



Congratulations on booking a tour with New Zealand Sea Kayak adventures!

This is a short document covering some of the basic information about making a trip with us, including the all important “gear list”

Please take the time to read through the document and feel free to get in touch with any questions

#### **PRE-TOUR MEETING**

There will be a pre-tour meeting at 7:00 pm the night before your kayak tour starts . Magnus or Anais will be in touch with you by phone or email in the days prior to this to confirm the location, Usually a quite bar in the Village of Paihia. The purpose of this meeting is to pass out rental gear, drysacks and some other paddling gear as well as go over the personal equipment list. We'll go over the maps as well as answer any questions you may have—not to mention (most important) we get to meet each other! The meeting is usually held at the “Saltwater Bar” on Kings rd, Paihia.

#### **EQUIPMENT PROVIDED**

All primary sea kayaking equipment and many accessory items are furnished on our tours. Specifically, you will be provided with a rudder-equipped sea kayak, split paddle (for feathered or un-feathered paddling), custom-sewn spray deck, life vest, seat cushion, sponge, laminated deck map, several dry storage bags for all your personal clothing and camping gear, and a paddling jacket.

Additionally, all cooking and eating utensils and appropriate emergency and repair gear is also provided.

We use a selection of polyethylene single kayaks, all constructed in NZ buy “Quality Kayaks” a small business that has been producing excellent kayaks for over 30 years. The latest additions to the fleet are the QK Skua’s a stable easily driven boat with great storage capacity and excellent maneuverability, Great for a medium to Larger paddler these boats are our go to for both clients and Guides. We also make good use of the QK Penguin, similar in shape to the Skua they are slightly smaller and lighter a great boat for the smaller paddler.

When using doubles we make use of our trusty “Packhorse Express’s” these fiberglass double have the reputation of being about as seaworthy as a kayak can be Large, Stable, Manouverable and fast. Not to mention they can carry just about anything including the kitchen sink! A great choice if we want gourmet meals or extra wine on a trip!

## TOUR PREPARATION

For those who have not kayaked before, or do so rarely, we strongly recommend a light “training” program that will use the same muscles as paddling a kayak—the wrists, forearms, upper arms and shoulders. Good paddling technique also uses the back and stomach muscles. You don’t need to develop a lot of strength—it’s more a matter of getting the upper body accustomed to this particular kind of movement. If possible, go paddling using an easy going pace (enjoy yourself!) at least an hour or more at a stretch several times prior to the tour—the more times the better. If that is not an option, perhaps you could visit a gym or exercise club and do the appropriate exercises that would come close to the same movements as paddling a kayak.

Don’t be nervous if you don’t think your Kayak skills are up to much, we take great pleasure in passing on our knowledge and technique!

## EQUIPMENT YOU WILL NEED TO BRING (OR RENT FROM NZSKA)

If booked on a camp based trip as opposed to Hut based trip you will a tent and air mattress are items you’ll need to bring or rent from us, Sleeping bags are needed on all trips except cottage based. Your tent should have an effective rain-fly and your sleeping bag should not be bulky or too warm. We highly recommend bringing a Therma-rest air pad as they have the least bulk for the most comfort. Therma-lounger chair kits are also highly recommended for luxurious comfort in camp!

All of your personal gear will be packed into the small front hatch of the kayak. This is a 25cm circular opening—a standard VCP hatch (not as big as we’d all like!). The larger rear hatch is strictly reserved for loading the bulkier group items such as cooking utensils and food. Space is at a premium, so for the kayak tour, please bring only the items suggested on the gear list. Any unnecessary or particularly bulky items will likely have to be left behind.

**Please note**, you will be packing your sleeping bag into a dry stuff sack that NZSKA will provide. This measures 20cm in diameter by 50cm long. It’s sized to fit through the front VCP hatch. Check to see that your sleeping bag will fit into this size stuff sack—if not, arrange to use a smaller bag or rent one of ours.

A tent with a good rain-fly is very important for the potential “tropical” rainstorms that can blow through. If your tent is questionable, consider borrowing, or renting from us.

