

Grand Marais to Knife River via the Apostle Islands

This trip combines the intensity of a long offshore passage with the ease and fun of cruising the Apostle Islands. Renowned for its rust-red sea caves and warmer waters, the Apostles offers a very different destination from the rugged north shore. The trip will begin at the North House Folk School dock in Grand Marais. Plan A is to sail the 46-mile open water crossing on the first day, spend two days sailing and kayaking in the Apostles, and cross once again into Knife River on the 4th day. The weather always has its say, however; smaller sails along the north shore are also a possibility. What we know is that we will be immersed in all aspects of sailing Amicus II and living aboard together. As with all our trips, lessons in navigation, nautical terminology, points of sail, anchoring, and cooking are interspersed with the activities. Once in the Apostle Islands, we will kayak and dinghy the sea caves (weather permitting), hike the trails, visit a lighthouse, and even go for a swim. The final crossing to Knife River is 37 miles.

The Boat and Captain and Crew—Mark and Katya Gordon are co-owners of Amicus Adventure Sailing, a small family-owned charter business that operates out of Knife River, MN. Mark (captain) has more than 25 years experience in leading trips and over 18 years as a licensed Captain and EMT. Katya (first mate) is a lifelong sailor and is a veteran of outdoor wilderness experiences, with more than 15 years of experience leading trips in mountains, lakes, deserts, rivers, and oceans. Together they have sailed thousands of miles on Lake Superior and beyond with their two daughters, Cedar (11) and Lamar (9) who will also be aboard for the trip. This trip will be the final leg of their latest sailing adventure – a 10 month trip from Lake Superior to the Bahamas and back.

Amicus II is a custom-designed 40-ft. steel cutter. She weighs 27,000 lbs with an 11 ½ ft. beam and 5 ½ ft. draft. Because of her heavy, full keel she is a joy to sail and moves smoothly through waves. Her hard dodger and well protected cockpit make her comfortable to sail in challenging conditions. She sleeps eight (including 3 double bunks). She is outfitted to minimize her carbon footprint and to spend extended periods cruising in remote areas away from docks and marinas. She has two 120 watt solar panels and a wind generator to power her two battery banks; she carries over 100 gallons of water and 70 gallons of diesel fuel. She is equipped with a small propane galley (stove) and both conventional marine and composting heads (toilets). A diesel cabin heater makes early summer and late fall cruising cozy and warm on brisk days. In short, Amicus II and her Captain embody our core values: Simplicity, Sustainability, Seaworthiness, and Safety.

Detail: Limited to four students – discounts for a group of four. Tuition includes food and lodging throughout the course. Separate tuition payment & cancellation policies apply to this course.

Dates: June 25th - 29th , 2014

Level – * Beginner to Advanced

*While no sailing experience is required for this course, participants should understand the rustic nature of the accommodations aboard Amicus II and the potential for challenging weather and sailing conditions. There is no shower onboard (except an on-deck solar shower) and all hot water must be heated on the stove. Living space on any sailboat is limited and while Amicus II is a spacious 40 footer, participants will have limited “personal space”. There is one private “cabin” onboard; all other berths are enclosed by privacy curtains. Temperatures on land and in most anchorages will be in the 60s and 70s. Temperatures on the water can easily dip into the low 40’s due to the cold lake temperatures so proper clothing is a must. There will be two passages of 8-12 hours each during this trip. Please do not hesitate to call Mark and Katya Gordon –218-290-5975 with any questions you may have.