

Wanapitei Bay Trip

This is a 23 day canoeing adventure into remote northern Ontario and Quebec. It is a challenging trip technically and physically, and demands a high level of commitment from the participants. The trip typically ends in Moosonee, Ontario, found in the James Bay region of Northern Ontario. Some trips will do a short “Bay Paddle” at the end of their trip to get to Moosonee, depending which rivers are travelled. From Moosonee the group will take the Polar Bear Express train back to Cochrane, Ontario, and then board a bus back to camp. Each day on trip the campsite will be disassembled and the group will move down river, shooting sets where they can and portaging when the whitewater is too difficult. Food is prepared by the group on a daily basis, chosen from the selection of meals that were assembled by the leaders before trip departure. Weather in this region of Canada can be quite chilly or very dry and hot or at times very rainy so it is imperative that gear and clothes are chosen with care. It is extremely important that when coming up to camp your child is prepared for weather extremes and the bugs. The bugs in this area are present both in July and August.

Notes on clothing

Investing in gear at this age is a tough call. It is always good to have the best when out in the wilderness. However, we understand that while children are growing clothes have a short lifespan. We recommend buying durable and high range/quality items if you believe the participant is close to full grown. If the participant is not full grown midrange items are more than sufficient.

Rain suit – Your rain jacket must be waterproof and breathable. It is a possibility that the jacket will be worn for warmth as well as rain. Breathable jackets are warmer in the long run. A rain jacket is a good place to invest some money if your child has done the bulk of their growing. Campers could conceivably be in their rain gear all day and evening depending on the weather. Breathability is recommended for rain pants too though it is not imperative. Rubber rain pants are sufficient. If you can afford it breathable wear is always the best in terms of comfort – provided it is also waterproof!

Shirts, Pants, Sweaters, Long Johns - Cotton on trip is cumbersome and at times dangerous. When wet it uses the body’s heat to dry itself causing the person wearing it to become colder. Thus we ask that your child does not bring cotton on trip. We recommend that your child bring clothes made of quick dry or wicking materials. These clothes dry fast and keep your child warm. Good materials to look out for are fleece for sweaters, marina wool or polypropylene for long johns and shirts, and quick dry for short and pants. These rules about cotton apply to socks as well. Wool and smart wool are good sock material, please no cotton socks for canoe trip! It is important to remember that there will be varied summer weather and temperatures, so you must prepare for both possibilities.

Notes on gear

Sleeping bag – This may be a good time to invest in a bag that is lightweight and warm. Down is compact when packed and is very warm, though if wet it loses its warmth. Synthetic materials are cheaper, but they are not as compact when packed. Synthetic is less expensive than Down and does dry faster. If buying a new bag (either synthetic or Down) purchase at least a - 7 Celsius rating and discuss the trip and other possible uses for the sleeping bag with your retailer.

Sleeping pad - Sleeping pads should be tested out at the store for comfort, length, etc. Ensolite pads are cheaper but less comfortable. While Thermarest style pads are more comfortable and keep the body warmer they are more expensive. We recommend that, if your child will be returning to camp for a few summers, to invest in a Thermarest.

Backpack – While children grow out of most items a good backpack can last a long time. If your child is of a mature size, a good backpack could last them through most of their “career” at Wanapitei. Invest in something sturdy rather than with many “bells and whistles”. The backpack should be able to hold all of the items on the **Essentials for Canoe Trip** lists (sleeping bag and pad optional). This is around the 65 L range of pack. Size, durability, and comfort are the biggest priorities. Remember campers carry their personal packs on portages, it should be comfortable. Dry Bags and backpacks are normally measured in liters, hence the 65L (liter) reference above.

Dry bags - The dry bag **will go inside your child’s personal backpack** and keep their things dry if their pack gets wet. There are many different dry bags on the market. The only essential thing to keep in mind is that the bag should say that it is waterproof. After that your personal budget is the main criteria in what dry bag you purchase.