**ADDITIONALLY**, a thin wet suit of some configuration is recommended for snorkeling and capsize/re-entry practice. Bring mask, fins and snorkel if you want to join in on the snorkeling.

Snorkeling is definitely a part of the kayaking trip for those interested. Although the BOI probably has the warmest water temperature in New Zealand—averaging about 18°-23°C in the summertime — it is still cool enough to warrant wearing either a 3 mm wetsuit “steamer” or “spring suit” for snorkeling. For just swimming, however, a wet suit is not necessary. You will need to bring your own snorkeling gear or rent from us.

## NZSKA GEAR RENTALS

We rent tents, sleeping bags, Therma-rest air pads that come with Therma-lounger chair kits, wet suits and mask/snorkel/fins combined for \$5/day/item/person. You may have already rented some items whilst completing the online booking, If you didn’t and know feel you would like to have no fear! Drop a quick email or wait until the pre-trip meeting and we can make any necessary arrangements.

## WEATHER AND SEA CONDITIONS

You can expect a full spectrum of weather conditions on our kayak tours—from rainy and windy to sunny and still. In general, however, you'll find the weather very pleasant. During the summer months, December through March, daytime air temperature will range 20°-28°C (68°-83°F). Even when it's raining, the air temperature is not particularly cold, so basically, it's quite a comfortable climate for outdoor recreation and camping. Many New Zealanders consider the Far North, where the BOI is located, as having a subtropical climate. February and March are usually the warmest months. Nighttime temperatures can drop down to 16°C (60°F) or on rare occasion plummet down to 13°C (55°F) brrrrr. Our southern hemisphere sun is very strong, Proper sun protection is of the utmost importance throughout any trip with us, light long sleeved top for paddling, full brimmed hat, sunglasses and lots of sun cream are all desirable.

Wind, typically, will strengthen in the late morning or early afternoon due to sea breezes developing, but consistently strong winds are not the norm. Wind conditions are quite variable, so . . . there are many days of almost flat calm, as well as periods of breezy weather many days in a row.

Because there are no mountain ranges nearby, the weather in the Far North of New Zealand seems to blow in quickly and move out quickly, so campers are not usually stuck with lousy weather for many days on end. Conversely, even with the night sky clear and full of stars, it's always wise to pitch your tent!

The average summer water temperature in the BOI area and the Northeast Coast is about 18°-23°C (64°-70°F). What this means for the paddler is that you do not have a serious hypothermia problem if you capsizes. There is plenty of time for making a kayak re-entry without the debilitating effects of cold water. This makes for very reassuring paddling if the conditions get exciting!

## GENERAL INFO

### GETTING TO THE START OF THE KAYAK TOUR FROM AUCKLAND

New Zealand Sea Kayak Adventures is based in the small seaside town of Paihia, located in the Bay of Islands (BOI). To get to Paihia you can fly, take a bus or rent a car.

### AIRPORT SHUTTLE BUS TO DOWNTOWN AUCKLAND

From the Auckland International Airport, you can take the SKYBUS shuttle into downtown Auckland, Sky City Terminal. This airport shuttle service seems to run every half hour all day long, and takes about 45-60 minutes. Catch the shuttle just outside the terminal. Ask for directions from anyone working there or the Information Booth.

### TO FLY TO KERIKERI, NEAR PAIHIA

Ask your travel agent for details. There are about four flights per day into Kerikeri from Auckland. Their schedule and prices change often enough that we don't print this information, but generally the earlier you book a ticket the cheaper it will be. From the Kerikeri Airport, you will need to catch a taxi shuttle into Paihia, there are shuttles making this journey both ways for every flight.

### BUS FROM AUCKLAND TO PAIHIA

This is the most practical means of getting to Paihia for most people and there are several runs daily from the Sky City Terminal in downtown Auckland. There is a convenient luggage check (small fee) in the same buildings that the buses depart from. Both companies charge about the same, anywhere between \$20 to \$50 NZD depending on how far in advance you book. If traveling in New Zealand during December, January, or the Easter holiday period, it is recommended that you book your bus tickets well in advance.

