaking expedition generally runs for between two and four hours, depending on the weather. Up to four excursions throughout the expedition will be scheduled, but please be aware that kayaking is strictly subject to weather and water conditions. Safety is number one priority and the expeditions will not run if we do not deem the conditions fit enough.

What will I see?

Sea kayaking is a beautiful way to be close to Antarctic nature. When you kayak, you can reach down and touch the water. You can seize the ice floating past and watch penguins, seals and whales glide through the water just inches from you. Incredible scenery is guaranteed – rugged shorelines with snow-capped mountains in the background, pristine untouched shorelines, icebergs that can turn the water beneath you a brilliant blue. The quiet nature of kayaking also makes it an excellent opportunity to encounter wildlife.

Should photographers' kayak in Antarctica?

If you're a photographer and you want to kayak, you will need to be prepared for some compromise as it won't be possible to do both to the best of your ability. Our expedition guides will be happy to talk to you about your photography priorities so that you don't miss out on the best opportunities for photography.

Is sea kayaking safe?

It is important to be vigilant when you are kayaking. You are exposed to polar weather and sea conditions so dress according to the elements to avoid the risk of hypothermia. Sea kayaking numbers are limited to two groups of 16 so that our accompanying guides can keep track of everyone and ensure your experience is maximised. One guide stays with the group in a support kayak, while another trails nearby in a zodiac in case of emergencies which require a faster retreat back to the Ocean Endeavour. All guides are experts in kayaking and have vast experience working sea kayaking groups. They will work to scale an excursion to the skill-level of your group.

Do I have to bring any of my own kayaking equipment?

Kayaking equipment is provided. We have 14 to 18 different kayaks onboard, with a mix of doubles and singles. There are different sizes of dry suits and we carry around 35 dry suits. PFDs (personal flotation devices) are mandatory for safety, and we have a variety of sizes available to make sure you find one that fits. Spray kits for the cockpit of each kayak are available in different sizes. We also provide pogies, which go over your hands to keep them warm and dry, as well as booties for your feet.

Please make sure you're dressed properly for your excursion in the open polar elements. We recommend you bring the following:

- + Thermal underwear bottom and top for underneath your dry suit
- + A fleece jacket or vest to wear over your thermal underwear
- + Gloves (preferably ski/snowboard/mountaineering gloves with some grip and a Gore-tex outside/Thinsulate inside)
- + A wind-and-waterproof breathable jacket or paddle anorak/jacket and trousers (e.g. Gore-tex)
- + A waterproof bag (if you're bringing a camera)
- + Fleece hat
- + A turtle neck or neck gaiter
- + Thick socks
- + Sunglasses
- + Sunscreen/sun block

Avoid wearing cotton clothing like t-shirts or jeans when kayaking as once wet they are hard to dry.

