

Tips offered for happy, safe canoeing

1) **PICK YOUR RIVER CAREFULLY.** This is the time of year when chilly mornings can give way to sun-dappled afternoons and then wane into cool evenings. The waters of northern Michigan are cold, so you might want to choose a quiet stream during the fall and save the rapid rivers for summer.

2) **PLAN AHEAD.** If renting your canoe, call the livery before you go and make sure they are open. Many canoe rentals have restricted hours or close during autumn. Also, plan your trip early in the afternoon when the sun is the warmest.

3) **BE PREPARED.** Take an extra set of clothing in a waterproof bag. Secure your things to the canoe. Take along a sweater or jacket and a windbreaker. Layer your

clothing to trap in body heat. A hat is also advisable for shading eyes and retaining body heat.

4) **WEAR A LIFE VEST.** It will provide a little more warmth but, more importantly, it could save your life. Every passenger must have a flotation device. If you opt for a flotation cushion, know how to use it.

5) **KEEP YOUR CAMERA IN A WATERPROOF CONTAINER.** It's better to take your photos before you leave and after you return, and let your camera spend the rest of the time on dry land. However, if you do take your camera on your trip, protect it from water damage. Remember, plastic bags can cause condensation, so choose waterproof containers carefully.

6) **NEVER STAND IN A CANOE.** Also be careful not to lean too far to one side. Distribute your weight evenly and place your gear in the center of the canoe.

7) **DO NOT GRAB OVERHANGING BRANCHES.** It might stop your motion, but won't stop your canoe.

8) **PACK A WARM LUNCH.** Include a thermos of hot chocolate, coffee or soup.

9) **PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT.** If you plan to build a campfire, use only fallen branches or twigs. Do not cut live trees. Do not litter or bury your trash, bring it back to the landing for disposal.

10) **PREVENT FOREST FIRES.** Never leave a campfire until it has been thoroughly put out and all ashes are cold. Be careful to extinguish all matches and cigarettes.

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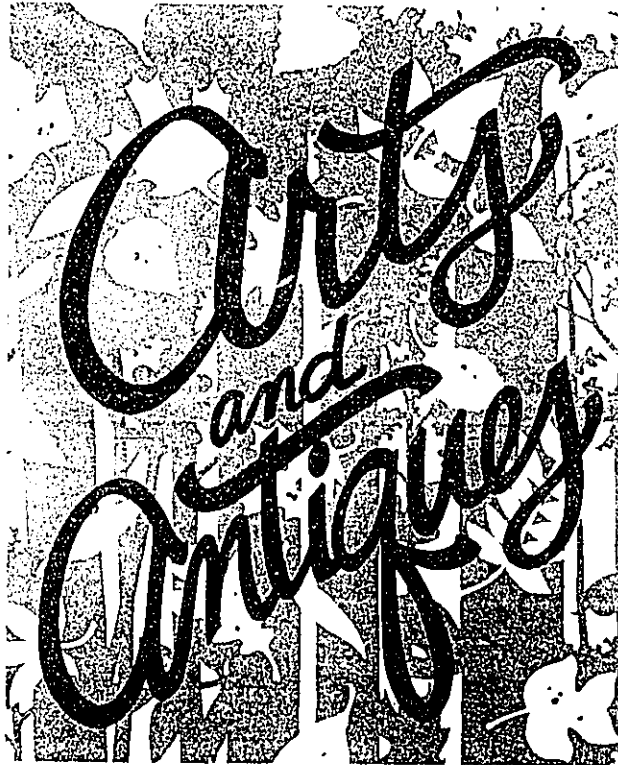
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