Pre-booking notes

WELCOME ABOARD SWAN KIRA

We are delighted you have chosen a sailing adventure with Swan Adventure Sail. Please read the following trip notes through carefully before you come aboard. If you have any questions at all, please contact us to discuss them.

Pre booking checklist

**Kit:** we provide a comprehensive kit list for our Adventure Sails and for Race Sails so you need to make sure you have the equipment we suggest and you MUST provide your own footwear.

**Insurance:** you must have suitable travel insurance. Details are set out below.

**Medical form and medication:** you must complete and return the self-declared medical form lower down in this document before you book. You are welcome to contact us to chat through any medical questions you have. You will need to declare to the Skipper any regular medication you take.

**Travel:** make sure you check out your travel to and from the boat before booking. You can either board in the morning on the day of departure or if it suits you better, you can sleep on the boat the night before departure, just let us know. Disembarkation time may vary between trips, we will let you know when you book so you can arrange your travel to fit.

**Terms & Conditions/Contract:** These pre booking notes are written as clearly as possible but they are for guidance only. While they are accurate to the best of our knowledge at the time of publication, they are not a legally binding contract. please read through our terms and conditions carefully. You must ensure you have read, fully understood and signed our Terms & Conditions when you book a trip.

Please note there will be a final check of your travel insurance, passport and visas, medical form and signed contract when you arrive and if anything is missing or not in order, you will not be able to sail with us.

On board the Kira

**The crew:** while on board we encourage you to be an essential crew member and to participate in all tasks and activities – that’s one of the most attractive aspects of an adventure sailing holiday. However, on some trips for example private charter, you may opt to do rather less! We will discuss this with you when you book.

Your fellow crew members will come from all walks of life and all age groups. Many people choose to come alone, as it is a great way to meet new people with a shared passion for sailing.

**Accommodation:** Kira has 10 berths in total. For our Adventure Sails you will be allocated a bunk for the entirety of the trip, and we will tend to ‘underfill’ the yacht. For races, you may well find you will be ‘hot bunking’ ie working and resting in shifts with fellow crew members. We have a good amount of storage on the Kira so you can bring plenty of gear (although for race sails we need to keep the weight down!). Please pack it in a soft bag which is easier to fold and store than a hard case.

**Food:** we provide all food and snacks on board. Meals will be prepared by crew members. If you have any special dietary requirements please let us know when you book and we will do our best to accommodate them. This should not be a problem unless your diet is very extreme! Please bear in mind that when we stop overseas or somewhere remote, our food choice may be more limited. When we are ashore, you are welcome to eat off the boat but this will be at your own expense.

**Itineraries:** PLEASE NOTE whilst we will endeavour to visit all places on the itinerary, we cannot guarantee the exact itinerary due to possible weather and tidal constraints. Apart from arrival and departure days the itinerary can change to allow us to provide you with a safe and enjoyable experience.
Passports and Visas
It is your responsibility to ensure you have the visa you need for your time on the expedition. Any visas will need to be obtained before you leave home and cannot be obtained en route. Where you do need a visa, we recommend that you use a visa agent, as this will make the process much easier for you.

You must check what the requirements are for your specific nationality for every country listed on the expedition before you book with us and you will not be allowed to travel with us on expeditions where you require a Visa unless you do have it.

Rules regarding visas do change, often at short notice and so you must check with the relevant embassies that you have what you require at every stage. For non EU citizens, be aware that the United Kingdom operates a separate visa policy from much of the rest of Europe.

Depending on which expedition you have signed up to, you may well need a visa to the UK, plus a visa to the Schengen countries. You must ensure that your Schengen visa allows entry into multiple countries.

You will need a passport that is valid for at least 6 months after the end of your expedition and that has at least one blank page. Many countries will refuse you entry unless you have a passport that meets these requirements.

Security for your belongings
Property on the boat is generally very safe. However, we are travelling in a large yacht to areas in which it will draw a great deal of attention. While the yacht can be locked, it is inherently less secure than a house.

Therefore you must ensure that your belongings are well packed away and adequately insured. Anything that you do bring onto the boat is entirely at your own risk and Swan Adventure Sail will not be responsible for its safekeeping or for any damage that might occur.

Ashore, we recommend that crewmembers always travel in groups of two at a minimum. The areas that we visit are generally very safe, but situations can change very quickly and you should check the latest advice for every country on your preferred adventure sail before booking and before travelling.

