



# WHITE SQUALL

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## CABIN-BASED PADDLING Trip Participant Handbook 2012

### *Welcome to White Squall*

Inside you'll find important information and checklists to help you prepare for your trip.

We're looking forward to having you join us. Please take the time to read this information in advance and call or email if you have any questions prior to your departure date.

### **PRIOR TO YOUR TRIP:**

- Discuss the trip prerequisites with us upon registration.
- Have the prerequisite skills and experience needed to participate fully in the trip?
- Consider taking additional training prior to the trip? (You get a 10% discount on any clinics or daytrips you take to prepare for your trip – tell us you're a tripper when you book.)
- Complete and submit the registration form and the "Acknowledgement and Assumption of Risk" & "Release and Waiver of Liability" forms?
- Arrange for final payment of the trip balance (due 30 days prior to your departure date.)
- If you have your own boat and considered bringing it:
  - o Have you told us, and are you aware that because Diamond Key is remote and boat access only, there may be an additional charge (approx \$100) to get your kayak out there?
  - o Have you discussed its suitability and safety gear with the guide(s)?
  - o Are you aware that others may be asked to paddle it while you take your turn in the tandem?
- Review our cancellation policy and arrange for cancellation insurance (from your insurance agent) if you deem it necessary.
- Do some stretching and strengthening exercises for arms, shoulders, back and abdominal muscles.

### **A WEEK OR TWO BEFORE YOUR TRIP:**

- Have your trip Guides been in touch? If not please call.
- Do you know when and where your trip meets?
- Have you made any necessary accommodation and travel arrangements?

### **GROUP PADDLING**

When you sign up, you're paying us to make sure you have a safe, enjoyable trip. This means accepting the importance of honouring decisions made for the benefit of the whole group, not you as an individual. For eg., we may be at a spot where you think it would be great to swim for an hour, yet for weather or other reasons the guides may decide to carry on. If it were your own personal trip, you might choose to hang out there and swim, however, when you're with a group - you need to recognize that there are larger concerns. We need to be each other's keeper - and by doing so, the entire group functions more happily and safely.

## **MEETING PLACE:**

Unless otherwise notified, we'll gather at White Squall Paddling Centre at 8:15 am on the first morning, ready to go at 8:30 sharp for coffee & intros. There's a lounge and change room, as well as our award-winning outhouses. From there we'll sort out vehicles (car-pooling as much as possible) and travel up to Key River Marina (a 45 minute drive). We'll then load up and take a boat westwards out Key River, to Diamond Key Lodge, situated where it meets the open Bay (a 45 minute boat trip).

## **GEORGIAN BAY WEATHER...**

Georgian Bay weather can change rapidly, even in mid-summer. Summer days can be hot (30° C) yet in early summer and fall the nights can drop to 0° C. We can't over-emphasize the need for proper sun and rain protection. Summer weather is usually fair and moderate, but rainy, cold days do occur even in July. The water is comfortable for swimming from early June to early September.

## **WHAT WILL IT BE LIKE:**

### **Diamond Key Lodge (visit their website [www.diamondkeylodge.com](http://www.diamondkeylodge.com))**

Diamond Key is nestled in the north-eastern corner of Georgian Bay amongst some of the finest freshwater paddling waters in the world. Please know that it's not a lodge in the sense of a southern Ontario full service facility. It is an extremely well-kept traditional Georgian Bay fishing camp with a complete septic, drilled well, showers and the best sunsets in the world.

Imagine a group of cabins tucked in the rock of the Canadian Shield looking out to the islands and channels of the north-eastern Bay. The cabins have bedrooms, kitchen area, inside washrooms and shower – and a cosy woodstove for a rainy night. It's a little piece of paradise.

### **Meals & Bedding and Your Own Room!**

We provide tasty meals beginning with lunch on the first day and finishing with lunch on the last day. Our meals are mostly vegetarian, quite varied and ample, using fresh and whole foods. We're happy to accommodate most dietary restrictions, likes and dislikes, as long as you tell us well in advance. White Squall staff (along with your help we hope!) will prepare meals inside the cabin which has a full stove and fridge.

There is a nightly charge included in the trip price to be at Diamond Key. Couples will get their own room, and others will have their own bed in a room shared with another trip-mate of the same gender. If you would like your own room, there is an extra charge of \$50/night, as available. The camp will provide a mattress cover and a pillow with a pillow case. Please bring your own bath/hand towel and sleeping bag/sheet along with your regular paddling clothing and gear.

### **Snacks, Drinks, Fishing & Socializing!**

We bring a library that includes recreational reading, field guides and historical accounts. The swimming is awesome, so don't forget your suit! If you fish, this is the place - and if you forget your licence, you can purchase one at the Lodge. Games or a small musical instrument are always fun to have along. The Lodge has developed an awesome nature/hiking trail so bring your boots and 'take a hike'. Favourite snacks or special munchies are welcome, if you like. Alcohol has no place on the water, but in moderation at the end of the day, it's a pleasant addition to your stay so we'll offer wine with some of the evening meals. If you would like to bring along favourite beer or wine, please feel welcome. We simply ask you to do this in moderation to ensure everyone's safety.

### **The Paddling Part....**

We want you to relax, have fun and learn new things. Our staff are professional outdoor leaders with years of experience. They'll encourage you to learn approved paddling, safety and day tripping skills. If you'd like to work on specific skills, we'll gladly help, provided the group agenda isn't compromised. Weather & group needs determine where we go and what we do. Safety and rescue gear (including a cell phone & marine radio for emergency communication) accompanies each trip, and our leaders are properly trained in its use.

