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# LURE OF THE NORTH



## Personal Gear List

Be sure to bring *everything* on this list, but not much more than that. Once you have everything selected and procured, ensure that it all fits comfortably into your duffel bag(s).

**Note:** We have purposely limited the amount of descriptive information and recommendations in this list to keep it useful as a clean checklist to use while packing your gear. For more detailed descriptions and specific product recommendations please check the “Personal Gear List” page on our site under the “Winter Camping” heading. (Note **OPT** = optional).

### Clothing – Bottoms

- Light Long Underwear (x1);
- Heavy Long Underwear (x2);
- Heavy wool or synthetic pants (x1);
- **OPT:** Canvas/ Nylon Windpants;

### Clothing – Tops

- Light Base Layer (x2);
- Medium weight sweater;
- Heavy weight sweater (zip or button preferred to pullover);
- Windproof Jacket;
- Very warm parka with a hood (ideally down-filled);

### Clothing – Extremities

- Warm wool toque;
- **OPT:** Face mask or neck tube or balaclava;
- Thick wool scarf;
- Heavy wool mitts, and overmitts (leather ideal, or nylon);
- **OPT:** Very warm mitts for rest stops, such as down mitts if you are prone to cold hands;
- Leather work gloves (lined, or with removable liners);
- Heavy wool socks (4 – 5 pairs);
- **OPT:** Light liner socks (if wool irritates);
- Warm felt boot liners (x2);
- Cold-weather footwear: breathable moccasins are ideal, heavy waterproof winter boots like Sorels are okay. See note re: selecting footwear.
- If using moccasins, then warm-weather footwear (lightweight rubber boots) are req`d.
- Ski Goggles;
- Underwear (x 2 -3);

### Sleeping Kit

All of the following items should be packed into one small duffel bag (with exception of large sleeping pads, which can ride free) for convenience at camp.

- Cotton shorts and t-shirt (it can get warm in the tent!) - these can serve as your pyjamas too;
- -20 (or better) sleeping bag (Can be achieved with one winter bag or two 3-season bags);
- Sleeping pad – thick, closed cell foam pad;
- Toiletries:
  - Toothbrush/ toothpaste/ floss/ chapstick/ vitamins/ meds/ hand salve etc;
- **OPT:** Camp Booties (Slip-on/ Slip-off booties for at night - highly recommended).
- Ear Plugs;
- **OPT:** reading/ sketch/ log book;
- LED Headlamp;

### Travelling Gear

- 2 litres of water capacity;
  - A 1l water bottle with insulative sleeve and a 1l vacuum bottle (Eg. "Thermos") is ideal;
- Whistle;
- Sunglasses and Sunscreen;
- "Traveling" Snowshoes (see note re: sizing and style);
- **OPT:** Smaller, "camp/ bush" snowshoes.
- 500 – 750ml bottle to hold trail mix (much easier in winter than plastic bags);
- **OPT:** Ski/ hiking pole (I find one useful, but 2 cumbersome... others never use any);
- **OPT:** Small binoculars;
- **OPT:** Camera;

### Other

- Small wash towel (soap provided);
- Lightweight Rain Gear (jacket and pants);
- Spare headlamp batteries;
- 3 - 5 kitchen-sized garbage bags;
- **OPT:** Ontario Fishing Licence and small ice-fishing outfit;
- Duffel bags (x2): You should have all of your items packed into two small duffel bags:
  - A sleeping duffel which will hold all your evening items (described above);
  - A duffel for everything else – this includes backup clothing items (extra boot liners, extra socks, underwear, etc), spare batteries, and various other sundries you might have.
  - The two above duffels will be securely stowed away on toboggans and not-accessible while travelling. You will be provided with a 'day-pack' to hold items you will want to access throughout the day (scarf, toque, waterbottle, camera, etc)

### Special Items for “Summit” trips only (Includes "Ishpatina Ridge" in 2015)

- The smaller "Camp/ bush" shoes listed above are mandatory as "summit shoes" for these trips. These can be modern aluminum-framed snowshoes, or traditional “bear-paw” style snowshoes. Contact us for more details;
- Lightweight 'summit pack'. A small, light, simple backpack to carry items for the day trek to the summit. Avoid stiff hip belts and lots of straps which will be cumbersome on the toboggans;

