



Tomales Bay Expedition Overnight



Tomales Bay Expedition Overnight Trip

- **Meet starts: Hearts Desire Beach, Tomales Bay, Inverness, CA by 9:30am on Saturday September 19, 2026**
- **Trip finishes: Hearts Desire Beach at 4pm on Sunday September 20, 2026**

Tomales Bay is a paddler's dream. With pristine water, beautiful scenery, and plentiful wildlife, your group will experience firsthand this remarkable jewel of west Marin County. During your trip you will first learn the basics of kayaking, then explore Tomales Bay by water while paddling to our beach campsite for an afternoon of exploring and an evening spent under the stars. The next day we'll enjoy a morning paddle to end our memorable trip on Tomales Bay. This trip is great for novice to advanced paddlers of varying abilities and backgrounds.

Environmental Traveling Companions

Environmental Traveling Companions (ETC) has been providing outdoor adventure opportunities to people of all abilities and backgrounds since 1972. Beginning on the banks of the Stanislaus River, ETC began using volunteers to take people with disabilities and youth from under-resourced backgrounds on whitewater rafting trips. Decades later the organization has grown to include three main programs: whitewater rafting, sea kayaking, and youth leadership development courses. ETC is recognized as a pioneer in the industry of accessible outdoor adventure. With this growth, ETC has still maintained a strong community, where most trips are staffed by volunteer guides and participants are fully engaged in all aspect of the adventure. An ETC adventure is a unique opportunity to experience nature, achieve growth through challenge, and develop stronger bonds with fellow adventurers.

Trip Overview

The trip will begin with an opening circle, giving the Guides and participants an opportunity to get to know one another. Next, the guides will give instructions on paddling and safety, help the group pack personal belongings and food into the

For more information, please contact the Sea Kayak Program Manager at 415-474-7662 ext. 13 or kayak@etctrips.org

kayaks, and accommodate any special needs before getting on the water. The paddle to our beach camp lasts about an hour and a half and allows us to intimately explore the Tomales Bay shoreline. We'll eat lunch along the way and then arrive and set up our camp and spend the afternoon further exploring Tomales Bay, either by foot or kayak. After a communal dinner, we can either play games by the campfire, go for a short hike to watch the sun set over the Pacific, or go out for a night bioluminescence paddle if conditions allow.

The second day we'll wake up and have breakfast before packing up our belongings and breaking camp. Next, it's time for a quick paddle and safety refresher and then a beautiful morning paddle back to Heart's Desire, the beach where we started. We'll have lunch and then together as a team (if ability and timing allows) we'll put the kayaks and equipment away before finishing our trip with a closing circle.

Trip Location

The trip will begin and end at Heart's Desire Beach in Tomales Bay State Park near Inverness, CA. Please see driving directions enclosed in this packet.

Guides

ETC uses primarily volunteer and some paid Guides who are highly experienced and trained in sea kayak guiding, First Aid / CPR, and working with people of all abilities and backgrounds. All Guides are enthusiastic, caring, and responsible individuals who give generously because they enjoy sharing outdoor adventures and beautiful places with diverse groups.

Special Needs Accommodations

ETC is committed to making outdoor adventure accessible to people with special needs and our Guides are experienced in making adaptations for a wide range of physical and cognitive abilities. In order for us to be prepared for your group, we ask that each group with people with special need complete the "Special Needs Trip Roster" no later than one week prior to your trips and discuss all special needs with the Sea Kayak Program Manager.

Due to the size limitations of our kayaks, people over 250 lbs or who cannot fit comfortably into kayak seat areas with the dimensions of 35" long x 18.75" wide could pose a safety risk should the kayak accidentally capsize. If you are concerned about a member of your group comfortably or safely fitting inside our kayaks, please discuss this with the Sea Kayak Program Manager no later than one week prior to your trip.

Equipment

ETC provides all sea kayak specific equipment, including kayaks, personal floatation devices (PFDs), spray skirts, paddling jackets, paddles, and safety equipment. Additionally, ETC provides waterproof bags for packing, kitchen equipment, pads for sleeping, and tents. **ETC does not provide personal equipment, and thus there is an enclosed "Equipment List"** outlining what each person should bring with them on the day of the trip. Also, **ETC does not provide sleeping bags**, although these can be rented from a number of outdoor equipment stores. We understand that outdoor equipment is expensive and do not ask individuals to purchase special items for their trip (many people already own clothing that is appropriate for sea kayaking). If you have questions about equipment please contact the Sea Kayak Program Manager.

Food

ETC will provide healthy meals with vegetarian options from lunch on Saturday through lunch on Sunday. If you have specific dietary needs or restrictions, please let us know about them well in advance.

Overnight Accommodations

We'll be camping on a remote beach on Tomales Bay and bringing all of our camping equipment, food, and personal belongings with us in kayaks. ETC provides 3-person tents for folks to use. There is no running water on the beach, so we will be bringing it all with us in our kayaks. For this reason, there will not be an opportunity to bathe while on the trip (although swimming is an option!). Additionally, we will use established pit toilets while at our beach camp.