See: Intercity Buses [www.intercity.co.nz](http://www.intercity.co.nz) or Mana Bus [www.manabus.com](http://www.manabus.com)

Travel time is about 4¼ hours. Before loading your luggage, ask the bus driver if he can drop you off in front of your motel or hostel. Sometimes—not always—they'll do this if not running behind schedule.

## THINGS TO DO

We recommend coming to the BOI a day or two in advance if possible. The Waitangi Visitors Centre (20 minutes walk from Paihia) is well worth a visit for anyone interested in learning about the Maori or early settlers to Aotearoa (New Zealand). This visitor's centre interprets the ancient Maori culture and the treaty with England in 1841. It is located on a large attractive reserve, and the scenery out over the BOI is outstanding. A 120' (37 metre) Maori war canoe is also on display here.

Otherwise, there are numerous activities in Paihia including sailing or boat tours of the BOI, fishing or diving charters and bus day trips to Cape Reinga. A favorite is sailing on the square-rigged R. Tucker Thompson. Bikes are also available to rent at the Mountain Bike shop near Waitomo Fuel station. Riding a bicycle out to visit the Waitangi Treaty Center grounds would make for a very enjoyable afternoon with great scenery or for the more adventurous a ride to the Mountain Bike Park is a worth it.

## Accommodation

There are many accommodation options in Paihia, far to many to list here! Booking.com is a great place to start looking for the latest deals

2 budget options we always hear great reports of are

"The Pickled Parrot" <http://pickledparrot.co.nz> , Lovely Backpacker style lodge with private rooms set in the bush, 5 min walk from central Paihia

"Haka Lodge" [www.hakalodge.com](http://www.hakalodge.com) , Modern Backpackers with private rooms, in Central Paihia

Or more up-market apartments

"Craicor Apartments" <https://craicor-accom.co.nz/> , Beautiful boutique apartments set in tranquil native bush 5min walk from central Paihia

## NZSKA POLICIES

All safety precautions, both in judgment and equipment, will be utilized to assure you the safest possible adventure and learning experience. The sea kayaking, snorkeling and hiking that you'll be participating in do run certain unavoidable risks. You assume that risk yourself. All participants are advised to have their own medical/accident insurance.

Trip cancellation insurance is also recommended in case of an unexpected need on your part to cancel. This can be arranged with any travel agent. In the unlikely event of a kayak tour being delayed one or more days due to dangerous weather or sea conditions, it is New Zealand Sea Kayak Adventures' policy to delay a tour for however many days necessary, rather than cancel. REFUNDS OF ANY KIND WILL NOT BE GIVEN due to a delayed tour. Therefore it is highly recommended that your travel plans be kept flexible for several days after the tour is scheduled to finish, in the event we have delayed the tour one or more days.

## IMPORTANT NOTES AND REMINDERS

### 1. CANCELLATION POLICY

Customers canceling more than 30 days in advance of the tour start date will be given half back on their 20% deposit per individual. Cancellation 30-15 days prior will result in loss of the deposit. Cancellation less than 15 days will forfeit half the cost of the tour. There is no refund for a “no show” or cancellation the day prior to the tour. However, all efforts will be made to join up a late arrival with the group, but at the customer’s expense.

### 2. TRIP DELAY POLICY

In the unlikely event of a kayak tour being delayed one or more days due to dangerous weather or sea conditions, it is New Zealand Sea Kayak Adventures’ policy to delay a tour for however many days necessary, rather than cancel. REFUNDS OF ANY KIND WILL NOT BE GIVEN due to a delayed tour. Therefore, it is highly recommended that your travel plans be kept flexible for several days after the tour is scheduled to finish, in the event we have delayed the tour one or more days.

