

**SKILS**

## Harvesting from the Wild



### Program Description

We are excited to introduce a 7-day workshop exploring wild foods while on a kayaking journey in the beautiful Clayoquot Sound. This immersive adventure includes multiple workshops on foraging wild foods and how to cook with them. Learn about shore, intertidal and forest plants, seaweeds and intertidal critters. Fish for lingcod, rockfish and salmon and learn how to fillet and cook them in the field. Set crab traps and pick up crab cookery tips. In the evenings, sip on foraged teas and wild cocktails.

Expect a dizzying array of wild-inspired delicious meals. We'll gather as much sustenance as possible from our environment and will bring along other pre-prepared wild foods to enjoy and sustain us.

You'll meet like-minded folks, smell and taste new flavours, learn a bunch, and get inspired to bring new ideas into your home kitchen. If you spend time outdoors and love harvesting for sustenance, this course is for you.

To help you prepare for our time together, we have created this program package. Please use this as a skill and equipment checklist, to ensure you are prepared for the program. There is a lot of information, please be sure to review it all.

### Paperwork Checklist

Please use the following checklist to ensure you have received and reviewed all the required documentation prior to the program start date:

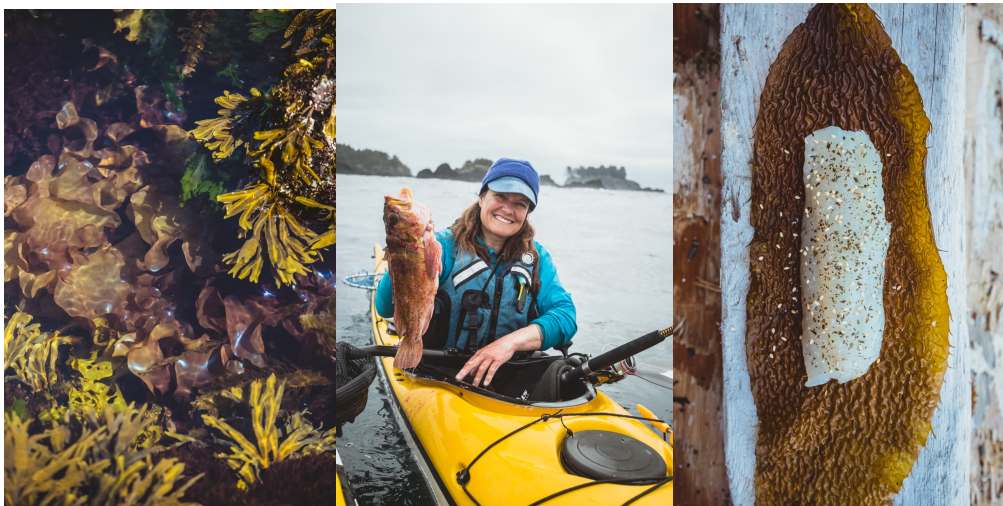
- ✓ Harvesting from the Wild Expedition Information Package – please review
- ❑ SKILS Waiver – please sign with your instructor at the beginning of the program
- ❑ SKILS Medical Form – please bring a completed copy to your program

# Program Overview

## Program Outline

From our kayak launch site we will head out on a 7-day (6 nights) wild food harvesting and kayak camping trip in Clayoquot Sound. The incredible environment is an ideal classroom and a wonderful setting for the tour. Depending on the itinerary and weather, we expect to spend between 2 and 4 hours on the water every day, with plenty of time for snacks and rest stops.

Leaving from Tofino, we'll base camp from two different locations to allow us to experience different environments and species, one on the open ocean and one in more sheltered waters. Most days, we'll spend half a day on the water fishing or crabbing and half a day foraging and preparing food. In the evening, you can sample a different cocktail made using wild ingredients.



Workshops include;

Kayak Fishing for Salmon, Lingcod and Rockfish- including food processing  
Kayak Crabbing

Foraging for shallow waters critters like urchins, sea cucumbers, etc.

Foraging for intertidal critters like sea snails, barnacles, bivalves, etc.

Foraging for seaweeds

Foraging for intertidal plants like sea asparagus, plantago maritima, etc.

