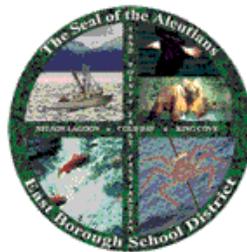
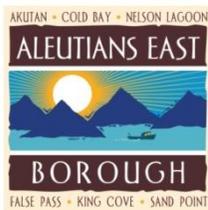


In the Loop



Eastern Aleutian Tribes

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World-Renowned Kayaker Freya Hoffmeister to Stop in Aleutians during her Epic North American Expedition



World-famous kayaker Freya Hoffmeister of Germany. Photo courtesy: Freya Hoffmeister.

She's conquered two continents by kayak. Now on her third monumental expedition, North America, Freya Hoffmeister of Germany plans to log a mind-blowing 50,000 kilometers (30,000 miles) within the next decade. Her next stop – the southern Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutians. While most people would find such a challenge to be impossible, or at the very least daunting, Hoffmeister, the daring and world-famous sea kayaker, relishes such a bold journey.

“Some people climb mountains. I paddle to islands and around continents,” Hoffmeister said.

The celebrated German kayaker and former elite gymnast, bodybuilder and skydiver is no stranger to challenges. Hoffmeister's previous mammoth expeditions include record-circumnavigations around South America in 2011 – 2014, Australia in 2009, New Zealand South in 2007, Iceland in 2007 and Ireland in 2006. She has proven she's a force of nature. The intrepid superwoman has encountered her share of dangers along the way, including saltwater crocodiles, Great White sharks, venomous sea snakes, deadly jellyfish, notoriously rough crossings and immense surf.

It may seem impossible to top her previous colossal adventures. However, the word "impossible" doesn't seem to be part of Hoffmeister's vocabulary. Her plan to conquer North America includes kayaking in blocks of 3 – 5 months on and off the trip. The journey calls for paddling in two half loops, commencing twice in Seattle and ending twice in New York City. She will paddle northward during half of the time and southward during the remainder of the journey. The expedition will take her from Canada to Panama, through the Northwest Passage and to the Panama Canal. She will kayak inside the Gulf of Mexico and Baha California and cross Hudson Bay. She will be the first person to circumnavigate the entire continent by kayak. This journey will be more challenging and longer than her first and second continental paddling trips combined.

"Everybody needs a challenge. This is my challenge," Hoffmeister said.



World-renowned kayaker, Freya Hoffmeister, plans to log a staggering 50,000 kilometers (30,000 miles) during her North American expedition. Photo courtesy: Freya Hoffmeister.

Hoffmeister is the most experienced expedition paddler in the world, and her resume proves it. She has received numerous awards, including the world paddle award "Sportswoman of the Year," National Geographic's "Adventurer of the Year" and the "European Adventurer of the Year" award.

Hoffmeister's moto for this expedition is "Never start stopping – never stop starting."

The ambitious athlete averages about 9 – 10 hours per day on the water. If there's nowhere to land, it could be more or even overnight. However, if there's a strong head wind, high seas or stormy weather, her time on the water could be shortened and she'll camp along the way. It all depends on the whims of Mother Nature.

“Basically, the weather dictates the rest days,” she said on her [website](#). “Overall, there might be ¼ of all days on the trip where I don’t paddle for weather or resupplying reasons.”



Freya Hoffmeister enjoys the stunning scenery of the Northwestern Fjord in the Kenai Fjords National Park. Photo courtesy: Freya Hoffmeister.

On her [Facebook](#) and [website post](#) of June 8th, Hoffmeister wrote that she and her paddling partner for this leg of her journey, Catriona, were forced to take the day off from paddling south of Dry Bay on the Alaska Peninsula because of strong head winds. In her post, she wrote:

“This was the worst forecast out of a range of good to reasonable weather days -- up to 17 knots headwind northwest. I decided for myself during the night, we should have a day off paddling to recover our sore, old bodies aching in many corners, after seven days of continuous paddling. Catriona, with her three weeks paddling together with me, rather thought we could have also gone today. But my experience on ultra-long-distance paddling told me, a full day off is better than two half-days of paddling. And I have some more months to go...”

Prior to embarking on this journey, Hoffmeister put in a good chunk of time preparing and organizing for this epic adventure.

“The logistics are an important part – collecting maps, tidal/weather information, new gear and making local contacts,” she said.

During her expeditions, Hoffmeister uses GPS and satellite communication.

She plans to disembark in Sand Point, King Cove and False Pass and possibly Chignik. She's estimating her time of arrival in Sand Point will be June 20th or 21st.

Along the way, Hoffmeister will take in all the spectacular scenery Alaska has to offer.

"I see different things that other people don't get to see," she said.

On Sunday, June 10th she posted to her website and on her Facebook page from Cape Kayakliut. Her post was titled, "Big Bear Day!

"I thought I saw some people exploring the arch. I was already looking for a boat, when the people turned out to be a mom bear and two cubs!"

Further down in the same post, she enthusiastically wrote about another bear sighting, this time it was an adult male.

"He was foraging peacefully in the seaweed on the high tide line while walking towards the end of

the beach where I slowly and carefully arrived. I watched him for a while. At some point, he saw me, sniffed and obviously got some wind, and he decided to rather turn slowly around to walk to the end of the beach where he came from.

I paddled a bit closer, but that seemed to be too close. He started to gallop away, but I didn't notice he couldn't get off the beach and up the cliffs in that corner! He turned towards me, and I backed away from the beach."



Hoffmeister takes a break to pose for a photo at Taz Bay. Photo courtesy: Freya Hoffmeister.



Hoffmeister enjoys a sunny day as she paddles from Seward to Kodiak. Photo courtesy: Freya Hoffmeister.

Hoffmeister is certain to see plenty of wildlife along the way as she makes her way south along the Alaska Peninsula. She’s looking forward to visiting a part of the world she has never laid eyes on before, and hopes to see what makes the southern Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutians unique. It’s probably safe to say she won’t be disappointed.

“Mountains, a lot of islands, bears, wonderful scenery and nice people along the way,” she said.

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