Cooking Facilities

We will bring all our cooking equipment with us in kayaks and will set up an expedition kitchen at our camp. We will have folding tables for the kitchen and will cook on propane stoves. ETC will provide all kitchen equipment including cooking and eating utensils. Available cookware includes a Dutch oven, wok, large pots, griddles, and large skillet. We

will be keeping our food cold in coolers, so we ask you bring ice to keep with you for the trip (ice blocks are preferable to cubes). If you have questions about kitchen equipment, don't hesitate to ask the Sea Kayak Program Manager.

Campfires

Depending on weather conditions, we may be able to get a fire permit that would allow us to have a campfire during the evening. If this is of interest to your group, please bring firewood and kindling with you, as we are not permitted to collect firewood on the beach.

Trip Forms

Each person participating in the trip, is required to complete two forms: a health form and a liability release. Both forms must also be signed by the participant or the participant's parent or legal guardian if he or she is under the age of 18. Both forms will be sent to you separately. Before signing the forms, participants should review ETC's Essential Eligibility Criteria for Participation and ETC's Personal Care Attendant Policy. These are also included in this packet.

Essential Eligibility Criteria for Participation in ETC Trips

For All Activities

- Be able to manage all personal care and mobility independently or with the assistance of a friend, family member, or attendant (see Personal Care Attendant Policy below)
- Be able to breathe independently, not require medical devices to sustain breathing
- Perceive, understand and respond to commands given by a guide independently or with the assistance of an interpreter
- Be able to effectively signal or notify guides or other trip participants of personal distress, injury or need for assistance
- If taking prescription medications, be able to maintain proper dosage by medicating independently or with the assistance of a personal care attendant or staff member
- Be prepared to participate in physically strenuous activities that may require physical ability beyond what many people are accustomed to in their day-to-day lives
- For overnight trips, be able to move about the campsite or building independently or with the assistance of a companion, on trips that include overnight camping
- Be able to remain adequately hydrated, fed, and properly dressed so as to remain generally healthy and be able to avoid environmental injuries such as hypothermia, heat-related illness, sunburn and frostbite
- Be able to wear all safety equipment correctly such as, but not limited to, helmet, spray skirts, or personal flotation device
- Be comfortable traveling in remote settings where access to advanced medical care may be significantly delayed

For Sea Kayaking Trips

- Independently turn from face down to face up and remain floating face up while wearing a properly fitted personal flotation device (life jacket);
- Independently exit a capsized vessel and cooperate with an assisted rescue facilitated by an ETC Guide.
- Be able to comfortably sit in a sea kayak, which has a typical weight capacity of about 250 pounds per person.
- Be able to spend extended time in outdoor environments, where there may be exposure to wind, precipitation, and uninterrupted sun, and the water temperature may be below 55 degrees F.

Personal Care Attendant Policy

ETC guides are trained in making our adventures adaptive, (including assisting with transfers in and out of kayaks and rafts and getting around camp), but they are not trained personal care attendants. Many participants with disabilities find that they need more support in the less familiar environments of our trips than they do at home.

ETC's overnight trips are usually camping trips, and some only have portable toilets and buckets for washing that are set up each night (i.e., no running water). ETC provides tents and cots for those who need them. You will need to be able to get into your tent and on and off either a cot or the ground on your own. Also, you will also need to be able to do your own toileting, washing, and dressing.

If you think that you will need assistance with any of the following: toileting, eating, taking medicines, dressing, and getting in/out of bed, ETC asks that you bring a personal care attendant with you. ETC does not want the additional cost of bringing an attendant to hinder you from being able to take part in our trips, so we offer scholarships and special pricing for attendants.

Terms and Conditions

We look forward to sharing an ETC adventure with your group. Below is a list of Terms and Conditions for your trip booking:

Reservations and Cancellations

- For trips with a per participant fee of \$250 or less, payment is due in full to secure the reservation.
- For trips with a per participant fee of over \$250, a deposit of 50% of the total trip cost is required 2 weeks after the booking date to secure the reservation. The trip balance is due no later than 7 days prior to the trip date.
- Cancellations made 90 days or more prior to the trip date will receive a full refund.
- Cancellations made 60-89 days prior to the trip will receive a credit for the deposit amount, which can be applied to any ETC trip within one year of the original trip date.
- Cancellations made 59 days or less prior to the trip date are not refundable unless special accommodations are made in advance with the ETC Office.
- ETC reserves the right to cancel the trip due to weather conditions, tide/current conditions, water level, or for other unforeseen reasons. If ETC cancels the trip, the trip payment will be refunded in full.

Transportation

- ETC does not provide transportation to or from the program location.
- Transportation during whitewater rafting trips can be arranged at an additional fee. If so, this transportation will not be wheelchair accessible. If you require wheelchair accessible transportation, ETC will help facilitate this using your own vehicle. During reservation process please confirm transportation arrangements.