Kayaking is a wet sport, so check the clothing list and be prepared to have fun and get wet. Plan to be on the water for 4 to 6 hours (with lots of breaks!). The schedule is flexible - some days, you may choose to not paddle at all. We expect everyone to help out and be involved in the group. We provide daily snacks to keep you happy.

We provide all group and paddling gear. Due to the logistics of getting boats out there, in advance we've put 4 single & 2 tandem poly sea kayaks fully equipped out at the camp. If want to use your own boat, it may be possible, however there is no discount (and it's possible you'll be asked to pay for a separate boat shuttle), so please contact us if you want to pursue that option so we can ensure that it's appropriate. We'll ask all participants to share in the paddling of the tandems during the trip so it may become necessary for someone else to paddle your boat for a short period. If you aren't willing to allow this, then you should leave your boat at home and use ours.

## **OK WHAT DO I BRING?**

### **FOR ON WATER/OUTSIDE**

- lip balm, sunscreen (waterproof)
- broad-brimmed sun hat, sunglasses
- bandana, bathing suit, towel
- full rainsuit
- windbreaker or paddling jacket
- shoes that can get wet  
(we insist on footwear at all times)
- paddling gloves (optional)
- water bottle
- extra drybag to pack for day trips
- insect repellent (DEET free preferably)

### **FUN STUFF (optional)**

- books, journal, pen/pencil
- kite, fishing gear
- mask, snorkel
- binoculars, camera
- compass
- small musical instrument

### **FOR IN CAMP**

- t-shirt, shorts
- light, long-sleeved cotton shirt
- full extra set of clothes
- sweater or fleece top, long pants
- long underwear (synthetic or wool)
- warm hat, mitts/gloves (evenings can be chilly at times!)
- appropriate shoes/boots (for around camp)
- sleeping bag
- headlamp/flashlight, spare batteries/bulb
- toiletries (soap, shampoo...)
- personal medications
- camp mug (optional)
- pocketknife

## **CLOTHING SUGGESTIONS?**

For cold, the best materials are those which retain heat even when wet, don't absorb water and wick moisture from the skin. Denim jeans are not good - wool, nylon, fleece, polypropylene and silk are best. Paddling jackets are really nice to have but a simple windproof shell really helps to retain heat. For hot midday paddling, we find a light-coloured, long-sleeved, cotton shirt or fleece top is great. T-shirts are OK but they don't give much sun protection. Having a warm sweater and pants for the evening is essential. Specialized paddling clothes/gear add to your comfort, but are not necessary unless you intend to take up the sport for the long haul! If you do want well-designed camp gear or clothing, please give us a call or check out one of our shops. Our two shops are full of stuff that we use ourselves.

## **GIVING THE BAY A BREAK**

Georgian Bay is one of the last great freshwater systems of the world and it's under increasing stress. Island vegetation is fragile so we try not to leave a big mark. We ask that everyone avoid washing in the Bay. Garbage is separated and carried out.

## **MEMORIES OF YOUR ADVENTURE**

We stock topographic maps & marine charts in both of our shops. These tell wonderful stories and will hold great memories after your trip. Give us a call if you'd like to mail-order and do some armchair wandering.

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS:**

### **Will we have campfires out there?**

Most of us love campfires, and if the fire hazard rating is low, it may be possible - but don't count on it. The Lodge does have a firepit if conditions are good.

### **Will I have to cook and do dishes?**

Yes - a White Squall programme is very much a travelling community where everyone is expected to pitch in where needed. The guides will co-ordinate and coach everyone, and the tasks are simple ones. Often, only a few helpers are needed, so then the rest can go and relax - and help out next time!

### **What kind of footwear is best - and do I have to wear them all the time?**

We ask everyone to wear something on their feet all the time for the simple reason that a foot injury can really mess up a trip, yet it's easily preventable. This is especially important while swimming as zebra mussels can cut a foot very easily. Sandals or water shoes are great. For cooler times around camp, some warm socks and running shoes or hiking boots work well.

### **How do I pack everything?**

The boat ride out to the Lodge can be a wet one so it's a good idea to waterproof your stuff. Dry bags are still a great idea as they waterproof as well as compress - and space can be an issue. Another way to waterproof is to use two strong garbage bags inside a nylon stuff sack. All your stuff is best tucked into a big duffel bag or mesh bag that you can use to keep your gear together on the boat. Everyone's bags will look similar so tag or tape them to identify them as yours. A few dry bags are also handy for taking stuff along on the day trips in the kayaks.

### **Can I drink the water?**

Diamond Key Lodge has drinking water and the guides will carry water filters with them on the day trips. You can pump and fill up your water bottle frequently while paddling during the day. If you want to bring your own water filter, that's fine too.

### **How do I go to the bathroom while Daytripping out on the Bay?**

For peeing en route, you can simply go off into the bushes. For the big stuff, we will have a kit with trowel handy and we'll ask you to dig a small cathole well away from the water. Yup, you'll be able to use toilet paper (we'll supply it). Sanitary napkins need to be double-bagged and carried out. Hand washing afterwards is mandatory - and we will have water and soap available for you along with hand sanitizer.

### **Why can't I use biodegradable soap in the Bay?**

Even the supposed bio soaps do not break down well in the cold, sterile conditions of the Bay.

### **Can I be contacted when out on trip?**

Consider yourself out in the wilderness, but, in case of an emergency at home your friends/family can call us at (705) 342-5324 and we'll attempt to get the message passed on out to the Lodge and to you. Or leave them with the Lodge number if you wish (705) 383-2842.

## **OUR NAMESAKE**

The late Stan Rogers wrote a powerful song called "*White Squall*" some years ago. It is a beautiful, sweet water ballad with a lingering reminder:

***"... and I tell these kids a hundred times don't take the Lakes for granted ..."***

**We hope we never will. Thanks for listening.**