

Great Glen Crossing?

Is it for me?

This is one of the Classic Scottish Open Canoe trips, which journeys along Loch Lochy, Loch Oich and Loch Ness, as well as of course the Caledonian Canal. This amazing journey therefore links the west coast to the east coast along one of the most spectacular natural glens around. Over the 5 days the journey is about 62 miles long and broken into manageable sections. To get the most of the week some canoe experience is essential, a minimum of five days on open water, and the fitness for a 5-day expedition is required. Wild or remote camping is a highlight of this trip and we usually have many happy hours spent round the campsite chatting about past, current and future adventures.

Aim

The Caledonian Canal is suitable for people with basic open boating skills, it journeys along some of the largest lochs in Britain so experience of paddling in a bit of wind is useful. The enthusiasm to learn about paddling in wind, open water and waves is essential! During the journey we will look at many paddling skills as well as the skills to camp overnight and have an enjoyable journey.

Course Content

You will be in a maximum group size of seven, with one instructor. Meeting your instructor on the first morning provides an opportunity to discuss people's experience and aspirations, which along with the weather forecast will enable us to plan the weeks' journey with you. The journey is normally completed in Tandem boats (2 people to a boat), but there may be the opportunity to paddle solo if requested.

Day one will be spent getting boats and kit organised and then driving to the put in at Corpach near Fort William. We will then pack up our boats and start our journey. Probably making it to Loch Lochy for our first night.

The next four days will be weather dependant and some days we might paddle further than others to make the most of the conditions. We will take some time during the days to look at personal paddling skills and may if the weather is kind have the opportunity to try sailing our canoes. We will portage our boats around the locks on canoe trolleys and depending on the groups river skills may have the opportunity to paddle the River Oich which flows between Loch Oich and Loch Ness. Highlights of the journey are the amazing mountain and lochside scenery that we are paddling through, learning a bit about the history of the canal and stopping off at some of the lovely towns and villages that the waterway passes through.

The final day will see us paddling into Inverness and getting picked up and driven back to Glenmore for unpacking, sorting out kit and final day tea and cakes.

This is a general outline of the journey and changes may be made due to weather, local conditions and paddlers ability.

Equipment List

Glenmore Lodge has a large, and very comprehensive store of up to date clothing and equipment. You are welcome to use your own equipment and pick and choose odd items from the store. Your instructor will want to check that personal equipment is appropriate for the activity.

If you are thinking about buying equipment but are not too sure what to get we would advise you to come and try our equipment and then make your purchases after the course. We have a range of most equipment items you can try during the course and there is advice on hand from other students as well as the staff.

We have a range of some of the latest river kayaks from Pyranha and other top manufacturers. All our Sea kayaks are this years models from P&H, Valley and North Shore. Our Open boats are all new from Mad River, Wenonah and Venture. The surf kayaks are from Valley and Mega including high performance and international class.

Our paddling clothing is from Peak and we have a wide range tailored to your discipline.

We use a range of paddles depending on the activity, Lendal and Werner for sea kayaking and Werner for river/surf kayaking and canoe. There are specialist additional open boating items such as deep water wooden paddles, poles and sails.

GLENMORE LODGE CAN SUPPLY:

- ✓ Buoyancy aids
- ✓ Helmets
- ✓ Spray decks
- ✓ Cags
- ✓ Wet suits
- ✓ Wet suit bootees
- ✓ Small drybags
- ✓ Dry suits (only for out of season kayak courses)
- ✓ Paddling Trousers
- ✓ Pogies
- ✓ Paddling Neoprene Gloves/mitts
- ✓ Towlines
- ✓ Split Paddles

Expeditions

- ✓ Large dry bags
- ✓ Barrels for open boat journeys
- ✓ Sleeping bag & liner
- ✓ Tents (2 & 3 person)
- ✓ Karrimat
- ✓ Cookers, (Trangias, MSR & primus) we have paraffin and meths only. If you prefer to use your own stove you must bring the fuel for it.
- ✓ Pots and pans
- ✓ Cutlery / plastic mug

EQUIPMENT YOU NEED TO BRING WHICH WE DO NOT HAVE IN THE STORES.

Listed here are the essentials, this is not an exhaustive list.

- ✓ Informal clothing for leisure wear
- ✓ Insulating layers – at least two mid weights
- ✓ Fleece/insulated jacket
- ✓ Waterproof jacket
- ✓ Hat & gloves***
- ✓ Vacuum Flask & Water Bottle ***
- ✓ Box or bag for packed lunch.
- ✓ Blister kit/ small first aid kit
- ✓ Personal toiletries & medications (towels are provided)
- ✓ Sun cream – you just never know! ***
- ✓ Sunhat and sun glasses & cord
- ✓ Insect Repellent – it may be midgey!***
- ✓ Spare towel
- ✓ An alarm clock
- ✓ Glenmore Lodge also has a pool, sauna, gym & climbing wall - so don't forget your swimming/gym/climbing kit!

Open Canoe

- ✓ For open canoe courses Spey descent, Caledonian Canal etc. a pair of wellies are very useful.
- ✓ For 5 Star courses please bring headtorch and light sticks for night paddling.***

Items marked * are available in our shop subject to availability.**

Some Useful Books

Scottish White Water: The SCA Guidebook by Bridget Thomas

Welcome to the wonderful world of Scottish white water, which has inspired many people to get out there, get off the beaten track and paddle something new. In an age where park and play is becoming ever more popular, it's been great to see paddlers once again seeking out the wilderness experience an important part of what makes paddling special.

Path of the Paddle by Bill Mason

Song of the Paddle by Bill Mason

Thrill of the Paddle by Paul Mason, Mark Scriver and Bill Mason

These books are a must read for any open boater! It takes you from basics right through to reading and tackling white water.

Paddle Your Own Canoe by Gary and Joanie McGuffin

Beautifully put together book with great photos to compliment the text.

Scottish Canoe Classics: 25 Great Canoe & Kayak Trips by Eddie Palmer

Eddy has chosen his favourite twenty-five inland touring routes and described them in loving detail. The routes are beautifully illustrated with numerous colour photos and specially commissioned maps. The selected routes are suitable for open canoes, sit-on-tops and touring kayaks.

Scottish Canoe Touring: An SCA Canoe and Kayak Guide by Scottish Canoe Association

This guide is aimed at those looking for calmer waters ...rivers, canals, inland lochs and sheltered sea lochs. Routes described cater for all tastes, from those seeking an idyllic afternoon's paddle to those looking for a multi-day canoe-camping expedition.

British Canoe Union Coaching Handbook by BCU

This book is a mine of useful information and practical tips. If you aspire to be a better canoe or kayak coach, this is the book for you.

Some Useful Websites

www.animatedknots.com/index.php	Animated Knot Tying
www.bcu.org.uk	British Canoe Union - Paddle sports coaching etc.
www.canoescotland.com/	Scottish Canoe Association
www.johnmuiraward.org	A scheme to get young people involved in the outdoors
www.ordnancesurvey.co.uk	Loads of info on maps, access etc.
www.outdooraccess-scotland.com/	Scottish Access Code
www.theaward.org/scotland	Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme
www.ukriversguidebook.co.uk/	UK Rivers Guide
www.songofthepaddle.co.uk	open boat website with a great forum
www.opencanoe.info	open canoe association
www.facebook.com/pages/Great-Glen-Canoe-Trail/363662555605	Check out the Great Glen Canoe Trail facebook site for lots of useful information