



## **Canoeing in Sweden itinerary**

### **Day 1**

Travel from the UK to Sweden. At Stockholm's smallest outlying airport of Vasteras we will be met by our driver/s who will transfer us and our equipment 2.5 hours North and West to the stunning Malingsbo - Klotten nature reserve. There is the option en route to stop for any final food supplies you may wish to take along in the boats as once in the nature reserve there are no super markets.

We aim to arrive at Nordic Discoveries Canoe Centre in Klotten village by the late afternoon on the first day allowing plenty of time for a pre course briefing outlining the route we will undertake, the objectives and aims whilst out in the reserve and crucially, a full safety brief making checks of all equipment to be taken along. General course kit and group rations will be divided between people to pack evenly between the canoes the following morning.

As detailed in the kit list we insist a 'ditch kit' be carried by each participant and strongly recommend all personal kit be stored in dry bags. There is the option to hire dry bags directly from Nordic Discovery before heading out.

Nordic Discoveries' Canoe Centre operates a shop where you will be able to purchase detailed maps of the nature reserve and any last non-perishable snacks. There will be more time at the end of the trip to browse the unique gifts and handmade clothing available in the visitors centre.

For the first night you will be accommodated in a dormitory style room of Nordic Discoveries' Wilderness Lodge situated right on the edge of the extensive Lake system we will be exploring for the rest of the course.

### **Day 2**

A 06:30 start will give the group time to make a final use of the Lodge's facilities and put away a cooked breakfast before carrying all the equipment down to the South shore of Langvattnet where we will launch the canoes.

Our canoes, life vests, paddles and trolleys for making the few portages easier will be waiting for us at the lake and here we take some time to familiarise ourselves with the canoes, basic paddle strokes and important safety drills in the case of a capsize. There is no rush here and we go into the anatomy of both the canoe and the paddle which

will help you understand this incredible mode of wilderness transport more fully during the expedition.

Although all equipment is provided for your trip participants are welcome to bring their own paddles and buoyancy aids if they wish.

All your personal kit will then be carefully stowed into the boats along with the group equipment before setting off North into the nature reserve. This is where the adventure really begins as we set off into the 50km square pristine wilderness of the Malingsbo – Kloten nature reserve.

For the remainder of the day we will take a leisurely paddle up the lake taking in the stunning scenery. We stop for lunch when we feel like it and then it is over to the group to rely on existing skill sets and accumulate new ones as we find and purify water, establish appropriate camp sites, forage for wild foods, navigate and keep on top of personal equipment admin. This is bushcraft at its best!

In the evening there will be a discussion on axes and their crucial role in the Northern forests. Axe choice, care and maintenance will be covered in detail and we actively encourage all participants to get to grips with this essential tool throughout the expedition.

### Day 3

Having spent the night in our first wilderness camp an early start will see the group preparing breakfast over the fire before packing down and stowing gear back in the boats. On the third day we will cover more ground aiming to get past two of the short portages and into a lake with lots of wildlife activity.

There will be ample opportunity to fish, forage and absorb the quiet serenity of this ancient landscape. For those who have limited experience in fishing we will guide you through tying hooks and using fishing lures. You will not need anything more sophisticated than a few spinners, strong line and something to hand wrap your line around after casting out.

Lunch will be cooked on the rocky shores and supplemented with any fresh ingredients the group can 'find' en route. Weather will be a big controlling force on our camp site decisions so where some nights will be spent under tarps deep in the wild wood other nights may well utilise the pristine designated camping points scattered throughout the park – here you will find an open space in the trees, stone fire place and a weather proof group shelter.

### Day 4

It is likely by now the group will have started to tune in to the natural rhythms of the environment, silently gliding along in your canoe it is hard not to feel a connection to this amazing environment. This is when we start to see the wildlife and making the most of leaving gear in camp whilst we take a dawn safari out along the lakes is something you won't be forgetting any time soon.

Beaver sightings along with Moose, Otter and Fox are all distinct possibilities but just knowing you are sharing a huge forest along with Wolf, Lynx and Bear is an incredible feeling even though we are not likely to actually see these shy animals. We will take every opportunity to set wildlife cameras around our camps to increase the chances of seeing wildlife.

After the dawn safari we head back to camp for breakfast and a leisurely start to the day with an instructor led session on getting your bearings and conventional map and compass navigation – no taking bearings off church steeples here, you will be paying the closest attention to ground shape and contours on the map. Throughout the day as we make for the next camp anyone who wants to refine their navigation skills can do so by moving the group point to point as an orienteering exercise.

With weather permitting we will continue the navigation theme into the evening and focus on the stars and moon. This is a truly special occasion as the whole group gather on the lake shore looking up at the incredibly bright and clear stars framed by pitch black forest. We will walk you through the constellations one at a time focusing on their navigational uses but brining in science, mythology and folk lore.

## Day 5

Five days into the trip things should be ticking along nicely with important daily tasks such as water filtering and purifying, fire lighting for breakfast, lunch and dinner and route finding to the next camp site all feeling like second nature.

This is also the time that all those collective paddle strokes pulling you, your partner, the boat and all the kit inside along the water start to take their toll on our bodies so we aim to get to our island-camp early allowing everybody the chance to rest, recoup and organise kit. Plenty more opportunity to enjoy the nature reserve any way you wish: fishing, walking, foraging, crafting...swimming!?

Before dark we aim to establish a fixed camp on the small island of Storon by rigging a parachute over the fire area and making a range of items to make life around camp more comfortable.

Into the evening there will be an instructor led session on improvising your own craft tools from old spoons, files and tent pegs.

## Day 6

We remain around our fixed camp for the day with the morning focused on finishing improvised tools. We will guide you through utilising the natural materials around you including any Birch bark we can forage and spruce or pine roots to make improvised containers for collecting berries.

In the afternoon we shift our focus to the addictive art of net sewing and after you have crafted your own netting needle and gauge we take you through the basics of which knots to use, how to start your net, altering the shape of nets and joining nets together.

Depending on the conditions in the evening there will be chance to cover stellar navigation again for anyone wanting to revise and consolidate their knowledge of the constellations.

#### Day 7

Our final full day in the reserve involves a leisurely departure from our fixed camp before we put paddle to water and get the group to our pen ultimate wilderness camp. There is no rush and we stop when we like for lunch and coffee breaks.

There will be more time allocated to getting any containers, tools and nets finished off once we have established our last camp.

The final night's camp is something of a celebration as everyone tries to bring something to the table. A communal meal round the fire with caught fish, collected berries and foraged teas is the perfect way to end your experience of the reserve – by tasting it!

#### Day 8

Your final morning in the wilderness is over to you to spend however you wish – taking that last paddle along those untouched ancient shores, fishing for breakfast and/or lunch, another morning sit spot and safari or simply enjoying the peace and quiet.

As our last activity we will guide you through building and using a woodland sauna to get rid of the week's accumulated wood smoke and grime - a truly invigorating experience in the ancestral birth place of the sauna!

We then have a short paddle to get ourselves and the boats back to the canoe centre in Kloten and its likely you'll have mixed feelings at this point on leaving such a beautiful place v's getting back to a hot shower and a celebratory meal.

Our last night is spent de briefing, recollecting and relaxing before a good night's sleep at the wilderness Lodge in Kloten.

#### Day 9

In the morning we will have a communal breakfast at Nordic Discovery's wilderness lodge before the group are transferred back to Vasteras airport for our return Flights to the UK.