



Course Overview Bay Area Backpacking to Urban Expedition

With two course areas, participants will experience some of the most beautiful parts of California - thriving San Francisco and the peaceful coastal mountains.

Daily morning fog envelopes the Santa Cruz Mountain range, watering its grand ancient coastal redwoods, some towering as high as the Statue of Liberty. Green mosses cover the forest floor alongside waterfalls and bright yellow banana slugs.

Unlike the rest of California, San Francisco is hilly, bustling and chilly. Its winding city streets lead to vibrant neighborhoods and spectacular city and ocean views. Nearly a million residents pack into a compact 7 x 7 miles. As a culturally diverse city, more than a third of its inhabitants were born in other countries, mostly Asian and Spanish-speaking countries. This spirited city is often recognized for political activism and progressive viewpoints.

Backpacking and Course Terrain

Traveling through mountain terrain is exhilarating and often physically exhausting. Travel days are generally very long and require great stamina and endurance. Expect to travel primarily on high quality trails through beautiful forested areas.

Miles Traveled Daily

As a general guideline, expect to travel approximately 3-7 miles a day as terrain and fitness allow.

Physical Fitness

Participants must come prepared for a physically, mentally and emotionally-demanding yet equally rewarding experience. One of the best ways to enhance your experience and set yourself up for success is to arrive physically fit.

Pack Weight

Packed backpacks typically weigh between 30-40% of your body weight or a minimum carry of 30 – 40 pounds. This varies person to person based on size, stature and physical ability.

Instruction and Skills

Previous backpacking experience is not necessary. We will teach you the skills for backcountry travel both interpersonal and technical skills. Technical skills include: how to pack appropriately, load a backpack, set up tarps, camp craft, navigation, how to sleep warm in your sleeping bag and how to cook your group meals over backcountry stoves. Interpersonal skills include group travel dynamics, risk management, weather and hazard assessment, communication skills and learning how to work as a team.

Training, Main & Final

Fundamental in Outward Bound's educational outcomes is the concept of "Training," "Main," and "Final." Our hope is to transfer leadership and decision-making skills over to students through an intentional progression. As the course advances, instructors will take on more of a 'coaching' role. This provides a safety net for students to work through their decision-making and risk management development.

Middle School Courses

This may be your first time away from home or you may be a veteran traveler. Either way, we have you covered! We plan our middle school courses to set you up for success no matter where you are on the spectrum of wilderness experience. The mental, social and physical challenges you will encounter are very real and meeting them is a genuine accomplishment. Instructors will create a highly structured environment with clear expectations and a daily routine like chore rotations or Leader of the Day.



Overview

Course Start

There is a 1.5 - 2 hour drive from the airport to course start location campground. You will spend the first day gearing up for the field and meeting the other members of your team. Group gear like food, tarps, kitchen equipment and first aid supplies will be divided up among group members. As this is not a guided trip, all group members will pitch in to do camp chores, including cooking, washing pots and setting up tarps.

Solo

The solo experience provides an important break from the rigors of the expedition, and a chance to reflect on your course so far. You'll spend time alone at an assigned location, with water, some snacks and gear to make sure you are comfortable. Solo sites are chosen to have as much solitude as possible, within earshot of your Instructors for management considerations. You will not travel during this time and your Instructors will check on you periodically, but you will be mostly alone for the duration of your solo. On this course, the solo will not be overnight and could range from 2 to 8 hours. Many students are initially nervous about solo but most are ready for a break from the group when the time for solo arrives. This activity may be abbreviated or eliminated as Instructors assess the weather, terrain or other factors that could affect the outcomes of solo.

Transition Day

In between the wilderness and urban sections of your course, you will shower, change into clean clothes, and de-issue any clothing and equipment that you won't need while in San Francisco. As part of your service back to future students, you will clean and re-organize any borrowed Outward Bound gear.

Urban

The urban section of this course provides the opportunity to explore the varied neighborhoods and cultures of San Francisco. During the day you'll engage in service projects which could include serving food to homeless individuals and maintaining trails in the city's parks. A new challenge will be to find your way around the city using the navigational skills you learned during the backpacking section of your course with instructors (while still carrying your expedition backpack!). At night, you will camp at an urban campground or Angel Island. All of these elements are designed to teach leadership skills and provide opportunities for self-discovery. Though you will be in an urban environment, you will not be allowed to use electronics or phones and you will immerse yourself in urban living.

Final Days

The second-to-last afternoon will be spent de-issuing and cleaning any remaining Outward Bound clothing and gear followed by a special meal and graduation ceremony. You will shower before returning home. Groups will leave for the airport in the morning.

Sample Itinerary

The following is an example of what your itinerary may look like. Your actual course plan will vary according to permitting, weather, student skills and abilities, and instructor planning/assessment.

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| Day 1 | Course Start, duffel shuffle (instructor review of packing list), transport to campground |
| Days 2-5 | Backpacking expedition (Introductory lessons to backpacking, camp craft, and navigation) |
| Day 6 - 7 | Transition to San Francisco, urban portion begins, service with Glide |
| Day 8 | Ferry to Angel Island, hike |
| Day 9 | City navigation, transition to final campground for deissue and graduation |
| Day 10 | Depart for airport |