

Final Preparations

Room allocation

Hotels will want to know how to allocate rooms to your group well in advance. On your booking form, ask if people want a double, twin or single room and who (if anyone) they want to share with. Some hotels have family rooms with three or four beds, which usually work out cheaper, so offer this option if it is available. If you are the organiser, you will probably need extra space for your paperwork etc. so ask if you can have a larger room.

Seat allocation

It is common on foreign tours for the organisers to allocate participants to a different boat each day. Each boat has a “captain” who stays with that boat for the whole tour, while the other crew members change. This can be a lot of fun and means people get to know each other and make new friends.

However, you may find that some participants prefer to row with their own club, so be flexible. Also, some people may be coming on their own or in a small group and need to be allocated seats. This can be quite a challenge for the organisers, as the number of people may not be equal to the number of spare seats. You may need to ask some of your helpers to be available to row if there are gaps, or drop out if there are too many people.

Lunches

If you are providing picnic lunches, make sure you order them in advance. Most large supermarkets have a range of sandwiches but don't assume they can provide 100 of them if you just turn up on the day. You will need someone to collect the food – preferably a non-rower so they are not rushing to get boated – and it's probably better to keep them somewhere cool and hand them out at the lunch stop rather than have people carrying them in the boats all morning.

Pub lunches are always popular but again need to be ordered in advance – a buffet is a better option than individual meals which are likely to take too long to prepare.



Water

Decide if you are going to provide water each day. To protect the environment, it's much better to ask people to bring a reusable water bottle and refill it each day rather than using plastic bottles.

Briefing

One of the organising team should brief the participants, or for a large group the boat captains, before boating each morning. They will need to know about the weather conditions and any changes to the route, as well as a reminder of any hazards and special conditions.

Make sure each boat has the day's route maps!

