

S15 Day Paddles - Upper Keys

Short Key Primitive Camp Trip Information Sheet

Description: Launch from roadside paddle launch and head southeast out of the canal and into Barnes Sound. Follow the shoreline and cut across to the first long point, then over to the north tip of Middle Key. Continue along the shoreline, past the Middle Key Cut, then along the Short Key shoreline. There are plenty of small beaches to stop at along the way if you need a break. Return is the same way you came.

Skill Level: Intermediate, due to loaded kayak

Distance/Approximate Time: 3.6 Miles (one way)

Launch /Takeout Site: Cardinal Sound Road Paddle Launch

Primitive Campsite: Short Key

Special Considerations: Please practice "Leave No Trace" principles. Since Short Key is so low, camping is not recommended during exceptional high tides. Barnes Sound can become quite rough on windy days, especially when blowing out of the east.. Spray skirt recommended. Leave your car roadside overnight at your own risk.

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.