Foraging for shore plants

Foraging for forest plants (trees and berries)

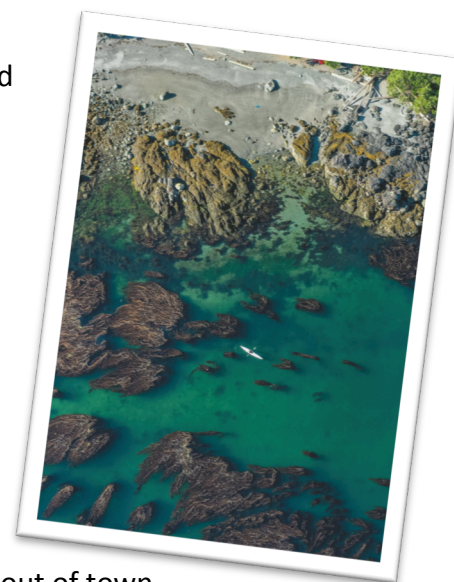
Field Cookery - tips and tricks for cooking in the field while kayaking

Wild Mixology - sparkling cocktails, creating flavours from the ocean and forest.

You will meet your guides and the other participants in Tofino, BC, at 8:30 am on the first day of the trip. Please aim to arrive 10 – 15 minutes early for your tour in case you encounter delays. As our program begins early in the morning, please arrange overnight accommodation in or near Tofino for the night before. Information on accommodation is provided within this document.

We will meet at the kayak launch beside the town dock in Tofino. The town dock is located at the base of First Street, and the kayak launch is located to the left of the town dock. Short-term parking is available at the kayak launch to enable you to unload your gear. At the time of writing, long-term overnight parking was available for \$35 for 7 days at the Municipal Parking lot at 391 Main Street. It's a gravel parking lot next to the police station on the junction of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and Main Street. You are responsible for the logistics of parking your vehicle for the duration of the tour. We cannot be responsible for damage to or loss of your personal items, so please ensure valuables are stored securely.

At the launch site you will be given a portion of the group equipment, food, and water to carry in your kayak, as well as instruction on how to pack your boat efficiently if needed. The front hatch of your kayak will be reserved for group gear and food. The rear hatches of your kayak will be allocated for your personal gear. We will provide you with a 10 litre water bladder for your cockpit. When all participants are ready, we will launch for an enjoyable paddle to our first campsite. On the seventh and final day of the program, expect to return to Tofino by 16:30 pm. We caution you that due to unsafe weather conditions or other reasons, our return may be delayed. As such, please do not organize tight connections or other time sensitive travel plans for the evening of your return or the following day. Consider purchasing cancellation and trip interruption insurance for any flight tickets if you are arriving from out of town.



## Who Should Take This Program

This program is appropriate for advanced beginner kayakers or more experienced kayakers with at least Paddle Canada Level 1 skills, or equivalent experience. Specifically, participants should be able to paddle at 2.5 nautical miles per hour for up to 4 hours per day. Participants must feel comfortable in gentle swells of 1 meter high and in winds of up to 15 knots. For your safety and enjoyment, and for the safety and enjoyment of others in the program, please enter the program with the



prerequisite knowledge, skill, and experience. If you are unsure about your level of experience, send us an email. This program is for ages 16 and up.

## Participation

Packing and unpacking the boats, carrying them to and from the beach, and setting up and breaking camp will be a group effort. The old adage ‘many hands make light work’ holds true as always. There will also be lots of rest and relaxation time. Help chopping vegetables and other such preparations for our meals will always be welcome. As well, pitching in to help with cleanup after meals is greatly appreciated. We find that if everyone chips in a little with some of the chores, the tour is more enjoyable for all, as the guides have more time to do what they

do best—guide. That means more time to harvest and to take in the scenery.

## Program Safety

Ocean kayaking and camping are not without risk. Certain sea kayaking rules and camping techniques must be agreed to and observed by all members of the program to maximize the safety and enjoyment of all participants and minimize our impact on the ecosystem. We will discuss these rules, why they are necessary, and what contingency plans we will use in the event of an emergency, at the start of the trip.