The advice for British nationals can be found at www.fco.gov.uk/en/travelling-and-living-overseas/travel-advice-by-country, but if you are not British you should check with the authorities of whichever country you have nationality.

Protect your belongings on board by using dry bags and some protective padding where necessary. Remember, kit on a boat will move around a great deal, sometimes suddenly. Anything of value needs to be carefully protected and packed away and we advise against bringing any fragile or easily breakable items.

Travel Insurance
You must have full travel insurance before you join the yacht and this insurance must cover you for the type of sailing we will be doing.

Unless you have proof of this cover you will not be allowed to join the expedition. For your convenience, we have teamed up with Travel & General and their policy has been tailored to cover our trips. As always, there are many other providers available and you are free to choose your own cover.

You can get a quote from Travel & General by clicking here
http://www.tgic-online.com/ti/jsp/start.jsp?AccountID=58823

If you choose not to take out this policy you must find one with as good or better cover. This insurance must cover personal accident, medical expenses, repatriation, loss and damage to personal effects. The policy must include a minimum cover of £3,000,000 for medical and repatriation expenses.

Kit List
We have separate downloadable kit lists on the website for racing and for adventure sails. For racing, weight is naturally at a premium, so kit has to be kept to a minimum. For longer adventure sails you will be able to bring more with you. Either way, please make sure you bring all the essentials we suggest. And if there is anything you are unsure about, just ask.
Frequently asked questions

What previous experience do I need?
For most of our trips, absolutely none. Our adventure sails are designed to allow everyone, whether a complete novice or a more sea-soned campaigner, to have a great holiday and develop their sailing skills. However, for the more advanced races such as the Fastnet, some previous sailing experience/qualification is desirable, although there are training weekends and qualifying races so by the time you get to the race itself you will feel well prepared. Feel free to call our skipper to discuss your suitability.

Who else signs up to these expeditions?
Anyone from 18 years old can join us. You will meet a great range of people on board.

Who is in charge on the Kira?
There will always be a full time skipper and mate on board. Both of these will have a minimum qualification of RYA Yachtmaster. Our senior Skipper James Dobie, who will lead most races and adventure sails in 2017, has years of experience both sailing and racing. He has skippered the Clipper Round the World Yacht Race and has taught extensively – you can read more about him here.

Do I need lots of expensive sailing kit?
Not at all. There is a suggested kit list in this brochure. You will see that life jackets are provided on board. If you have other outdoor hobbies you probably have a lot of good kit which you can use onboard, such as warm ski-trousers, walking boots or thermals. Bring plenty of layers, and synthetic materials are much better than cotton or wool.

Who cooks and cleans?
We all do! We are very much a team on board and everyone, including the skipper and mate, get involved with keeping a clean ship and cooking up the meals. For private charters, however, you can request to have more or less to do!

How fit do I need to be?
Not especially – no six packs needed! So long as you are basically fit, agile and healthy, you will be fine. There is some manual work involved in hoisting sails and winching, but we work as a team and will teach you the correct techniques. It really is not that strenuous and you will be fine.

Do I need a passport?
For most trips, yes, and it is your responsibility to ensure you have the visa(s) you need for your trip. You will also need a passport that is valid for at least 6 months after the end of your expedition and that has at least one blank page. If you do not have one already this can take up to 6 weeks. See the Terms and Conditions for more information about visas and passports.

Can I be in contact with home or work while at sea?
Telephone and email coverage can be limited at sea and crew should expect to be out of contact when we are not in port, so you should plan to be getting away from it all. Most marinas these days have good wi fi and mobile phone coverage. You can charge your devices on board. The yacht is fitted with a Sat C communications system which means that in an emergency, you can be in contact 24 hours a day. However, use of this system is very expensive and for emergencies only.

Can I come alone?
Sailing is the perfect adventure holiday for single travelers. You can expect a complete mixture of singles, couples and small groups.

How many people will be on board?
This varies completely and the maximum number of people accepted on an expedition depends on the expedition type. Normally, you can expect to be sailing with between six and ten crew.

Are my valuables safe on board?
When there is no-one on board, the boat is fully locked. For small valuables, we have a safe on board. We strongly recommend that you keep valuables to a minimum, though.

Do you have electricity on board?
When in a marina, we have 240v throughout the boat, just as you have at home. When at sea, we have 12v and 24v, into which you can plug a cigarette adaptor and charge your devices.