

Outer Banks Vacation: Ocean Kayaking and A Turtle Pond Hike

Description

After our [vacation lull](#) the previous day, we were looking to change things up a bit for our fourth day at the Outer Banks. Uncle Preston and Cousin Aaron and Noah wanted to try their luck at catch fish by kayaking, so they brought the two-seated sit-on-top kayak we rented down to the beach that morning . With Avery, we were always late to the beach party, so Mr. Kayak was there waiting upon our arrival.

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The winds decided to pick up from their calm state that morning which quickly changed the minds of the *bold* fishermen. They decided to stick with what they had been doing every day since arrival; casting

their lines, sticking the poles in the sand, and sitting down with a beer as they waited for the fish to bite.



And waited and waited. Even with the waiting, they still kept a smile on their face. I guess that the beer had something to do with it. Since it was already there, it only made sense to try testing my kayaking skills in the ocean. I even offered to carry the boys's fishing lines out farther to help their luck. Uncle Paul, Preston, and Cousin Aaron helped push me out on the kayak to get me started against the strong current and constant waves.



Fighting against the non-stop waves to make any progress was exhausting from the start. I eventually made it out far enough to drop the lures full of fresh shrimp bait. After I was *off the hook* to carry out the lines, it was time to battle against the waves. Holy current, Batman, the ocean is no joke! When I reached a good distance out from the beach, I began paddling parallel to the land.



The waves were fierce (to me) and until I realized you need to lean into each peak of the water, I almost capsized a dozen times. I wasn't scared, but didn't feel all that comfortable with what was going on. Regardless, I kept at it because ocean, YOLO!! Actually, that saying annoys me, but it was fitting here.

Going Mom and Avery watched as I struggled along the coastal waters, but then Avery had to go potty. We tried to say it was okay to pee in the water (I know, hypocrite parents), but she didn't need to pee. My wife had to walk Avery the half mile back to the beach house so our daughter could relieve herself. Probably for the best, because my return to land was far from graceful.

All was going well, I rode the waves like a champ (or that's how I felt), but then, as I sat on top of the last big wave before hitting beach, I flipped. A few underwater tumbles and a kayak bonk on my head later, I stood up, grabbed the giant plastic vessel, and dragged it to shore. Phew, that was an intense first time kayaking in the ocean, and although it was difficult, I loved every minute as I paddled with my muscles burning in areas I never knew existed.

We spent a little longer on the beach before heading back for lunch and nap time. Oh, and a little *hanging* around.



G-Ma once again gave my wife and I relief by taking a nap with Avery so we could venture out on walk and to pick our fresh seafood of choice for dinner. I was hoping that by helping the boys with casting their lines, weâ€™d have free and super fresh fish for dinner, but once more, no luck.

Upon our return, we caught G-Ma and Avery still in a slumber. After snapping a pic, we woke the sleepyheads up and prepared to go back out for more adventure.



On the agenda for the second half of the day was, shocker, more beach! But there was a turtle pond we always passed on our walk to the ocean, so we detoured to take a hike around the short path.



We never took a pic of the pond, but there was a general location where dozens of turtles would pop up and you could get right next to them. I lectured several families feeding the poor hard-shelled snappers white bread, a highly processed food imposter even humans should avoid. Besides, their diet is full of bugs and some fish, not bread and crackers. Anyway, the short walk was full of lush greens, birds singing, and bugs biting. She moved slower than usual for the hike, but once we hit the sand, Avery took off like a ballerina.



Look at those toes! Kelley and I both agreed we could watch our precious kid prance around the sand for hours. Well, prance, dance, or crawl that is.



Bonus points when she gives kisses for Mommy!



As we watched Avery cover more sandy terrain than most lazy beachgoers, Kelley had us make a footprint beside one of our daughter's. Such a simple thing, but something I know we'll cherish having for years forever.



From left: Daddy, Daughter, Mommy

We walked along the shore getting our feet wet in the cold ocean water as we searched for seashells a little longer. Eventually, it was time to make the walk back for dinner. With weary legs, Avery's transportation back to the beach house was usually via Daddy's shoulders.



Another day full of family fun was complete. We were tired, hungry, and dirty. After cleaning ourselves, I cooked our chosen fish for the day, yellowfin tuna steaks. Seared outside with a tender pink inside. Perfection!

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A photo posted by RC Liley (@going_dad) on Jun 14, 2016 at 6:28pm PDT

You could cut the buttery fish with a fork. Kelley, Avery, and I savored every bite along with our standard sweet potato and veggie sides. The meal was just what we needed to replenish from a busy day and prepare us for another one ahead. I ended up waking earlier than my usual early time and before I knew it, I found myself walking to the beach to catch the sunrise. Check back for the next post to see what I captured.

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