## The Elements

The weather is variable at all times on the West coast; during the expedition we can expect sun, rain and wind in varying amounts. Please come prepared. The water temperature varies from 9 degrees Celsius in the winter to 17 degrees Celsius in the summer. Bring warm clothing. Rubber boots and a good rain jacket and pants are highly recommended.

## Your Instructors

SKILS staff members are industry leaders and professionals with extensive guiding and instructional experience and certification.



### Kevin Kowossan

Outdoor food instructor Kevin Kowossan is deeply connected to wild foods. His unique depth of knowledge comes from over 10 years working with chefs, hunters, foragers and filmmakers on TV programs, workshops and guided walks. Kevin co-created and filmed Wild Harvest with Les Stroud, and created his own web series “From the Wild”. The

James Beard Award twice-nominated show is an intimate account of a group of friends learning how to engage with nature, find food, and turn it into delicious things. Kevin trained to be a sea kayak guide with SKILS in 2021 so he could take his friends on ocean fishing and foraging adventures for the series. Season 9 features SKILS staff Finn Steiner spear fishing in Barkley Sound and Season 10 will feature Justine jigging for rockfish at the George Fraser Islands. We are beyond stoked that Kevin is joining us for this program, sharing his vast knowledge of wild foods and field cookery.



### JF Marleau

JF has been working as a guide, guide trainer and instructor since 1998. He is one of only three people to ever achieve the highest level of certifications with Paddle Canada and the Sea Kayak Guides Alliance of BC (SKGABC). JF is a pioneer of kayak fishing in Canada and developed kayak fishing courses and guided trips. He’s the author of books and training manuals and wrote the kayak fishing chapter in John’s Dowd classic book Sea Kayaking: A Manual for Long-Distance Touring. He’ll share his passion and expertise in all things fishing. JF has worked as a professional hunter and

spent most of his life harvesting food from the forest, intertidal zone and the sea.



### **Justine Curgenvan**

Justine is a SKGABC Level 4 Guide, Guide Trainer and a Paddle Canada Level 3 Instructor. She teaches and guides kayak fishing programs. An avid harvester, Justine loves finding new ways to gather, process and incorporate wild foods into meals.

## **Ratios and Group Size**

We work with a small ratio of 3 instructors to 10 participants to ensure a great experience, optimum learning and increased safety.

# **Program Logistics**

## **Accommodation**

You will need to make your own accommodation arrangements in Tofino for the night before the program starts (and optionally after the program finishes). Tofino is a popular tourist destination, so make certain you reserve your accommodation well in advance. The following links may help you in finding accommodation in the Tofino area:

- Tofino Chamber of Commerce: [www.tofinochamber.org](http://www.tofinochamber.org)
- Pacific Rim Visitor Information Centre: [www.pacificrimvisitor.ca](http://www.pacificrimvisitor.ca)
- Bella Pacifica Campground: [www.bellapacifica.com](http://www.bellapacifica.com)
- Paddler's Inn: [www.tofinopaddlersinn.com](http://www.tofinopaddlersinn.com)
- Surf Junction: [www.surfjunction.com](http://www.surfjunction.com)

## **Getting to and from the program**

You are responsible for transportation to and from the starting location of the tour. Vancouver Island is easily accessed by air, ferry, and bus. Air Canada and WestJet offer regularly scheduled flights. BC Ferries offers ferry service from Canadian departure locations, while Washington State Ferries and the M.V. Coho offer ferry services from American departure locations. Once on Vancouver Island, Tofino can be accessed by car or the bus. Following is a list of links to help you plan your transportation.

- **Air Canada**

- 1.888.247.2262 (in North America)
- [www.aircanada.com](http://www.aircanada.com)
- **WestJet**
  - 1.888.WESTJET (1.888.937.8538)
  - [www.westjet.com](http://www.westjet.com)
- **BC Ferries**
  - 1.888.BCFERRY (1.888.223.3779)
  - 1.250.386.3431 from outside North America
  - [www.bcferries.com](http://www.bcferries.com)
- **Coastal Pacific Airlines (flight to Tofino)**
  - 1.800.663.2872
  - [www.pacificcoastal.com](http://www.pacificcoastal.com)
- **Washington State Ferries**
  - 206.464.6400
  - [www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries](http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/ferries)
- **M.V. Coho Ferry**
  - 360.457.4491
  - [www.cohoferry.com](http://www.cohoferry.com)
- **Vancouver Island Connector**
  - 1.866.986.3466
  - [www.viconnector.com](http://www.viconnector.com)

