



# SKY MIND RETREATS

## SOUTH SAN JUAN WILDERNESS BACKPACK RETREAT

### WHAT TO BRING

The most important thing you can bring to any wilderness trip is a flexible attitude, ready to cheerfully accept the surprises that nature and circumstances may present. Please keep your total weight to about 25 pounds. With water your total pack weight will be about 30 pounds. Bowe or Susie will be happy to inspect your pack in Platoro, to help you eliminate unneeded items.

Make sure to prepare for bad weather! This is indeed mountain country. Rain, cold, thunderstorms, wind, and even snow are quite likely. Average daytime high temperatures for this period are 60-70 degrees F, nighttime lows 40 degrees. It is possible to have freezes at night. Sitting may be cool at times: Please be sure you have sufficient clothes to sit in the early and late hours of the day. (You can use your sleeping bag for extra warmth if needed.)

Do not be daunted by this list; you already have most of what you need, and we will help you figure out how to deal with the rest! Tents, sleeping bags, backpacks, and pads can be rented from backpacking stores at very reasonable rates. (See page 3 for more on this.)

#### **CLOTHING (required)**

- Sturdy lightweight boots or full leather hiking boots, comfortable and broken-in, with Vibram or other good soles.
- Socks: 2-3 pair, wool or polypro, plus liners as needed.
- Waterproof rain jacket or parka, and rain pants. (ponchos do not do the job)
- Two warm garments. For cool mornings and evenings: for example, warm wool shirt and polarfleece-type sweater (avoid bulky sweaters). Do not bring cotton sweatshirts or sweaters.
- Lightweight windbreaker - serves as a warm but light layer.  
OR down vest, heavy long-sleeved flannel shirt or other garment to add another layer in case of cold.
- Long loose-fitting lightweight pants (or lightweight rain pants – not cotton).
- Long sleeve nylon supplex shirt (for protection against sun and possible insects).
- Insulating long underwear, both bottom and top. (Either polypro, capilene, or wool wicking long underwear. Do not substitute cotton or cotton-blend long underwear.)
- T-shirt.
- Underwear (2-3 as needed). (Can be washed during the retreat)
- Hat for sun protection for face and neck.
- Warm pullover cap. Very necessary!
- Warm gloves. Can be lightweight synthetic or wool, for evenings. Very necessary!
- Clean clothes to be left in car, to change into after the retreat.

#### **CLOTHING (Optional)**

- Hiking shorts.
- Crocs or other lightweight footgear to wear around camp and for stream crossing
- Bandanna.

#### **FOOD (required)**

- Your choice of hot and cold drink mixes** (herb tea, cider, cocoa, coffee, etc.)  
Hot water for drinks will be available before breakfast and after dinner.
- Your choice of trail snacks** (trail mix, candy, dried fruit, power bars, etc.)

- EQUIPMENT (required)**
- \_\_\_\_\_ Large internal or external frame backpack, large enough to carry all your personal gear. An internal frame gives you a lower center of gravity, but must be more carefully fitted. Volume will likely be about 4000-5000 cubic inches.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Lightweight day pack, for day hikes. (Some backpacks have detachable hip packs. If yours doesn't then bring a separate day pack. Will need to hold your lunch, water bottle, layer of warm clothes, rain gear, and optional items like camera)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Rain cover for backpack (coated nylon) OR 2-3 garden plastic leaf bags (for sleeping bag, clothing, etc. Put all water-sensitive things like cameras in ziplock bags.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Lightweight sleeping bag, good to freezing (30 F).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Sleeping bag stuff sack. (If you use an external frame pack include straps to attach the bag to the pack).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Ensolite foam and/or Thermarest air mattress.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Tent with waterproof rain fly. (One- or two-person size 3-season, lightweight)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Tent ground cloth. Either custom for your tent model, or a lightweight plastic sheet.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Tent stakes and guying cord. Can be lightweight. You can also use logs and rocks at the campsite to anchor your tent.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Sunglasses.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Plastic one-liter water bottles (two).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Water purification equipment (choose one): Iodine pills (Potable Aqua), chlorine dioxide drops (Aquamira), or filter pump.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Matches or lighter.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Personal toilet paper supply, in a plastic bag to keep dry.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Whistle (for emergency signaling only).
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Personal First Aid, including moleskin or athletic tape for blisters. (Bowe will have a more substantial first-aid kit.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Personal medications.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Personal and medical I.D.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Sunblock or sunscreen.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Mosquito head net. For sitting meditation.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Toothbrush and toothpaste or powder.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Small flashlight or headlamp, with extra batteries.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Lightweight cup, bowl, and spoon (fork optional). Having both a bowl and a cup is nice so that you can have tea with your food. Insulated cup is recommended.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Sanitary supplies for all pre-menopausal women.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Crazy Creek or Thermarest chair, small inflatable cushion, etc., for sitting practice.

