

S15MK Day Paddles - Middle Keys

Long Key Circumnavigation Information Sheet

Description: A big part of Long Key is State Park land so this is a nice, relatively undeveloped island with just the small town of Layton and an old landfill (now a transfer station) that you will see rising above on the bayside. At the north east side of the trip, about halfway around there is a campground on Fiesta Key which has a tiki bar and grill that would make a good lunch stop. But don't linger too long, it is a long paddle back to the start. There are some nice natural beaches to take a break on after you round the point, another place to stretch your legs beachcombing.

Skill Level: Advanced

Distance/Approximate Time: 15.6 Miles/7 Hours

Launch Site: Long Key SP Paddle Launch

Special Considerations: Start this trip at a rising tide and plan to come back an hour or two before low tide or you will have to walk thru mucky sand to or from the launch site. There will be a strong current going thru the two bridges at Long Key Channel (US 1 and the old railroad bridge) so don't take the first archway where the current is strongest. Take the second or third archway, again preferably on an incoming tide so you don't have to fight against it. You don't want to do this paddle on an extremely windy day. It might look calm on the oceanside but if it's blowing out of the north, it could be deceiving until you get to the bridges and get slapped in the face!

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.