



# Bonaventure River Canoe Trip

7 days, 8 with travel, available early to mid-June

**The Bonaventure River:** One of Eastern Canada's finest rivers with lots and lots of lively and class I-II whitewater yet with no portages and only a couple linings. The Bonaventure starts out as a swift moving mountain stream with many sharp turns growing in size as we descend through a valley of Black Spruce. It's also a great river for poling. The views of the surrounding hills are spectacular. Trip is seven days and we paddle 80 miles. Not a physically demanding trip when paddling in medium and medium/low water but becomes more demanding in higher water (wading and lining canoes where we normally don't have too). Note: In the event the water is too low or too high (rarely happens), we have the option of paddling the Cascapedia River for four days then the lower Bonaventure for three days.

**Skill Level:** The majority of participants should have solid paddling skills and feel comfortable in class II-III rapids. We can work with those that don't by teaching them the basics of how to paddle in the bow. Must be good on your feet as this involves getting in and out of the canoe from time to time to line around obstacles.

**Meeting Up:** Day 1: we meet in Houlton 9AM at the Irving Big Stop. Two options for staying over in Houlton the night prior are the Shire town Inn and Ivy's motor Lodge (I recommend Ivy's). **You will have the option of following us to the Bonaventure or possibly carpooling with others. If mine is the only truck going, others will need to car pool. If we need to leave a vehicle in Houlton, we have a safe place to do so.** It is a 6+ hour drive (with pit stops) to the town of Bonaventure, where we tent overnight at a local campground. We eat out that evening and after a breakfast intown the next morning, we'll load up and head to the headwaters of the Bonaventure. Note, while we cover all meals on the river beginning with lunch on day 2 (first day on the river), we do not cover meals prior to that including any on the road meals, supper on day 1 and breakfast on day 8.

Day 2: After breakfast we meet up with our transporters to load up then head for Lac Bonaventure, the launch location of our trip. On this day, we only paddle a short distance and set up camp.

Days 3-4: The Bonaventure starts out as a swift moving mountain stream with many sharp turns, growing in size as we descend through a valley of Black Spruce. The views of the surrounding hills are spectacular.

Day 5: We are in the gorge with several class III ledge drops (lined or paddled) and numerous class II rapids.

Days 6-7: The river is much wider, and we paddle over many beautiful salmon pools on our way to the Bay of Chaleur.

Day 8: We take out mid-morning, with the option of grabbing a quick shower at a local campground. You should arrive back in Houlton by early evening.

**Equipment:** We can provide all canoeing and camping equipment necessary to make your trip comfortable and safe. Our inventory includes: durable Old Town and Esquif canoes, type III life jackets, paddles, poles (canoe poling), tents, self-inflating sleeping pads, large and small river dry bags to pack your personal gear into, compact folding chair, group tarp, cooking and eating utensils, first aid kit, and for peace of mind, a Garmin IN Reach satellite two-way communicator. For those who prefer to bring some of their own equipment, please be sure to indicate what you will be bringing on the trip application.

**Meals:** Breakfasts include organic coffee, assortment of regular & herbal teas, oatmeal, omelets, buttermilk pancakes and French Toast served with real Maine blueberries & syrup, and the traditional Maine guide breakfast of local farm fresh eggs, meat, organic potatoes. Lunches are on the fly and may include make your own wraps with assorted breads, variety of meats and cheeses, Tuna, lettuce, pickles and tomatoes. Snack foods including trail mix & bars. Suppers will include the best cuts of locally raised filet mignon steaks, wild caught sockeye salmon, vegetables, fresh cooked biscuits, pork loin, spaghetti with homemade sauce and garlic bread, chicken, rice, vegetables & dumplings, taco soup, fresh salads and freshly baked desserts including brownies, apple crisp, gingerbread cake and strawberry shortcake. We can accommodate for vegetarians. For gluten free folks, review the above menu and bring substitutes as necessary. For vegetarians, we'll bring substitutions including extra oatmeal, veggie burgers and avocados to substitute for lunch meats.

**You Provide:** (see personal gear list) The Chic Choc Mountains in mid-June can be hot and sunny or cold and wet so you will want to packing for cold weather camping. Bring quality rain gear with a hood or hat with brim to shed water. Bring proper cool weather and cold water clothing, (cotton when wet stays cold!) Wool, polypropylene and modern synthetic thermal materials when used with an outer shell provides warmth even when wet. Please come prepared.

**Footwear:** Old pair of sneakers with good traction work well for wading and canoeing. Be sure sneakers are not too tight as they can cause blisters. Wearing heavy wool or neoprene socks with sneakers will help keep your feet warm. Synthetic or wool socks provide warmth even when wet. River sandals are not a good choice when canoeing as they provide little protection for your feet and fall off easily while wading. **Note:** We can't help but have wet feet as we are in and out of the canoes often especially on day 2 when we wade and drag our canoes through the log jam area.

### Common Q & A

- It is an Atlantic Salmon River and is highly regulated so we skip the fishing
- NO pets allowed
- Camping: This is pristine camping and most of our camping is on gravel bars. While some sites we are able to tuck up into the woods.
- Outhouses? Perhaps the last night or two if we happen to camp in an area that provides them but we just dig a cat hole well back from the river's edge and cover it when we leave.
- Toilet paper is supplied but most bring a secret stash of their own
- Bringing boxed wine is fine, Responsible drinking only please. It is against the law to drink while canoeing.
- NO marijuana or Cannabis (CBD) Products. This could be a BIG PROBLEM trying to get across the border with.
- We'll often mix and match canoeing partners based on what works best.
- Solo paddlers welcome, (please call us to discuss)
- Camp chairs are provided
- Tents: We provide outfitter style tents that are easy to set up and take down. Outfitter tents come with a heavy #10 zipper and heavy-duty floor.
- There is no cell phone coverage on most of the Bonaventure.
- While we provide biodegradable soap, if you would like a small bottle to keep on your person for personal use, we recommend Doctor Bronner's soap. The 2 OZ size is best for camping. From our personal experience, don't choose peppermint scent, as we have found it to attract bugs, we like lavender scent. You can buy on line at [www.shop.drbronner.com/products/lavender-pure-castile-liquid-soap](http://www.shop.drbronner.com/products/lavender-pure-castile-liquid-soap)

**Packing Considerations:** When packing, bring what you need, but don't overpack.

**Note on Sleeping Bag:** Bring a sleeping bag that is compact and packable. We recommend a 0-degree Fahrenheit sleeping bag. Nights can get cold in the Chic Choc mountains in June

Contact me anytime and we are looking forward to having you on the river!

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