## Extra Notes/ Clarification re: Gear Lists

### Clothing Material Choices

- The best clothing material choices for traditional winter camping are generally natural fibres such as wool, leather and canvas. Your insulating layers (ie. All warm layers worn under your outer 'shell') should be made up of wool or synthetic materials such as polyester (“fleece”) or polypropylene.
  - You should not be wearing *any* cotton clothing as an insulating layer.
- Your best outer shell material is both windproof and breathable. A tightly woven cotton canvas pullover is the best, as it is both windproof and highly breathable. Alternatively a nylon wind jacket will work fine.
  - The very best outer shell is a canvas anorak which has a nice fur-trimmed hood and extends down to mid-thigh. With an anorak like this (and proper insulating layers underneath), you will be comfortable in the windiest of conditions.
  - Waterproofness is rarely required or desired in the winter. In cold, dry conditions, non-waterproof materials (“breathable” material) are best as they allow your sweat to evaporate, and will keep you drier and warmer than waterproof gear.
- Leather is a great outerwear option in places which see a lot of abrasion, such as gloves, mittens and moccasins. Again, they are windproof and breathable, but also very durable, have a great grip on tool handles and not apt to melt around the fire.

### Sleeping Bags

- Down or synthetic sleeping bags are both fine for traditional winter camping. Down is best because of its lightness and durability, but synthetic is more affordable. Drying sleeping bags is easy in the heated tent, so choose whatever your budget will allow if buying a new bag. Alternatively, you may pair two 3-season bags to have a warm enough night-time setup.
- Most nights, the woodstove will be kept running all night, meaning you will frequently be sleeping in comfort with your bag partially open.

### Snowshoes

- Traditional (large, wooden-framed) snowshoes are best for this type of trip. They provide much greater floatation than small mountaineering snowshoes, and also pack a nice wide 'float' (or track) for toboggans to ride in. We recommend a travelling style snowshoe like the “Huron”/ “Maine”/ “Algonquin” shoe. These are great for lakes and river travel, but are more cumbersome while searching for wood in the forest. Alternatively a shorter shoe like “Bear Paws” are better in the forest, but not as good in the open. Contact us for specific size recommendations.
- **NOTE:** We now prefer to bring 1 pair of large 'travelling' snowshoes and 1 pair of smaller 'camp' snowshoes for ourselves, and recommend this setup for guests as well, particularly on longer trips;
- For 'summit' trips ("Ishpatina Ridge" in 2015), the large travelling “Huron” shoes will not make great 'summit shoes' for the climb. In this case, a small pair of shoes like “Bear Paws” or modern snowshoes are mandatory.

## **Footwear**

- Moccasins are ideal for cold weather (-5 or less), big winter boots (such as Sorels) are 2<sup>nd</sup> best. *Whatever your boot, ensure it has a removable liner.*
  - Footwear should be sized to accommodate enough insulation to keep you warm while standing still at -20 degrees. This is more insulation than you may think:
    - 1 – 3 pairs of thick wool socks;
    - Thick felt insole;
    - Thick felt liner;
  - Mountaineering/ skiing or hiking boots are not adequate. They are too tight-fitting and restrict blood flow. A large-fitting pair may work, but you will be less comfortable.
- If wearing moccasins or other breathable footwear, it is a good idea to bring along a separate pair of waterproof (rubber) boots in case of encountering thaw conditions. An alternative is to temporarily waterproof your moccasins by putting plastic bags inside – ensure you bring an adequate supply of durable plastic bags;
- **Footwear and Blisters:**
  - Probably the most common injury while hiking is blisters. Although they sound minor, nothing can ruin a good hike faster than a couple of large blisters. We have not encountered blisters while on winter hikes with either moccasins, or Sorel-style boots, but that doesn't mean they aren't possible. Whatever type of footwear you plan to use for this trip, ensure you wear them frequently pre-trip test their compatibility with your foot.

## **Duffels**

- Any relatively small duffel which will accommodate everything you are trying to pack into it will do. Keep it light and simple: no frames, no shoulder straps. In our experience it is most convenient to have two small duffels: one for sleeping items which you will use every night, and another one for backup items which you may only need occasionally. As stated, a daypack will be provided for items you will don and doff throughout the day.
- MEC-brand duffels are great for this use (and storage around the house too). Two small MEC duffels, or 1 small and 1 medium should suffice (depending on how big your sleeping bag is).

## **Personal Outfitting**

- We have a *limited* supply of rental equipment available. Please see our equipment rental price list for availability and contact us well in advance if you plan to rent anything for your trip.

## **Modern Snowshoes and Moccasins**

- Modern snowshoes can be damaging to moccasins and as a result should not be used together. Thus we will not rent our moccasins for use with modern snowshoes. Certain styles of modern snowshoes may be more damaging to others - your discretion is advised when using your own gear.

## **Inflatable Sleeping Pads and Spruce Boughs**

- We often use conifer boughs as part of our tent floor. These make an exceptional floor in a traditional winter tent, but can wreak havoc on modern inflatable sleeping pads. We personally only use closed cell foam (non-inflatable) pads for ourselves, though many guests still successfully use inflatable pads with some extra care and discretion.