



# Akita Backcountry

## 2023 Information Sheet

### What is Akita Backcountry?

Akita Backcountry is our outdoor education program where campers learn to live outdoors, off the grid, and build confidence in themselves in the natural world. Each backcountry session is designed by a member of our adventure team to highlight the skills of our staff members. Each session campers may have the opportunity to learn fire building, backcountry cooking, archery, orienteering, knots and rope basics, canoeing and much more. (Not every topic will be covered in each session.)

Every day is different, and every session is different, but each day begins at the Backcountry Base Camp, where our campers stay in two large platform tents. Campers learn skills that they have a chance to demonstrate in real world scenarios. Campers mainly spend time on our 1,200 acres, although some groups may have the chance to experience canoeing on the Hocking River or hiking in one of the many beautiful state parks close to Camp Akita.

### Transportation

Participants ride to and from Camp Akita in a First Community Church passenger van driven by a Camp Akita staff member. Specifics for your session will be communicated by email prior to the Backcountry session.

### Food & Lodging

Campers stay in two large platform tents separated by gender. Within the platform tents, each camper will have their own sleeping cot. Campers assist our staff in meal preparation and may leave with a new appreciation for Dutch Oven cooking. Food and water are dropped off each day in coolers from our kitchen in main camp. In case of inclement weather (severe thunderstorm, tornado, or high winds), we keep a van on site to transport campers back to main camp for safety. If we are forced to return to main camp, campers will stay in our Lodge.

### Gear

We provide some of the basics for Backcountry for you. This includes backpacks, sleeping bag, sleeping pad, dishes, and utensils. If you would like to send your camper with any of the previously mentioned items, feel free! A complete packing list is included in this packet.

### Physical Limitations

Akita Backcountry operates on a "challenge by choice" philosophy. This means that each can set their own limits and is never forced to do anything they feel uncomfortable with. The physical aspects like hiking, climbing, and canoeing are not the focus of Backcountry. Instead, we focus on building self-confidence through, building relationships, and having fun, all while spending time in nature. The physical demands of this program are well within the limits of any healthy young person.

### Leaders

Each Backcountry session will have two Counselors, one male and one female, unless the session is specific to a gender (i.e., all-female, all-male). We rotate members of our Adventure Program team for each session. They each hold certifications in CPR, archery, climbing tower, and as lifeguards. They are the most experienced members of our summer Leadership Team and run our adventure programs throughout the year. Trip leaders carry two-way radios and cell phones and will maintain constant communication with our main camp staff.



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## 2023 Packing List

*\*Denotes an optional item*

### Tops

#### 4-7 T-Shirts

Synthetic shirts are recommended over cotton because they dry much faster and wick moisture away from your skin.

#### Light-weight Layer

Light or mid-weight long-sleeved shirt. Long underwear works best. Synthetic materials are recommended.

#### Heavy Layer

It can get chilly in the hills at night! A light-weight fleece will work best, as it will keep you warm even if it gets damp. Sweatshirts and sweatpants are ok but can be heavy and bulky.

#### Rain Jacket

This must be big enough to fit over all your layers at the same time. Ponchos are not recommended.

### Bottoms

#### Underwear

5 pairs of your most comfortable underwear.

#### Shorts

3-4 pairs of loose-fitting, nylon athletic or hiking shorts.

#### Insulating Layer

Light or mid-weight long underwear pants. Again, it can get chilly at night!

#### Pants

Light-weight synthetic pants are best. If these are zip-off pants they can double as shorts. Pants are great to hike in to protect your legs from thorns and poison ivy.

#### Rain Pants\*

Rain pants are not required but are a good option if you have a pair.

### Bathing Suit\*

We will be swimming in the lake and canoeing. Please bring a bathing suit or alternate clothing appropriate for swimming, as well as a towel. Be sure that whatever you bring to swim in is comfortable and allows you to be active in the water.

