

Below is the proposed itinerary for the trip. As is true on any adventure travel trip, plans for any specific day may be modified due to weather considerations, unforeseen circumstances, new opportunities, and group interests.

DAY 1

Arrive Tampa head to lodge, kayak instruction and practice

We meet at the Tampa, FL airport at 10:15am (if you plan to arrive that morning, please make sure your plane arrives by 9:45am). Our drive to the Chassahowitzka Hotel is about 1.5 hours. After settling into our rooms, we will share a welcome lunch and then head to the water for a couple of hours of instruction in our kayaks. Contrary to popular myth, kayaking does not require significant upper body strength; we will teach you how to paddle safely, effectively, and efficiently so that you are not totally exhausted at the end of the day. This practice time will also help you get to know your boat and how to get it to go where you want it to. Our paddle will be on the Homosassa River to the back side of the Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park. We will hug the shoreline and watch for manatees. We'll learn to spot them by the soft exhalation of air as they stick their snout above the water to breathe and by their form just below the surface of this clear water. If they are curious, they may come right up to us! Despite weighing multiple tons, manatees are very gentle and slow moving, so they pose no danger to us. After our time on the water we'll return to our hotel and our group dining area for a hearty meal and a discussion of our plans for the rest of the trip.

DAY 2

Kayak on Homosassa River, visit Homosassa Springs Wildlife State Park

Today we return to our outfitter and instead of heading up the Homosassa River, we'll turn left and head up the Halls River. Paddling on this scenic river will enhance our skills as we spend more time on the water. We may opt for a different destination, depending on conditions and where the manatees have been hanging out. After lunch back at the hotel, we head back to the Homosassa Springs State Park, this time by land. This little gem of a park is a great place to learn more about the manatees and the native other birds and mammals. This is a haven for rescued wildlife that cannot be safely returned to the wild. We'll be able to see the recovering manatees and a variety of fish through the underwater viewing station. After spending a couple of hours in the park, we'll return to our hotel for some relaxation. You might opt to hang out on the porch. Whatever you decide to do, we'll end the day with a fabulous meal in our group dining area.

DAY 3

Kayak on the Chassahowitzka River, visit Three Sisters Spring

Today we'll explore another spring fed river, the Chassahowitzka or 'the Chaz'. The Chaz is very primitive and feels ancient. You'll find yourself wondering if a T-Rex is going to stick its head over the Spanish moss draped palm trees or if a brontosaurus will be munching on the marsh grasses we paddle through. The Chaz has over 30 springs, some of which are well hidden and hard to reach. We'll pick a few and paddle to them in our kayaks in search of the manatees that like to gather in the spring's warm water. The Chaz's waters are crystal clear, abundant with colorful fish as you look towards the bottom. The springs are turquoise blue and beautiful to behold, with or without manatees. As we explore the Chaz we'll also watch for shore birds feeding in the waters. If we're lucky, we may even see a Yellow Crested Night Heron.

After our day of paddling we'll return to our resort to shower and change before going to Three Sisters Spring, where we can walk out on a boardwalk to three different springs where manatees hang out. Tonight we'll enjoy a farewell dinner together.

DAY 4

Pack up, hike Salt Marsh Trail, return to airport

After a hearty breakfast we'll pack up and leave our riverside resort for an last experience of the area. This time we'll spend about an hour in the woods, hiking the Salt

After a hearty breakfast we'll pack up and leave our riverside resort for our last experience of the area. This time we'll spend about an hour in the woods, hiking the Salt Marsh Trail. This trail and observation tower provide a sweeping view of a vast span of salt marsh. This is a great way to stretch our legs before our departure. After our hike we'll head back to the Tampa airport. You'll be back by 1:00 PM and can fly out after 2:30 PM.