## Meals

SKILS will provide gourmet meals each day, beginning with lunch on the first day of your trip and finishing with lunch on the final day. Our meals are specially designed to be delicious, nutritious, and transported with us in our kayaks with minimal refrigeration. We will gladly try to accommodate any dietary requirements or allergies; just let us know at least one month in advance.

## What SKILS Will Provide

### Safety Gear

- First aid equipment
- VHF Marine Radio
- Signaling flares

### Cooking Gear

- Large group tarps
- Stoves
- Fuel
- Lighters
- Pots and pans
- Cooking utensils
- Cutting boards
- Cups
- Bowls
- Plates
- Cutlery
- Washing basins

- Pot scrubbers
- Dishwashing soap

### Food and Water

- Drinking water in portable containers
- Nutritious meals and snacks

### Drybags

We will provide each participant with two drybags (one 20 liter and one 5 liter) if requested.

### Camping Fees

SKILS will organize and pay for all camping and park fees while touring in Clayoquot Sound.

### Fishing Equipment

Rods, reels, lures, swivels, plyers and bonkers.

Participants will need to replace lost fishing lures.

## What You Need to Bring

Following is a list of gear that you will need on the program. Most items are required, however, an \* indicates the item is optional.

### Fishing license

Federal saltwater fishing license for yourself with your salmon stamp. Fishing licenses can be purchased online.

### Paddling Gear

- Sea kayak at least 16.5 feet long
- Paddle
- Sprayskirt
- Canadian Coast Guard approved PFD (Personal Flotation Device)
- Whistle
- Hand pump
- Tow line or throw line (buoyant heaving line at least 15 meters in length)
- Paddle float
- \*Spare paddle
- \*Sponge for drying out hatches



If you are providing your own kayak and paddling gear for your program, your sea kayak must meet the following requirements: (1) it is suitable for open sea conditions; (2) it has positive buoyancy when capsized; (3) it is able to adequately carry gear as required for the program; (4) it has perimeter lines: and it is at least 16.5 feet long. Please note: recreational kayaks that do not meet the above requirements are not suitable for our program. If you have questions about the suitability of your kayak, please contact us. We have many suitable kayaks in our fleet and will be happy to match you up with an appropriate rental for this program if you are concerned about the suitability of your own craft. For kayak or equipment rental visit <https://skils.ca/rentals/>

**Camping Gear** - If you are paddling with friends you may choose to share a tent

- Tent
- Sleeping bag – 3 season bag with synthetic insulation
- Sleeping mat
- \*Tarp with thin cord
- \*Pillow case

### Toiletries

- Toothbrush and toothpaste
- Sunscreen and lip balm with high SPF protection (30 +)
- Toilet paper
- \*Biodegradable soap
- \*Camp towel
- \* Pads and/or Tampons



## **Paddling Clothing**

- Immersion gear or alternative warm, dry paddling clothing such as bibs and paddling jacket.
- Neoprene booties or other immersion footwear
- Paddling gloves or poggies

## **Personal Clothing**

The following is a guideline to assist with your packing; feel free to bring more or less as you feel necessary. Please avoid cotton as it keeps you cold when it's wet. Please wear clothing designed for outdoor use and made from Merino wool, silk or synthetic materials such as Capilene, polyester, polypropylene, or nylon.

