

2023 Adult Backpacking Retreat

Kesugi Ridge Trail, Denali State Park, Alaska

- ✓ In full knowledge of the vast array of times that planes land in Anchorage, *communicate early & ask before you buy.*
- ✓ Pick-ups and staying at the Holy Spirit Retreat Center are available Friday night June 30th and Sat. July 1
- ✓ **PACK & MEET: Saturday, July 1** after everyone arrives
- ✓ **MASS & DEPARTURE: Sunday, July 2**
- ✓ **RETURN: Friday July 7 around 5 pm**; drop-off at airport FRI. PM or SAT. AM (Holy Spirit Retreat Center available for lodging).

TASK LIST: in advance of the retreat

- Set up a one-hour video chat with Jen to discuss gear, packing, and muscle preparation!
- Registration, Health, & Liability forms filled out and returned to **Into the Deep** with down payment.
- Get your muscles moving ☺...gradually put more weight in your backpack and walk on uneven/inclined terrain.
- Break in your hiking boots!!! (call for tips if you need help shopping for a pair)
- Hydrate yourself well before the trip: at least ½ your body weight in ounces per day, more with exertion.
- Report allergies: we will discuss & plan all food together so we are only carrying what we need.
- Call if equipment is needed: REI in Anchorage rents backpacks, sleeping bags, and sleeping pads.
- Medications** in Ziplocs (please bring in original containers but only as much as needed).
NOTE: we have a well-stocked group First Aid kit; please discuss what you want to bring so we don't carry more than necessary.
- Please carry your medical insurance card and driver's license!
- Set up "out of office" replies for cell phone & email: expectation of no electronics (unreliable coverage in this area).
- Money for souvenirs/gifts (we will attempt to make time for a visitor center).

BRING MINIMAL QUANTITIES:

- **Plan on 5 nights of camping and 4.5 days of hiking while carrying everything on our backs.**
- **We will go through your pack together before departure and you may leave unnecessary items/suitcases at Holy Spirit Retreat Center in Anchorage.**
- **Temps will be between 40 and 70 degrees; bring items of clothing that can be **LAYERED** over each other with your raincoat on top. You should be able to wear all your warm layers at once!**

CHECKLIST: please do not ignore anything on this list unless it is marked as 'optional'

- Headlamp + batteries (*it's important to be hands-free; I.D. has a few to loan out*)
- Thermal mug (12 oz, wide mouth, with handle)** - *to eat breakfast foods...put your name on it!*
- 3 liters: water bladder(s) or bottles** - *plastic, with means to clip on pack...put your name on them!*
- Good raincoat (*test moisture repellency!*)...**no plastic ponchos!**
- Rain pants (*We will hike rain or shine. Can also serve as warmer layer; zipper-up sides are most convenient*)
- Hat with brim to protect from sun/bugs (*I.D. can provide a bug headnet upon request*)
- Sunglasses (*optional but helpful: high UV protection & polarized*)
- Hiking boots or sport shoes suitable for hiking with a backpack on uneven terrain (*ankle support is helpful*)
- Close-toed water shoes for wading/swimming, the drive, and around camp (*no flip-flops*)
- 2 pair wool socks for hiking (*no cotton; your feet need to be cared for & the range of temps calls for wool*)
- Optional/personal preference: thin pair socks for under heavier socks to avoid blisters (*not cotton*)
- Synthetic underwear (*will wick moisture & prevent chaffing*)
- Shorts (*1 pair, no short-shorts*)
- Long pants (*2 pair, no leggings*) - *quick-dry material (nylon, etc.); can be used as sun/bug-block. Zip-off legs are handy!*
- Short sleeve t-shirts (*2, ideally not cotton, no tank tops*)
- Long sleeve t-shirt (*1, ideally not cotton; serves as evening layer or daytime sun/bug-block*)
- 2 warm layers: fleece jacket, wool sweater, vest, etc. that can fit over each other (*please no sweatshirts: heavy & slow to dry*)

NOTE ABOUT COTTON: will not dry quickly and will tend to cause chaffing, discomfort, or chills.

