

Walnut2Walnut River Challenge Details

September 21, 2019

Explore the nautical environment surrounding Philadelphia by paddling the Independence Seaport Museum's annual Walnut2Walnut River Challenge.

The Challenge offers spectacular views of the city's river banks, bridges, piers, retired naval and commercial ships, historic masted ships and high-rise buildings while paddling 15 miles – down the Schuylkill River and up the Delaware River – from the west end of Walnut Street to the east end.

Canoes and kayaks are welcome. Because of the speed of sculls, we cannot offer safety boat support to these vessels. We advise that these vessels are not used. Any boat participating should be suitable for the boat wakes and waves on the open water of the Delaware River. It is recommended all boats should be 11 feet or longer. Sit-on-top kayaks are generally not suitable.

At the conclusion, join us for the after-party in the Riverview Tavern, our indoor waterfront bar, where food and beverages are available for purchase (and air-conditioning!).

Participants are required to wear a Personal Flotation Device (PFD) and whistle, should be able to paddle their boat for as long as the average course time – five (5) hours – and have a boat suitable for the boat wakes and waves on the open water of the Delaware River. Suitable kayaks are available for rent from Hidden River Outfitters. Please email Kara Mifflin at karamifflin@gmail.com or 215-605-3659 to rent a kayak. Quantities are limited.

Drop off/Check-in/Put-in/Start: Schuylkill Banks (the west end of Walnut Street)

Take-out/Finish: Independence Seaport Museum (the east end of Walnut Street)

Schedule:

Check-in: Begins at 9 a.m. at Schuylkill Banks

Safety speech: 10 a.m.

Load-in: Begins at 10:15 a.m.

Launch: 12 p.m.

After-party: Begins at 3 p.m.

Suggested Packing List:

- Paddle
- Boat
- Lunch
- Drinking water
- Snacks
- Sunglasses
- Sunscreen
- Hat
- Personal Flotation Device (PFD)
- Whistle
- Self-rescue equipment (paddle float)

Boat drop-off options:

Friday, September 20

We strongly recommend you drop off your boat on Friday, September 20 between 3 and 8 p.m. at the Schuylkill Banks entrance at the corner of S. 25th and Spruce streets. Volunteers will help you unload your boat and there will be overnight security.

Saturday, September 21

You can drop off your boat from 9-10 a.m. on Saturday, September 21 at the Schuylkill Banks entrance at the corner of S. 25th and Spruce streets. Volunteers will help you move your boat.

Check-in #1 (at the Museum):

If dropping off your boat in the morning, after doing so, bring your belongings and car across town to the parking area at Penn's Landing. It will take 15-40 minutes to drive across town to Penn's Landing. Park in the Hilton Parking garage, which can be accessed from Columbus Blvd. at Walnut Street. There is a fee to park. If you dropped off your boat on Friday, September 20, drive immediately to the Museum on Saturday, September 21, and park in the Hilton Hotel garage. Check in with event staff in front of the Museum, on the red brick walkway next to the traffic circle. More information about parking can be found at www.phillyseaport.org/parking.

Shuttle:

There is a free shuttle to take you to the Challenge launch. After checking in with staff at the Museum, meet at the northwest corner on S. Christopher Columbus Blvd. (the parking garage end, not the lobby end) on the west side of the Seaport Museum and wait for the shuttle bus to the put-in. The shuttle will start running at 8:30 a.m. and make several trips from Independence Seaport Museum to the Schuylkill Banks.

*Note: The shuttle only operates one way from Independence Seaport Museum/Penn's Landing to the put-in at Schuylkill Banks before the Challenge. **There is no shuttle at the conclusion of the Challenge.***

Amenities:

There is no food readily available at either the put-in or the meeting point for the shuttle. Eat breakfast before arriving or bring it with you. There are restrooms at the put-in location.

Check-in #2 (at Schuylkill Banks):

Check in at the registration table and exchange your registration for a paddler's number. The registration table will be set up to the side of the Schuylkill River Trail, under the Walnut Street overpass, where the Schuylkill Banks trailer is. If on the shuttle, it will stop on the Walnut Street Bridge. Walk down the stairs to the registration table.

Put-in:

Volunteers will help you move your boat from the shore, down the ramp to the dock at the launch site.

Course Directions:

Paddle south on the Schuylkill River. On the Schuylkill, you may paddle a straight path from one curve to the next but watch out for motor boats, especially at bends in the river. As you come to the mouth of the Schuylkill River, turn left to enter the Delaware River. There are commercial ships docked on the PA side of the Delaware River right as you enter, so make a wide left turn. River Gate Park is directly across

from the confluence of the rivers, on the New Jersey side. If planning on stopping there, once you reach the confluence head straight ahead, crossing the Delaware to the New Jersey side. Be aware of ship traffic. If you can see a tug boat or ship coming, it's best to let them pass by before crossing the river. You should see a dock and a sandy beach, with staff members there to assist you. When leaving River Gate Park, immediately cross the river back to the Pennsylvania side and continue up the left-hand (PA) side of the Delaware River. Plan to depart from River Gate Park by 2:45 p.m. to make best use of the tide. *A course map will be provided to all participants.*

Course Amenities:

Stops can be made along the way at [Bartram's Garden](#) on the Schuylkill River, and at [River Gate Park](#), in N.J., right at the mouth of where the Schuylkill River meets the Delaware River. The stop at River Gate Park will have snacks and water, and an available port-o-potty. There is also a sandy shore and boat dock to pull up to.

Course Safety:

PFDs and whistles are to be worn at all times. Please respect signs indicating to stay away from hazards or private property. There will be lead and sweep support motor boats, but you should bring your own self-rescue equipment (paddle float). If you have a VHF radio, you can listen to the Challenge support boats communicating on channel 69. No unnecessary conversations, please! For safety reasons, ***all participants must complete the challenge by 6 p.m.*** If you are unable to complete the paddle, you may ride back to the Independence Seaport Museum on a support boat, and your vessel will be towed. Note that once you are on a support boat, you will have to remain on board until the last paddler is off the river. The Challenge reserves the right to keep individual boats from participating due to weather, vessel condition, participant skill level or type of vessel.

Take-out/Finish:

Paddle to inside the basin at the Independence Seaport Museum, where Cruiser *Olympia* will be on your left and boat slips will be on your right. Volunteers will help you move your boat from the floating docks to hard ground next to the Seaport Museum. Leave your boats there, bring your valuables, and join us for the after-party. Restrooms are available at the Museum. Wheels will be available to borrow or move your boat to your car. Please return the wheels after using them.

Share:

Use the hashtag #Walnut2Walnut when sharing photos or videos to social media. We would love to see your experience!

Rain Date:

Given the need for the tide, there is no rain date for the event. In the case of cancellation, all funds will be returned. Otherwise, this is a non-refundable event.