

S10 Day Paddles - ICW

Sapphire Shores to Bayfront Park Paddle Information Sheet

Description: This is a paddle along the eastern side of Sarasota Bay from a small park in the Sapphire Shores/Indian Beach neighborhood north of downtown to Bayfront Park in downtown Sarasota. The paddle follows the shoreline and eventually under the Ringling Causeway Bridge and then with a turn to the southeast to Bayfront Park. The southeastern side of Bayfront Park provides a good landing spot for a restroom break and/or a lunch break at O'Leary's Tiki Bar and Grill which is just west of the landing site.

Skill Level: Intermediate/Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time: 4.5 Miles/2 Hours

Launch Site: Sapphire Shores Park Paddle Launch

Takeout Site: Bayfront Park Paddle Launch

Special Considerations: Short portage at launch site, with a 2' seawall to the beach launch. Avoid windy days, especially when from the north and west. due to the openness of the southern part of Sarasota Bay. As you approach the Van Wezel Performing Arts Hall (the big purple building), you will be approaching the channel for the 10th Street boat ramp. Heavy powerboat traffic, especially on weekends. Be alert for boats leaving and returning to the marina. Exercise caution and don't linger while crossing the channel. As you approach the bridge, give a wide berth to the fishing pier out of consideration for the fisherman. Be alert once under the bridge as this is a congested area with boats going in many directions.

Skill Level Definitions

Beginner: New to paddling and may need tips and or instructions about paddling strokes, safety procedures, and entering/exiting kayaks. Comfortable on short trips of 1 to 3 miles on protected waters, when wind does not exceed 5 mph.

Novice: Paddlers acquainted with basic paddle strokes and can manage kayak handling independently in winds not exceeding 10 mph on protected waters. Comfortable on trips up to 6 miles.

Intermediate: Paddlers with experience in basic strokes and some experience on different venues, including some open water. Comfortable on trip distances of 6 to 10 miles, winds not exceeding 15 mph.

Advanced: Seasoned paddlers who possess skills and experience to paddle all venues and conditions. Experienced in self-rescues. Should be comfortable paddling more than 10 miles in a day.

NOTE: Great care has been taken to ensure this guides accuracy, but weather, tides, and water conditions can change rapidly and create hazardous conditions. These maps are for visual reference only, please consult NOAA Charts for navigation. Paddlers should have all proper safety equipment and check conditions before departure. All paddlers should always wear PFDs while on the water, and leave a float plan. There are inherent dangers in any paddle sport. There are special hazards along the Florida coast due to shifting tides, changing wind and weather, shallow waters, and treacherous bottoms with soft mud, rocks, and oyster bars.

It is up to each paddler to be aware of these dangers, to accept and be prepared for the risks involved, and to be certain they have the skills to safely paddle in these conditions.