### **Torso**

- Rain Jacket
- 1-2 fleece or wool sweaters/jackets
- 2 pair long jane/john tops
- 1-2 T-shirts
- 1 wind breaker

### **Legs**

- Rain Pants
- 1-2 pair pants
- 1 pair fleece or wool pants
- 1 pair long john/jane bottoms
- 1 pair shorts

### **Feet**

- 2-3 pair warm socks made with synthetics and/or wool
- 1 pair camp shoes – Sneakers work well
- 1 pair rubber boots
- 1 pair sport sandals or shoes that can get wet
- \*2 pair liner socks – Polypropylene or wool are common materials

### **Head**

- 2 wool or fleece caps
- 1 Brimmed hat or baseball cap

### **Hands**

- 1 pair of fleece or wool gloves
- \*cycling gloves for paddling to prevent blisters

## **Miscellaneous Gear**

- Headlamp or Flashlight with extra batteries
- Sunglasses with good UV protection with retriever strap
- Water bottle
- Insect repellent
- Small day pack or fanny pack for carrying camera, water bottle, etc. on short hikes.
- Spare garbage bags and zip locks
- Bathing suit
- \*Notebook with pencils &/or pens
- \*camera
- \*Pocket Knife
- \*Small personal first aid kit
- \*Moist towelettes for a quick cleanup
- \*Good Book
- \*Binoculars
- \*Earplugs for light sleepers
- \*Games such as Frisbee or cards

- \*Drybags (see below)

If you need to rent gear such as kayaks, kayaking gear, tents, sleeping bags, or sleeping pads, you can make arrangements with SKILS; please visit <https://skils.ca/rentals/>

## Packing your gear

You will need to waterproof at least your clothing and sleeping bag. Depending on how watertight your kayak is, you can pack the rest of your gear loose or in zip locks inside nylon stuff sacks. Here are two packing methods that work well. In fact, we usually use a combination of the two when we pack. Remember to leave room for group gear.

### Dry Bag Method

Dry Bags are especially designed for paddle sports and are available at most sporting goods stores. Depending on the closure system they do not always keep all the water out. Test them in the shower before the trip. We suggest a 20 litre bags for your sleeping bag and 2 X 10 litre dry bags for your other clothing and gear.

### Stuff Sack with Garbage Bag Liner Method

This is the tried and true method of years gone by. Line a stuff sack with a garbage bag. Pack as normal. Squeeze the air out before twisting the garbage bag top. Don't tie the garbage bag or use twist ties. Simply tuck the twisted end down into the stuff sack before drawing the top closed. This technique is reliable but not durable, so make sure you bring extra bags with you. You can improve the durability of this system by adding a 2<sup>nd</sup> stuff sack into the garbage bag creating a plastic sandwich. This method takes up less room than dry bags and makes the kayak easier to pack.

### A couple of final packing pointers....

- It is easier to pack your kayak with many smaller bags than a few larger ones,
- A large duffel bag or IKEA bag is useful for transporting all your small bags to and from your kayak,
- A large Tupperware/Rubbermaid is good for storing wet gear in your car.

## Medication

Please note that you will require a current tetanus shot (a tetanus shot is valid for 10 years). This is very important, as tetanus is a naturally occurring bacterium that lives in the soil. If you do not have up-to-date tetanus inoculation, you may contract tetanus through a scratch or cut, and require immediate evacuation. A simple tetanus

shot, easily accessible at most medical facilities, removes the risk of contracting tetanus.

Please be sure to let us know of any medical conditions of which we should be aware. Please duplicate and separate the quantities of any medications you will need during your program, and give your duplicated medications to your instructor, who will carry them. This will provide an additional source of medications should the primary set become wet, damaged, or lost. If you are prone to any health disturbances, e.g., easily infected cuts or severe migraines, please remember to bring any preventive medications. If you have any questions about medications, contact your doctor. Swell or wind waves can be encountered on the ocean. If seasickness is of concern to you, your doctor or pharmacist may be able to recommend medication to help. Also, anti-nausea (drug-free) Gravol Ginger, candied ginger as well as wristbands work well for many people. Please note that seasickness occurs only rarely in sea kayaking. Be sure to let us know if you anticipate that seasickness will be a problem for you.

## Preparing for Your Program

Kayaking requires some upper body strength and endurance. We recommend that you get out kayaking several times prior to your program. If you feel you could use some upper body conditioning before your trip, exercising with light weights can be quite helpful. Concentrate mainly on shoulder strengthening exercises, focusing on endurance rather than strength.



Thank you for enrolling in our Wild Harvesting program. If you have additional questions or concerns, please contact us. We look forward to playing on the water with you!