



The crisp air, breathtaking scenery and expert guides make Alaskan kayaking an adventure to remember.

Pangaea Adventures

FAMILY ADVENTURE TRAVEL

Vacation 360

Plop Yourself in the Middle of These Immersive Trips

By Neil Woodburn

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Type A personalities who cram eight meetings into a two-day business trip are often the same vacationers who frenetically drag their families through six foreign cities in five days. Such "vacation multitasking" is a sinful oxymoron. It leaves "vacationers" and their families more exhausted and high-strung than when they left.

Immersion vacations can be the perfect choice for avoiding such maladies. Simply choose a single location or activity and stick to it. By doing so, vacations become just that, a vacation. There's no rushing around or juggling multiple destinations and various sports gear. There is just the solace of doing one thing and doing that one thing completely.

[Alaskan Kayaking](#)

There is something undeniably peaceful about gliding in a kayak atop the indigo calm waters of Alaska's iceberg-filled bays. With each paddle stroke, civilization slips further away until all that remains is Mother Nature in her most rugged and beautiful form.

Kayaking in Alaska is an entirely different experience than doing so in Baja California or atop a lake at summer camp. To kayak in Alaska is to commune with this world in a manner few people ever experience, an escape into another state of being in which maddening traffic, Sony PlayStation and bad sitcoms are magically replaced with soaring eagles, marine life, glaciers and jaw-dropping mountain views.

Unfortunately, many people overlook water sports in this part of the world for fear of it being too dangerous. This is simply not the case. Kayaking in Alaska certainly has a perilous element -- freezing cold water -- but kayakers travel with experienced guides and are well-protected.

This perfect combination -- well-managed thrill-seeking that injects some edge into vacation without actually endangering lives -- makes Alaskan kayaking one adventure sport safe enough for the kids to enjoy. Indeed, outfitters such as [Pangea Adventures](#) regularly schedule [family kayaking trips](#) to such scenic locales as the Columbia Glacier and Glacier Island. Distances are carefully managed so as not to overwhelm the young ones.

"It was an epic trip," said Erik Olsen, who lives in New York City. "There is nothing quite like paddling in the unfathomable expanse of Alaska. The wildlife, the scenery, the deep blue glaciers, it was one of the great adventures of my life."

"Kayaking among the ice floes that calved off Columbia Glacier was astounding," said Erik Riegler of San Francisco. "Sea otters frolicked nearby, bald eagles floated lazily above and off in the distance, mile-wide glaciers wended their way down to the sea. But what really blew me away was, we were the only people in the entire area to witness these spectacular vistas. Our Pangea guide, Matt, said he'd never get tired of bringing clients here."

Package: Four-day Columbia Glacier & Glacier Island Family Base Camp (two days on Columbia Glacier, two days on Glacier Island). **Price Per Person:** \$1050