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# Paddling North: A Solo Adventure Along The Inland Passage



## 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.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"As a paddler and a traveler, Audrey Sutherland is someone to value, and this book about her Alaskan voyages is a marvelous addition to the literature of coastal kayaking. What I admire most about Audrey is her independence, her solitary travel, her patience, and her unflappable attitude in the most challenging paddling conditions." — Paul Theroux, author of *The Tao of Travel*:

Enlightenments from *Lives on the Road* — "Audrey Sutherland finished raising her children, quit her job, and took off in her inflatable canoe for the sublime treachery of Alaskan tidal waters. She had me on the second paragraph when she expressed her philosophy that has carried her through more than 8,000 miles of paddling: 'Go simple, go solo, go now.' The genre of adventure narratives has just been enriched by a new voice of inspiration." — Jonathan Waterman, author of *Running Dry: A Journey from Source to Sea Down the Colorado River* — "Audrey's story is the stuff legends are made from. For the 30 years that I've known her she has been an inspiration to both women and men -- often shaming us into action with her exhortation to go solo and keep it simple, an approach that flies in the face of the consumer style of kayaking that most of us adhere to." — John Dowd,

author of Sea Kayaking: A Manual for Long-Distance Touring

Audrey Sutherland was raised in California and has lived in Hawaii since 1952. She raised her four children as a single mother, supporting her family as a school counselor. In 1962 she decided to tour the coast of Molokai by swimming it and towing along an inflatable raft with supplies. She has ever since been an inveterate water traveler, during the past several decades in inflatable kayak because it's portable, light enough for her to handle comfortably and relatively inexpensive.

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.

If you are a kayaker or an explorer type person this is an excellent book. The author was our neighbor. She recently passed away but was very active until the last gasp. The adventures she had are amazing. She was quite a frontier woman. From Oahu Hawaii most of her life her adventures encompass exploration of the wilderness coast of Alaska backpacking with kayak and tent. Considering that kind of wilderness does not exist in Hawaii, she was quite brave to adventure into bear country as she did. She was no slouch. She was always in shape for each adventure and carefully mapped out and studied each portion of her trip before launching. A must read if you have any thoughts of doing this sort of thing.

Well written and soothing nonfiction which makes any kayaking I've done look like child's play. Hopefully you've paddled yourself or this might not ring your bell. Audrey is quite the paddler AND cook. She eats better kayaking than I do at home with the resources of a full kitchen and grocery store right up the street. Really cool book. She also mentions other books which sound very informative too. The author raised four kids and has been on adventures throughout the world.

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.

This was an hugely enjoyable and inspiring read. What an incredible woman. I wish there were more folks like her around. If only we all could enjoy nature more and abuse it less. If you enjoy beautiful descriptions of the outdoors and reading about what it's like to kayak alone in Akaska, you will love this book. If you like memoirs and reading about how other people live interesting and creative lives, you will love this book. Be sure not to miss the photo of Audrey and her kayak at the very end of the book. I almost did and that would have been a shame. Seeing just how small and compact her total gear for three months of adventuring was makes the whole story even more special.

I admire Audrey's spirit to undertake and accomplish this adventure when most would have discounted her for her age and equipment. While the book isn't one you'll stay up all night to read, she writes the story well enough to make endless days of paddling not too tedious. That can be hard.

My daughter, a librarian, checked this book out for her father when we were visiting her this fall. He enjoyed to 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."

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...

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