

## S15 Day Paddles - Middle Keys

## Boot Key Paddle Information Sheet

**Description:** A good trip for all level of canoe and kayak paddlers, however to keep from getting lost in the mangroves it is a must to have and use a GPS, (unless you enjoy wandering around aimlessly). If you have never been in a mangrove tunnel, this is a perfect opportunity to find out what one is like. Some tunnels are so narrow that it is best to stow your paddle and pull yourself through by the mangrove roots and branches, or take your paddle apart and use one half like a canoe paddle. Water clarity is poor to excellent depending on what direction the tide is flowing.

**Skill Level:** Intermediate

**Distance/Approximate Time:** 6.9 Miles/3 Hours

**Launch Site:** Sombrero Beach Paddle Launch

**Special Considerations:** Medium to high tide only for paddling in the lagoons. -It is best to plan the trip for a weekday, and also it is best to get to the put-in early in the morning to beat the beach crowds. As the heat of the day draws the swimmers, the parking spaces will be at a premium. GPS recommended.

### 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.