

Best Extended Touring Kayak



Romany Explorer by Sea Kayaking UK

The kayak that our readers chose for extended touring does not have a huge cargo capacity, so for a long cruise you'll have to think like a back-packer when it comes to the gear you carry. What was likely more important to those readers who voted for the Explorer was its ability to handle the rough conditions that you're more exposed to the farther you paddle. In our review of the Explorer, one of our test paddlers took on 30-knot winds and 3-foot waves and concluded: "The handling in stronger winds and the behavior in confused seas are addressed admirably by this kayak." A second reviewer, after paddling the Explorer in 20-knot winds and 2-foot waves, wrote simply: "It makes sloppy conditions uneventful." You couldn't ask for more.

\$3,720
www.seakayakinguk.com

Best Day / Weekend Kayak and Best Rough-Water Kayak

Romany by Sea Kayaking UK

The Romany placed first in two categories. At 16' by 21½", the Romany is a compact kayak designed for medium-sized paddlers. Although it is relatively narrow, it has enough initial stability to suit novice paddlers and enough secondary stability to please advanced paddlers. It has a combination of good tracking and high maneuverability, and its low profile allows the paddler a wide range of motion and is well suited for a variety of rolling techniques. The keyhole cockpit provides a sure grip for boat control and the sloped aft bulkhead helps drain the cockpit in reentry techniques. All these characteristics make for a kayak that is well suited to taking on dynamic conditions that make for challenging and exciting outings.

\$3,720