### Footwear

#### Hiking Boots

Akita Backcountry does not require the most expensive boots, but you must have something that is more durable and supportive than tennis shoes. Boots that rise above the ankle will provide the most support and prevent twisted ankles, but boots that are ankle-height will work just fine. Boots that are waterproof are recommended.

If you do one thing to prepare for Backcountry, please ensure you wear your boots around before coming on the trip. Blisters may not seem like a big deal, but they are one of the most common injuries we see and can quickly lead to some less-than-happy campers!

#### Socks

5 pairs of wool-synthetic blend or synthetic socks. Smart Wool, Patagonia, and Bridgedale all make excellent backpacking/hiking socks. These socks must be long enough to pass the top of your boots.

#### Camp shoes / Canoe shoes

You will need a pair of shoes to wear around our campsites after hiking, as well as to wear on our canoe trip. A pair of old tennis shoes, Crocs, Teva's, or Chaco's all work well. Flip-flops or other flimsy sandals will not work. These should be comfortable and big enough to be worn with your hiking socks.



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## Personal Gear

### Water Bottles

Bring two bottles, with the total capacity being at least two liters.

### Sunglasses\*

Should be a cheap pair with UV protection. Please do not take expensive sunglasses on this trip.

### Headlamp

A headlamp is wonderful because it's an easy, hands-free flashlight. Luckily there are a lot of lightweight, inexpensive models available at places like Target and Walmart. Don't spend more than \$40 on this, but you need one of these!

### Personal Hygiene

Toothbrush, toothpaste, towel, and face/body wipes are the most needed items. Trial sizes are best. You can bring hand sanitizer if you want, we will have soap for you to use. We will not be taking showers on this trip, so bringing baby wipes will help you stay clean. Please remember any personal hygiene and toiletry items that you may need during your stay.

### Medications

Bring any daily prescription or over-the-counter medications, or vitamins to check-in. Our camp staff will collect these from you; all medications are locked in the van. All medications must be brought in the original container with dispensing information. Do not forget your inhaler, if applicable. We carry a Med Kit with allergy and pain medications for those "just-in-case" situations, so no need to bring those.

### Sunscreen

SPF 15 or higher, sweatproof and long lasting.

### Plastic Bags

We use Ziploc bags and trash bags to store our clothes and other belongings, so they are easy to find and always stay dry in our backpacks. You can use a Ziploc bag to store a days' worth of clothing, with extra bags for your extra socks and undergarments. Bring a trash bag to store dirty clothes for easier packing.

### Camp Chair\*

Light-weight, foldable camp chairs are gaining popularity and are a wonderful comfort addition to the trip. These are great for campfires, group times, and just hanging out. Crazy Creek is the most common brand of these chairs.

### Camera\*

Please do not bring a nice/expensive camera! A disposable camera is perfect and if you lose it, you won't be out a hundred dollars. Please do not bring your phone to use as a camera.

### Face Masks

Masks are no longer required at Camp Akita or Check-in. Anyone is welcome to wear a mask, and those who choose to do so will be respected. Please pack face masks as you deem appropriate for your child.

### Miscellaneous

Please also remember to bring a pillow, towel, journal, and a good book to read (nice to have when it rains!).

## Group Gear

We will provide all this gear for you. Participants must purchase any gear that is lost or damaged.

### We will supply the following:

- Tent
- Ground Pad
- Cot
- Stove and fuel
- Dishes and utensils
- Sleeping bags\* are available, but you are also welcome to bring your own.

### What **NOT** to bring:

- Drugs, alcohol, or tobacco
- Food (we have campers with allergies)
- Electronics (iPod, cell phone)
- Expensive items
- Anything you don't want to get dirty, wet or possibly lose.

### Packing Note:

While we understand it is important to be prepared, please understand that we take all the camper's belongings down with them in a van. Pack what is necessary and remember that multiple lightweight layers will work for the camper's time at camp.

*\*Optional items*



# Akita Backcountry

## Questions?

Please email the Adventure Program Director, Andy:

Andy [@CampAkita.org](mailto:Andy@CampAkita.org)