SLEEPING: each tent holds 3-4 participants

- Stuffer sleeping bag (*good to approx. 30°*): can rent from REI
- Closed cell or insulated sleeping pad (*compact*): can rent from REI
- Only a VERY compact pillow due to space; you can also roll up a fleece
- Optional: flannel sheet “sleep sack” to line sleeping bag (*great by itself if hot / adds 10° warmth if cold*)
>Make your own: use a thin/light double flat sheet folded in half and sewn across the bottom, plus 1/3 up the side.
- Warm, dry socks designated for sleeping (*sweat from the day can chill your feet*)
- Warm hat & gloves, long underwear tops & bottoms (*use these for sleepwear and/or during the day. Especially wise if you tend to get cold or your sleeping bag is thin*)
- Eye “mask” if you think the light will keep you awake (*summer nights in AK = dusk light all night*)

SWIMMING & STAYING CLEAN: showers are not available on trail and soap/shampoo are not allowed in lakes

On some level, participants will have to accept that they will not be perfectly clean while enjoying the great outdoors, but we also won't be neglecting ourselves! ☺ Though lakes in Alaska tend to be glacier-fed & therefore extremely cold, water is always a good thing. A few good tricks to consider:

- Bringing synthetic clothing (athletic shorts, t-shirts, & under garments) allows participants to both hike and swim without changing clothes; both clothes & skin get rinsed together!
- If you bring a swimsuit: ladies, one piece or tummy-covering tank style/guys, no Speedos ☺
- Bring a washcloth to scrub over your skin when swimming. In particular, NORWEX brand microfiber body cloths are made to be used with just water – effectively wiping things that cause odor off your skin. **Into the Deep** will order one with your embroidered initials upon request.
- Bandana: can serve as a washcloth, to cover head/hair, to keep neck cool/warm, etc.
- Towel (*compact / medium size; I.D. has several “camp towels” to lend*)
- Personal Toiletries (*travel size & unscented, put in Ziploc*)
- Feminine hygiene products (*no fear - a special instruction sheet will be sent to you!*)

OTHER ITEMS to CONSIDER:

- 65+ Liter backpack with plastic liners: *you may borrow from I.D.*
- Compression sacks will be helpful for packing sleeping bag & clothes: *I.D. has several to lend*
- Walking poles for balance: *I.D. has a few to lend*
- Pocket knife, whistle, compass
- Bear spray (*we will each carry one; I.D. will obtain and distribute*)
- Camera/batteries/memory card (*group camera is available*)
- Rosary, breviary (*save weight by sharing: copies of Night Prayer will be carried for the group*)
- Pick one or 2 personal items to carry in a Ziploc: book, mini travel game, cards, journal+pen
- Favorite electrolyte & energy snacks (*limit yourself to 1-2 per day; trail mix provided*)

ORGANIZE your BACKPACK:

It is recommended that you should carry only about 1/3 of your weight when backpacking, so choose wisely. Note that all the contents of your pack should be protected from rain with either a double plastic liner or individual Ziplocs, unless the item is OK to get wet. You will also carry a portion of food & gear provided by I.D...if this seems impossible, be not afraid! We will walk you through it!

- Wear on your body: synthetic underclothes, shorts or pants with zip-off legs, t-shirt or long sleeve light shirt, wool socks
- Sleeping bag on the bottom & sleeping pad around the perimeter of pack (I will teach you how to pack these tight)
- Clothing goes in next...compression or stuff sacks will likely be used for those too!
- A few gear items go in next; to be determined when we all meet up!
- Minimal toiletries & medicine in Ziploc
- Optional personal items, camera (*accessible but protect them from rain; a group camera is available*)
- Optional Ziploc of your favorite energy/electrolyte snacks (*must be stored in bear bins at night*)
- Hats & gloves, extra pair of wool socks, fleece, sunglasses & headlamp – easy to get to without dismantling backpack
- Rain jacket & pants on top or outside pocket (*getting to them fast is important*)
- 3 Liters of water: easily accessible (*use a bladder or attach bottles with carabiners*)
- Optional: strap walking poles to the outside