Flat-water paddle- This paddle should be made from a wood material, and can be fitted at the retailer where purchased. If you have a paddle of your own, for a rough fit the handle of a paddle when vertical should nestle in the armpit of the paddler or between the nose and chin, whichever is more comfortable. Paddles can also be rented at camp.

Whitewater Paddle - This will be a whitewater canoe trip mainly, thus your child will need a whitewater canoe paddle. A midrange paddle can be purchased at MEC. A decent whitewater paddle usually has a carbon shaft and strong plastic blade. The cheapest option, and a good option for those children who are unsure about returning to camp, is a paddle with an aluminum shaft and plastic blade. Paddles can also be rented at camp.

Whitewater Helmet – There are many different types of whitewater helmets. A midrange helmet is fine for this trip. There must be a snug fit and a good chin strap. A cycling helmet **will not** do. Helmets can also be rented at camp.

PFD (life jacket) - It is imperative that the PFD is in good condition and has good floatation. The proper size and floatation can be determined where purchased. We ask that for whitewater canoe trips a paddling vest be purchased as your PFD. This type of PFD allows for optimal mobility while paddling and also efficient swimming in whitewater if and when you dump.

Essential Items – For Canoe Trip

- 2 pairs of shoes – one very sturdy for day that will be wet most of the time – and one lighter for evening dry wear.
- 1 rain jacket – must be waterproof, and breathable
- 1 rain pants – must be waterproof, breathable is recommended
- 2 t-shirts
- 2 long sleeved shirts – one quick dry material – one light polypropylene
- 2 sweaters – one for light day use, one for warmth in evening – both must be wool or fleece NO COTTON
- 1 pair of quick dry/ light weight pants – NO JEANS or SWEAT PANTS
- 1 pair of quick dry/ light weight shorts (or bathing suit bottoms)
- 1 pair of fleece pants
- 2 pair of long johns marina wool or polypropylene – NO COTTON
- 8 pairs of socks – 5 pairs smart wool for day, 3 pairs wool or smart wool for night/evening
- 9 pairs of underwear – quick dry/polypropylene if possible
- 2 sports bras
- 1 bathing suit
- 1 sun hat - if child is prone to loosing things bring two!
- 1 toque – wool or fleece
- mitts or gloves

Essential Gear- For Canoe Trip

- 1 sleeping bag – a temperature rating as low as -7 Celsius is recommended
- 2 water proof dry bags – one 20-30 L for sleeping bag- one 30-40L for personal belongings
- 1 sleeping pad
- 1 personal ground sheet – for under tent
- 1 personal backpack – all of your child’s clothing essentials will go in a dry sack and then in this backpack (sleeping bag and pad can be stored elsewhere) – roughly 45-70 L
- 1 flashlight and extra batteries – headlamp is recommended
- 1 bug jacket – (a ball cap is recommended to wear under bug jacket – to keep face mesh away from the face)
- 1 pair of sunglasses and attachment string
- 1 lifejacket (PFD) – preferably a paddling vest to allow for optimal mobility when paddling and in the water.
- 2 whistles
- 1 or 2 water bottles

- 1 mug
- 1 flat water paddle
- 1 whitewater paddle
- 1 whitewater helmet

Essential Toiletries

- toothbrush and toothpaste
- sunscreen – waterproof
- lip chap - with SPF
- insect repellent
- sanitary products

Optional Items for Canoe Trip

- sandals - sturdy Teva or Choko – no leather eg. Birkenstocks
- fishing gear
- reading/writing material
- quick dry small towel
- camera and waterproof case
- needle and thread
- musical instrument
- playing cards
- Swiss army knife (small blade)

Essential In Camp Items

- two T-shirts – tank tops
- long sleeve shirt – can be cotton
- 1 pair of pants
- 1 pair of shorts
- 5 pairs of underwear
- 5 pairs of socks (can be cotton)
- 1 towel
- small pillow
- sheet for bunk
- pictures etc.
- bathing suit