

The Wild Institute

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Wilderness trips for women, Professional

Speaking, Personal Coaching

Porcupine Mountains Hiking

May 28-31, 2008

"A sincere thank you to all the Porkies for a remarkable weekend in the great outdoors. As I mentioned, I was drawn to this trip and I trusted my gut that I would have a fabulous experience. I've been walking around all week with this very calm, connected feeling and I plan to continue doing things for myself that extend that feeling. Thank you for sharing and caring!"

Porcupine Mountains Wilderness State Park is one of the best-kept secrets of the upper Midwest. Despite its secluded lakes, virgin timber forests, miles of wild rivers, gorgeous Lake Superior vistas, and 90 miles of foot trails, the park remains remarkably uncrowded, even on a beautiful May weekend.

Located in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, the 60,000-acre park is nestled on the shore of Lake Superior with sand and rock beaches. The park rises from the shoreline to a series of jagged hills, from which the Porcupine Mountains get their name.

Each day, you'll choose between adventures led by long time Wild Institute guides: shorter hikes (about 3-5 miles) with plenty of time to learn about the unique natural history of the area, and longer, more vigorous hikes (about 8-10 miles), often hiking through ancient forest to secluded Lake Superior shoreline. Hike, relax, hunt for rocks on Lake Superior's shoreline, welcome the spring wildflowers at their peak, and birds recently back from their winter homes.

Several hikes pass through old growth forests, including the largest virgin hemlock/hardwood forest in the United States. Some of the trees are 200 years old. In past years, we've come upon white pines and hemlocks that were so large it took three of us touching fingertips to reach around the base of the tree.

Your days are spent hiking, exploring, and relaxing, returning to delicious meals at our cozy campsite and sharing the day's stories. Conversations around the campfire often range from raucous laughter to deep conversations. Wake to the sound of native flute when the coffee is ready, and decide on your day's adventures over breakfast. Our schedule is flexible, all hikes and activities are optional. The point is to get outside, have fun, and welcome spring with wonderful women like yourself.

www.thewildinstitute.com

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The details...

Guides: Your guides are founding director of The Wild Institute, Chris Heeter, and long-time guide Marsha Berry. Their combined guiding experience of over fifty years creates trips that are fun, respectful, and extremely safe. Their humor and love of the earth are contagious!

Meals: Food matters! We bring hearty and delicious primarily vegetarian fare. Many women are surprised by the amount of fresh vegetables and mouth-watering menus prepared outdoors.

What to bring: When you register, you'll receive a detailed packing list, so you'll be sure to have what you need. You bring only your personal gear, sleeping bag, and sleeping pad. You are welcome to bring your own tent either as a solo or to share. Otherwise, tents are provided at double occupancy.

How much experience, how in shape do I need to be: You do not need any prior hiking or camping experience for this trip. Though many women use their trip as motivation to get in better shape before they go, no particular level of fitness is necessary for this trip.

Can I sign up on my own: All women are welcome, and many sign up on their own. Others register with friends, partners, sisters, mothers, adult daughters.

Weather: Plan on anything from gorgeous spring weather in the 70's to chilly days in the 50's. It gets cold at night (usually in the low 40's), but typically warms up significantly during the day. The suggested clothing in the packing list that you receive when you register will help you be comfortable in all kinds of weather.

Group size: Minimum 5, maximum 12

Trip fee: Your trip fee of \$450 includes guides, campsites, meals, and all equipment. You'll need a park sticker for your vehicle (\$29 annual, \$8/day for non-residents, \$24 annual, \$6/day for residents).

Schedule: We'll meet at 2:00 on Thursday, May 28, and set up our little tent village. Then we'll be on Northwoods time, hiking, exploring, eating great food, relaxing, and enjoying the company of other fine women. On Saturday, May 31, we'll eat breakfast, take a short morning hike, and leave the park around 11:00AM, in time to have lunch together in town before heading home.

Transportation/travel time: If you are driving, Porcupine Mountain State Park is about a 5 and a half hour drive from the Twin Cities in Minnesota, about 7 hours from Chicago. If you are flying, there are several county and municipal airports nearby; the nearest major airport is Duluth, Minnesota (about 2 and a half hours from the park). When you register, we'll send along a list of the other participants if you would like to carpool.

Payment information: Your deposit is not refundable. If you must cancel, please do so in writing. If you cancel 90 days prior to the trip or more, the balance of your trip fee is refundable; 60 to 89 days, the balance of your trip fee is transferable to any other Wild Institute trip through the end of the following year; 0-59 days, the trip fee is not refundable or transferable. **We strongly recommend that you purchase travel insurance so that you can recover your losses should you need to cancel for any reason.** A couple companies that Wild Institute participants have used are CSA Travel Protection (800-348-9505) www.csatravelprotection.com/comfort and Travel Insured, 800-243-3174. The Wild Institute reserves the right to alter trip plans due to severe weather, water/snow conditions, or other unforeseen circumstances.

How do I sign up: A deposit of \$150 holds your spot, and payment in full is due by April 3, 2008. With your deposit, please send name, address, phone, and e-mail address.