### 3. PRE-TOUR MEETING

There will be an important pre-tour meeting for everyone at 7:00 p.m. in Paihia the evening before the tour. Magnus or Anais will be in touch via email or phone in the days before this to confirm the location. If ordering a dinner meal there, it’s recommended that you order your meal by 6:00, so you can be finished eating and ready for the meeting.

You can expect the meeting to last about 1 hour. After the meeting you’ll want to allow 1-2 hours for organizing and repacking your gear and clothes into our dry bag system.

### 4. EARLY ARRIVAL IN PAIHIA IS BEST

It’s highly recommended, if possible, that you arrive in Paihia in the early afternoon or even

the day before the pre-tour meeting. People arriving on a bus that evening are usually uncomfortably rushed when trying to make the 7:00 p.m. meeting.

### 5. BAGGAGE STORAGE

Excess travel baggage can usually be left with the motel or hostel you’ve booked with. Ask them about this when you check in.

### 6. RENTAL GEAR

We have tents, sleeping bags, Therma-rest air pads (with lounge chair!), wet suits, and mask/fins/snorkel (all three considered one item) to rent at NZ\$5/day/item/person. Please pay for the rental gear at the pre-tour meeting in NZ dollars if you haven’t ordered them online while booking the trip.

### 7. ALCOHOL ON THE TOUR

Alcohol is about the only thing we do not supply on our trips. If you enjoy a relaxing glass of wine or some form of spirits after a day’s paddle, please make your purchases at one of several liquor stores in Paihia before the pre-tour meeting as these shops are often closed in the evenings. The 2-3 liter wine bags commonly sold are particularly practical for our trips. We discourage beer cans or wine bottles; however, the stout glass bottles that spirits are sold in are usually robust enough to carry safely in a kayak.

## 8. EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

NZSKA has made the following preparations in order to cope with potential emergencies:

- All groups carry emergency equipment such as first aid supplies, fire extinguishers, spare food, spare shelter, binoculars and a back-up communication device
- Emergency contact information kept on the back of the VHF
- All guides are trained first-aiders
- All guides have been vetted by Magnus to ensure they have appropriate skills on the water (e.g. capsize recovery techniques, short and long tows)
- Identifying potential 'safe' beaches/locations for alternative take-out or emergency landings if required
- A copy of the guides manual which includes this emergency response plan in full will be among the guides equipment on all trips and trip participants will be notified of this during trip briefings

NZSKA uses a general procedure to deal with a wide range of emergencies or incidents. The most likely incidents include adverse weather conditions, medical emergencies (on or off water), prolonged separation of an individual from the group and collision with other vessels. Although this procedure is not practiced, NZSKA ensures that all staff are aware of the appropriate order of their response to an emergency. Should an emergency occur, NZSKA top leadership (Magnus O'Grady) will review the use of this procedure annually and whether it is adequate and/or appropriate? If required, changes will be implemented.

- Ensure own safety and safety of the group first. Account for all paddlers.
- Head Guide will assign responsibilities to group members or junior guide if present.
- Ascertain if there is a need to call for outside help. (VHF radio or cell phone). This could be a call to NZ Coastguard (VHF emergency channel 16) or to other vessels in the area via Russell Marine Radio (VHF channel 63), it is the head guides decision and responsibility for establishing this contact, they may then nominate someone to maintain communications with contacted parties.
- Administer first-aid as necessary, following the DRSABC principals of first-aid. (First-aid kit carried by each guide).

- Be prepared to change or halt the activity with the group to ensure continued safety of the individual and/or group (i.e. landing the group at the nearest appropriate location, possibly initiating search with binoculars).
- If necessary, contact police (e.g. fatality, missing kayaker).
- If owner/operator Magnus O'Grady is not on the trip, then he is to be contacted via cell phone.
- Contact customer's listed emergency contact if appropriate (on pre-trip Questionnaire).
- Contact insurance company if appropriate (business insurance includes liability.)