- EQUIPMENT (Optional)**
- \_\_\_\_\_ Hiking Staff or Ski Pole, for extra stability and support. Highly recommended for those with weak ankles.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Insect Repellent. Recommended but with full-coverage clothing you can avoid.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Toiletries - small towel, biodegradable soap (not to be used in or near streams), comb, hand lotion, small mirror, etc.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Small pocket knife (Swiss Army, etc.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Neutralizer pills or vitamin C powder, to neutralize iodine taste in pill-purified water.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Extra nylon stuff-bags (a pillow when stuffed with clothing, a laundry bag, etc.)
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Camera, film, memory cards.
  - \_\_\_\_\_ Note pad and pen.

**PLEASE DO NOT BRING PERFUME OR SCENTED LOTIONS AND SUNSCREENS**

**PLEASE DO NOT BRING ALCOHOL, RECREATIONAL DRUGS, CIGARETTES, IPODS OR OTHER MEDIA PLAYERS, CELL PHONES, OR BOOKS (These items distract us from deepening practice.)**

**BORROWING EQUIPMENT:** Check borrowed equipment carefully! Check tents: Are the rain fly and all the poles there? Any holes or badly worn places? Do the zippers work? Has it been recently seam-sealed? Set it up ahead of time to make sure you know how. Get in it and check for holes.

**Check backpacks:** The backpack you use must fit you, not anyone else. If you're borrowing one, put it on. Adjust waistbelt and shoulder straps. Fill it up and see how it fits. Make sure zippers work. Make sure you know where the sleeping bag goes--inside? outside, tied on with straps? Do you have the straps? Is there an outside pocket for your water bottle? If you're not sure about the pack, go to a store and try packs on. The sales people are usually very helpful and knowledgeable, and you can get a good idea how a pack should feel from trying on new or rental packs.

**Check sleeping bags and pads:** Sleeping bags must be down or fiber-fill, lightweight backpacking type. Make sure zipper works. Check for rips. Check Thermarest-type pads for leaks.

**RENTING EQUIPMENT:** Tents and backpacks can be rented from outdoor stores. Some places also rent sleeping bags and sleeping pads. The same precautions apply as for borrowing equipment. Check the equipment carefully. Have the salespeople help you. Make sure you know how to set up tents. The time you spend now will make your first day on the trail smoother. Reserve packs and tents in advance, but check them over again when you pick them up.

**Give me a call if you have any questions! --Bowe (575-779-2111)**  
[boweellis@gmail.com](mailto:boweellis@gmail.com)

### ITEMS PROVIDED BY TRIP ORGANIZERS

1. All group meals.
2. Salt, pepper, and some spices.
3. Stoves, fuel, fuel bottles, funnel/pouring spout.
4. Cooking pans, lids, and cooking utensils.
5. Vise grips or pliers.
6. Rope and cord for commissary use.
7. Trash bags for group trash.
8. Dish soap and other clean-up items.
9. Rigging for bear-proofing of food.
10. Hand sanitizer (alcohol based gel).
11. Jug or pot for occasional bath/laundry.
12. First-aid kit for emergencies.
13. Satellite phone for emergencies.
14. Maps.
15. Basic repair kit.
16. Group trowel for toilet use.
17. Kitchen rain tarp (shelter for cooks).
18. Group meditation rain tarp.
19. Pack animal delivery of group gear.