

SeaBase 2017

Overview:

Coral Sea Sailing adventure in Spring (April) of 2017. Five nights sailing on the boat. One night before/after on land. Two crews went. Older scouts had a crew of 8 (4 adults and 4 scouts). Younger scouts had a crew of 7 (3 adults and 4 scouts). Only saw the younger crew at mid-point when both crews were at Marathon.

Sailed around the Florida Keys for five nights. We were on both sides of Florida and sailed in the Gulf and Atlantic sides. Lots of swimming, snorkeling, and fishing.

Spring time is the time to go. Not too hot and not too cold for us from the North West. Temps were 80's day and 60's night time. Perfect.

Adult Roles:

You need to divide up the roles so one person does NOT do too much. We broke up the roles into the following:

Med Forms/Meds:

Scout master was in charge of this task.

Ground transportation to/from Airport:

All scouts were responsible for getting to/from the airport. This allowed parents to say good bye at the airport. It also allowed the Scout Master to make sure to do a final check of equipment (i.e. No knives on the plane) and get the last minute instruction for meds, etc. We meet 2 hours before the flight. This worked well.

Air Transportation:

Ana Inman got the flights for everyone. Due to limitations by others, we had to pay cash. This worked. But it would have been easier for several of us to pay by credit cards.

Mike Hunter and his son – used air miles to fly independent of the other scouts. This worked for them since they wanted to say an extra day and visit family.

Ground Transportation in Florida:

Mike Hunter organized a tour company to pick us up at the hotel and deliver us to/from Seabase. This was an independent company and worked well.

Bill Bellas – set us up with the UBER application. We used this to get to the hotel for the first night. This worked well.

Hotel for the first night:

Mike Hunter made reservations for a hotel that was about 10 to 15 miles away from the airport. This was during Spring Break. So the hotels near the water were too expensive. Going out a little distance was able to find a hotel that was cheaper and nice.

All scouts put on their swimming suits and had fun in the pool for several hours.

First Night:

Bill Bellas and Chris Fryer found the restaurant that was in walking distance. We had good Mexican food. Afterwards, all of us did “glow in the dark” putt-putt golf.

Adventure the first day:

Mike Hunter organized the ground transportation to stop for an Alligator farm adventure as well as Air Boat ride. This was a big hit with all of the scouts.

Adventure the last day:

Bill Bellas organized the group to have early dinner (Bubba Gump Shrimp) and walk along South Beach. It was lots of fun spending 4 hours just exploring the area.

Scout Roles:

- Adults – This is a boy lead troop. So we tried to sit back and let the scouts run the boats with the captain’s help.
- Each crew had to elect a crew lead.
- Scouts were in charge of cooking and cleaning each meal. Captain of the boat kept the scouts on task.

Transportation:

Took a very early Saturday morning flight to Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International which is near Miami. Once we got to Ft. Lauderdale, we gathered our baggage; we used Uber to get us to the hotel that was about 20 miles away. This worked very well.

The next morning, we did a quick breakfast at McDonalds that was in walking distance.

The ground transportation (a Van with a trailer) showed up at the hotel and we loaded our equipment. They drove us to have a good large lunch. We then stopped at the Alligator Farm where we spend several hours doing the shows and the air boats.

First night at Seabase:

We showed up a little late for check in due to the Alligator farm, that it all worked out well. We quickly unloaded and everyone qualified for their swimming/snorkeling. We got our snorkeling gear got assigned to our boats.

We had to separate gear into what was going on the boat and other extra gear (suit cases, clothes home, etc.) The extra gear was then put into a common locker for the troop.

We then all had dinner with our captains and then slept on the boat the first night while in dock.

Trek:

This was an easy trek to prepare for. The only requirement was that you had to be a swimmer. I worked hard to improve my swimming skills. I had several scouts that did need to practice also. Make sure everyone is a swimmer. They will send people back who fail the swimming test and there is NO refund.

Snorkeling – We did this multiple times. The water is beautiful and clear. It would be good if the scouts had some experience before hand with snorkeling. But this is NOT a requirement.

The water was perfect for us coming from the NorthWest. We are use to cold weather, so getting in/out of the water was no problem.

All four scouts slept in the front cabin. Adults slept around the boat. I slept in a hammock outside. I only used a silk sheet. It was 60's at night, so plenty warm for me.

Anchor duty: All Scouts and adults had an hour watch each night. The scouts actually liked this important task. Each person would watch to make sure the boat was not drifting while anchored.

Last Day:

Sailed into port. Scouts cleaned the boat under the captain's supervision. Checked in our snorkel equipment and got a dorm room assignment. We got our "extra equipment" out of the locker. Scouts relaxed, shopped, took pictures.

Seabase organized a “luau” that evening. There was good food followed by lots of games and got to compete against other troops. Volleyball and other competitive games followed by a movie that night. All of the Scouts had a great time.

Transportation back to Airport:

Our van came early the next morning and we drove back to Ft. Lauderdale. We did stop on the way back and spent an hour at a Milk Shake, petting zoo. Scout Master brought a Milk Shake for each Scout. He advised them the scouts they could get a “Vanilla” shake any time. So try something new. Lots of Guava, Papaya, Pineapple/Mango, etc. shakes!

Mike Hunter and Preston – broke off from the group at the airport. We checked in our bags and then Uber-ed over to the beach. Bill Bellas found a fun place to have supper: Bubba Gump Shrimp. We then all gave the Scouts 2 hours to walk around the beach. It was nice that everyone got to stretch their legs and relax before the 7 hour flight back home.

Equipment Advice:

- The list provided by Seabase was very good. You really do NOT need many clothes. Remember: Cotton is rotten. Once it get’s wet on the boat, it will stay wet. Nylon/Rayon are the materials you need.
 - I took only one other pair of shorts and several nylon shirts.
 - Sandals
 - Sun Glasses (Polarized) Required. We are not use to the intense sun in the NorthWest.
- Sunscreen – The scout master brought one large bottle of Sunscreen for each crew.
 - Much cheaper then everyone buying sun screen.
 - Buy there. There are requirements on the type of sunscreen allowed.
- Towel – backpacking type. Dries out easier. (Cotton is rotten – remember)
- Wrist watch – with alarm. Easier than trying to charge your cell phone every day.