

WILDERNESS WISDOM

What You Should (and Shouldn't) Carry

Redundancy is a virtue. If you can't fix a particular piece of gear or live without it, bring a spare. **Iodine pills make water taste like, well, iodine;** pack them as a backup. Our favorite filter is MSR's Hyperflow (\$100; msrgear.com). For light, fast purification, try SteriPen's JourneyLCD (\$90; steripen.com)—just bring extra batteries. A basic polyethylene tarp

(from \$3.50; rei.com), plus the ability to tie a bowline and a slipknot, equals an easy, dry cooking/chilling space. **Duct tape is good.** A #16 blunt-point plastic/canvas needle and some #69 bonded nylon thread is better. And **Gear Aid's Backcountry Repair Kit**, with everything from SeamGrip to cord locks, is best (\$28; rei.com). The only thing

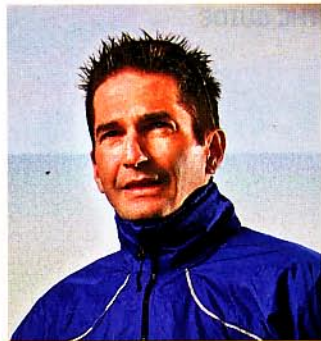
more versatile than Buff's (dorky but practical) polyester headwear (\$20; buffwear.com) or a cotton bandanna? **A silk scarf.** Use one as a sun shield or neck wrap, to clean your camera lenses, or even as a tablecloth. **Consider renting:** LowerGear.com offers everything from bear canisters (\$17/week) to GPS units (\$32) to tents (from \$29).

Marine Trail campsite, an isolated spot with a breathtaking view of Mount Baker. Over the next few days, keep on the calmer bay side and paddle around Lummi to Clark Island. Be sure to check out the sandstone cliffs of Matia Island or, if you're feeling ambitious, the popular sandy beaches of Sucia Island. Either way, stay at the

campsite on Doe Island—a small, forgotten state park known for its private coves—before crossing three-mile-wide Rosario Strait and finishing back in Anacortes. **ESSENTIALS:** Rent from Sea Kayak Shop (five days, \$290; seakayakshop.com), in Anacortes. Pick up Waterproof Charts' #43 (\$27), the Current

Atlas for Juan de Fuca Strait to Strait of Georgia (\$30), and Washburne's Tables 2009 (\$7). All are available at local stores.

PREREQUISITES: Solid coastal kayaking experience and the ability to read nautical charts. Need schooling? Kayak Academy, 20 minutes east of Seattle, offers a five-day training camp (from \$950; kayakacademy.com). **WHEN TO GO:** September. After Labor Day, the pleasure yachts disappear, but it still feels like summer.



PRO TIPS

RAY ZAHAB

(1) Pick friends you can lean on and trust, because some days you're going to feel good and some days you're going to feel like crap. (2) Expect your expedition or trip to cost 10 to 20 percent more than you anticipated.

Ultramarathoner Zahab and his team broke the record for fastest unassisted journey to the South Pole in January.

WILDERNESS WISDOM

Food and Drink

You need more energy than you do at home—at least 2,500 calories per person per day. **Energy bars are for quick fixes and emergencies.** Cheese, salami, dried fruit, dark chocolate—that's lunch. **Bake.** Cast-iron Dutch ovens like GSI Outdoors' Hard Anodized model (\$110; gsioutdoors.com) are heavy, but nothing distributes heat as evenly. **Discard all original containers.** Powders go pre-measured into sandwich bags, stuffed into freezer bags. Liquids, like olive oil, go in reusable plastic bottles. No cream in your coffee is better than powdered anything in your coffee. And **no coffee maker is simpler than the BrewMug** (\$20; brewmug.com). When selecting your menu, don't think food pyramid; think taste and texture: sweet, salty, crunchy, and chewy. **Discover boxed wine** (especially Black Box Wines, from \$22; blackboxwines.com). The collapsible bladder, removed from the box, packs brilliantly.

Sunrise in the San Juan Islands