Medical

All participants must complete a Health Form, which must be signed by the participant or the participant's parent or guardian if he or she is under the age of 18. ETC works to accommodate people with special needs, though we reserve the right to exclude or remove someone from a trip at any time if doing so is related to the safety of the trip. Participants or agency staff will be responsible for the administration of any medications they may take regularly. ETC Guides are never to be responsible for the administration of a prescription medication.

Liability

Due to the nature of the activity, a condition of participation is the completion of a Liability Release acknowledging the inherent risks of the trip activities. This form must be signed by the participant or the participant's parent or guardian if he or she is under the age of 18. Participants who refuse to sign the liability release will not be allowed to participate.

Payment of your trip deposit indicates that you agree to the above Terms and Conditions.



Tomales Bay Expedition Overnight Equipment List

Paddling Attire:

- Pants or shorts (synthetic material is best)
- T-shirt or long sleeve shirt (synthetic material is best)
- Wool or fleece sweaters
- Shoes that can get wet and will stay on feet (old tennis shoes, sport sandals, wetsuit booties)
- Baseball cap or visor
- Sunglasses (with retention strap)

On Land/Evening Attire:

- One T-Shirt
- One pair of shorts
- One pair of pants
- Underwear
- Socks
- Dry shoes (good for hiking/walking)
- Warm jacket
- Warm Hat

Other Personal Items:

- Sleeping bag (mummy style is preferable).
- Sunscreen
- Lip balm with sun protection (SPF)
- Reusable water bottle with secure lid
- Small towel (not a full sized)
- Small flashlight or headlamp
- Toiletry items
- Prescription medications (if you take any)
- Prescription eyeglasses (if you have them)

Optional Accessories:

- Camera
- Binoculars
- Small Games

Items Not to Bring:

- Electronics (including cell phones)
- Expensive watches and jewelry

Important Notes:

- *Space is limited in our kayaks, so we ask you bring what you need to be comfortable while minimizing any extra items*
- *Please pack in a backpack or small duffle bag. On the day of the trip, ETC will provide drybags that you will transfer your belongings to in order to keep them dry.*
- *Weather on Tomales Bay is highly variable and evenings can be cold. Please be prepared for both warm and cold weather.*

Tomales Bay Sea Kayak Program Driving Directions

Do not solely use GPS navigation, as it is often unreliable for this area and coverage is limited.

FROM HWY 101 IN NOVATO OR HWY 37

Driving Time: From 101 it is approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes

- Take the South Novato Blvd exit onto South Novato Blvd. and continue on Novato Blvd. for approximately twenty minutes.
- You will go through the town of Novato and eventually end up in a rural area, passing Stafford Lake. The road will dead end a few miles after at Point Reyes/ Petaluma Rd.
- Turn left onto Point Reyes/Petaluma Road. Continue on this road until you reach a stop sign at Platform Bridge Road.
- Turn right (remaining on Point Reyes/ Petaluma Road) and follow until it ends at Hwy 1.
- Turn left and continue on Hwy 1 through the town of Point Reyes Station.
- After crossing the small bridge out of town, turn right onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd.
- See * below for remaining steps

FROM HWY 101 IN PETALUMA

Driving Time: From 101 it is approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes

- Take the Petaluma Blvd North Exit and stay on Petaluma Blvd North through town to D street.
- Turn right on D Street. D Street will eventually turn into Point Reyes/ Petaluma Rd and continue on this road until you reach a stop sign at Platform Bridge Road
- Turn right at the bridge to stay on Point Reyes/Petaluma Road and continue until it ends at Hwy 1.
- Turn left on Highway 1 and continue through the town of Point Reyes Station.
- After crossing the small bridge out of town, turn right onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd.
- See * below for remaining steps

FROM SAN FRANCISCO ON HWY 101 NORTH OR HWY 580 (Richmond – San Rafael Bridge)

Driving Time: From Hwy 101 or the West end of the San Rafael Bridge it is approximately 1 hour and 15 minutes.

- Take the Sir Francis Drake Blvd/San Anselmo exit and drive approximately 21.5 miles through a series of towns and Samuel P. Taylor State Park until the road comes to a T at Highway 1 in the town of Olema.
- Turn right (north) on Highway 1 towards Point Reyes Station
- After 1 block turn left at the Point Reyes National Seashore sign onto Bear Valley Rd. Pass Park Headquarters and continue for 2.3 miles to a stop sign.
- Veer left, back onto Sir Francis Drake Blvd. To continue, see (*) below.
- See * below for remaining steps

***CONTINUED STEPS**

- Continue traveling on Sir Francis Drake Road, passing the towns of Inverness Park and Inverness.
- Take a slight right at the fork onto Pierce Point Road and drive 1.2 miles to the Tomales Bay State Park entrance.
- Turn right into the park entrance and follow the road for about 0.5 miles (you will drive through the kiosk where park visitors pay**)
- Turn left into the main parking lot for Heart's Desire Beach where you will see two large green containers on your right hand side and your guides will meet you for the trip.

*****ETC Guides will provide each person with a parking pass and thus it is not necessary to pay for a parking permit at the entry kiosk.***