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Paddling North



Synopsis

In a tale remarkable for its quiet confidence and acute natural observation, the author of Paddling Hawaii begins with her decision, at age 60, to undertake a solo, summer-long voyage along the southeast coast of Alaska in an inflatable kayak. Paddling North is a compilation of Sutherland's first two (of over 20) such annual trips and her day-by-day travels through the Inside Passage from Ketchikan to Skagway. With illustrations and the author's recipes.

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Customer Reviews

Can you imagine taking off at age 60 paddling throughout southeast alaska alone for 2 months every summer for ten years, in an inflatable boat?? Audrey Sutherland did, and writes eloquently about the experience. She sets an impossible standard for low tech, low impact kayaking, and has the ability to make a log littered beach into a gourmet kitchen. You'll delight in hearing these tales of making something from nothing. a one of a kind woman...

Would you like a guide to paddling Alaskan coastal waters? How about a guide with 8000 miles experience paddling solo in an inflatable kayak? Audrey Sutherland shares with you her diary at age

60 paddling solo 800 miles from Ketchikan to Skagway. Most every launching and landing is a small adventure. Wind, tide, waves, cooking, camping in the rain, boat and gear care, all require meticulous planning. "Go simple, go solo, go now." she tells us. What do kelp pickles taste like? Her book includes about a dozen maps annotating her route, spotting the points of interest in her story. I felt I was cheating when I followed her route with Google Earth and looked at Panoramio photos along her journey. Having read her book of her younger days swim camping around the pali cliffs of Molokai and Kauai (Paddling My Own Canoe) I found myself unable to wait for the paper or kindle editions of this new book. If you liked Neil Frazer's Boat Camping Haida Gwaii (Queen Charlotte Islands), you are sure to want this book.

Audrey Sutherland SHOULD be a household name like Georgia O'Keefe, and John Muir. What she did, for the art of finding beauty in silence and nature is captivating. Only after learning of her from Patagonia blog, I bought her books and relish her writing and experience as a naturalist, and explorer, and a woman. I highly recommend all her writings, and may she rest in peace in the stars above. Her writing takes silence, concentration and vision. I would love to see someone get her life to the big screen so more people can know of her adventurous and loving spirit.

My daughter, a librarian, checked this book out for her father when we were visiting her this fall. He enjoyed the book so much he suggested it would be a good one for my book club to read. The short length of the book was the initial appeal since over half of the club members are still working (secondary and college reading teachers). I loved the book so much I bought my own copy to keep and enjoy again and again (like the good wine and cuisine Sutherland enjoyed throughout her journey). Every club member had different reasons for why they enjoyed the book. I loved it because my husband and I enjoyed our recent round trip cruise from Vancouver to Hubbard Glacier; Sutherland's vivid descriptions brought back wonderful memories. Like Sutherland, several members are working single mothers who connected to that part of Sutherland's story; one member said that reading this book helped her to discover a similar strength in herself. To quote one member, "I think it was a deeper discussion than we have had before! I admire the inner strength in each of you."

Inspirational. She takes crazy risks but is well equipped to deal with them. Her writing draws me quietly from page to page and when I come to the end of the chapter, my mind is full of mossy banks, fog bound islands and dark waters. So completely does she capture me, my shoulders ache

and my hands are cold.

This deserves six or seven stars! I found the book engrossing and an easy read, but with a depth that made me search my own soul. It's a physical, spiritual, and very real adventure that makes me long for a similar adventure. I read *Paddling My Own Canoe* several times many years ago, wish to re-read it now, and can't recommend either book too highly.

Paddling books tend to read well in inverse proportion to the scale of the voyage - better written are the least interesting or useful trips, for some reason. Not this one. Three months into Alaska alone in a cheap inflatable Sevylor, one amazing woman writes about natural events and life philosophy with equal skill. I am in awe. Thank you Audrey for such a gift.

Reading Paddling North's philosophical musings will inspire you, the author's love of nature will make you more observant if you take a cruise ship up the passage, her humor will keep you entertained, and her gourmet dining in the rough will give you a new perspective on camping in the wilderness. This book is an absolute gem that should go down in history with other classics of observing nature.

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