In cases of personal emergencies in which people may need to contact anyone involved in NZSKA trip then the first point of contact should be office co-ordinator Anais Puissant on - 0064 22 627 3305 or Magnus O'Grady on - 0064 27 319 9289



## GEAR LIST

### Sun Protection

- SUN HAT: Baseball style or straw/fabric hat with firm brim and chin strap.
- SUNSCREEN: 1 bottle or tube of waterproof SPF 30.
- LIP SUNSCREEN: 1 tube of SPF 30.
- SUN GLASSES with NECK CORD: 100% UV protection important. Spare pair recommended. Neck cord essential.
- PADDLING SHIRT: A quick drying, light colored, long sleeved shirt (or polypropylene top works fairly well).

### Clothing

- BATHING SUIT: 1 pair of nylon (quick dry) board shorts work great.
- SHORTS: 1 pair (bring two if using one for paddling).
- TEE SHIRTS: 1-2
- LONG PANTS: 1 pair
- UNDERWEAR: Your call!
- THERMAL/MERINO TOP: 2, one for paddling and one kept dry for the evening or lunch if chilly.
- SOCKS: 1 pair. Generally recommended for trips from April to December--not mid summer.
- FLEECE PULLOVER: 1, or your favorite wool sweater.
- HANDKERCHIEF: 2, one should be 100% cotton for cleaning salty sunglasses.
- WARM HAT: A wool or fleece beanie.
- RAIN JACKET: Lightweight coated nylon best (smaller and packs away easier), Gortex OK.
- RAIN PANTS: Optional, lightweight. Suggested for April-December.
- FOOTWEAR: Aqua socks or similar below the ankle, mesh top, water sports shoe. A second pair of sandals or running shoes might be nice for camp.
- PADDLING GLOVES: Optional — for blister protection. Cycling gloves work well for most people, however for some folks weight lifter's gloves probably give more all around protection.

### Camping Gear

- SLEEPING BAG: Lightweight and compact! Generally, summer evening temperatures are quite warm, but can range from 13°-22°C (55°-72°F). The bag you use will need to fit into our "dry stuff sack" system, which measures 7" x 23".
- TENT: Backpacker size. It should also have a good rain-fly.
- THERM-A-REST PAD: This type of air ground pad is recommended for compactability and comfort
- THERMA-LOUNGER: Highly recommended. Makes your air pad into a camp chair — they are great!
- HEADLAMP: Compact size with spare batteries.
- WATER BOTTLE: 1 pint or quart size. Bicycle bottles work well.
- INSECT REPELLENT: 1 small bottle.
- TOWEL: Keep it small. I highly recommend the camper's Pack Towel.
- TOILET KIT: Along with your other personal toilet articles, we also recommend liquid biodegradable soap or shampoo and moisturizer.

### Snorkeling Gear

- FACE MASK and SNORKEL:
- FINS:
- WET SUIT: Useful for snorkeling, practicing capsizes recoveries and kayak surfing. A 2.5 to 3 mm steamer" or "spring suit" works well.
- MESH BAG: For carrying all your diving gear on the back deck of the kayak.

### Personal First-Aid

Even small nicks and cuts must be promptly cared for to prevent staph infection.

- BAND-AIDS: 1dozen.
- ANTISEPTIC SOLUTION: 1 small bottle. Betadine works well.
- ADHESIVE TAPE: 1 roll, 1" wide. This keeps the band-aids on.
- ANTIBIOTIC CREAM: Neosporen works well. (Cuts can easily become septic in this subtropical-like climate.)
- ANTI-INFLAMMATORIES AND/OR ASPIRIN
- TAMPONS FOR WOMEN: We have learned to put this on this list because many women have been surprised by irregular timing of their menstrual period.

### Miscellaneous

- CAMERA: A waterproof camera is highly recommended. IF YOU BRING A NON-WATERPROOF OR EVEN A WATER-RESISTANT CAMERA, PLEASE BRING YOUR OWN DRY BAG FOR IT! We suggest the "throw-away" waterproof camera as it takes surprisingly good photos.
- BOOK OR KINDLE: Useful if foul weather keeps the group in camp!



## Contact

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Due to often being out on the water! Email is always the most reliable way to get in touch with either of us.