Subject: : Gear Talk
Topic: : Canoe. Kayak. Pontoon. Speak up!
Re: Canoe. Kayak. Pontoon. Speak up!
Author: : gfen
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URL:

This has been a great thread, thanks for the input from everyone.

Anyways, been doing some thinking, and reviewing past thoughts and what everyone's shared.

Originally, when I'd decided to give serious review to a moderately priced watercraft, I had looked at a series of pontoon boats. At the time, it made sense: Stable, built for fishing, flexible options and easy to move and store.

First I was told by a relative who's a serious bass fisherman that they were downright useless, although I suppose anyone with a bass boat that costs more than my car might be somewhat biased. Heh.

Once I started to look askance at the credit card and really look into what I'd need, I noticed a snag: The ones I would look at didn't hold much weight. Figure that just for me, I need a capacity to carry 300#, and then that I'd like to have the options for an electric motor and other assorted gear and you're pushing 400#, without some extra just for safety's sake. Suddenly, the options aren't there.

Enter the canoe. Do some reading, and most stuff tends to be about kayaks (I do sort of feel that kayaking is kind of a fad/craze in sports right now), and kayakers tend to downplay canoes. Fair enough, the biggest draw of the canoe is big loads and multiple people, but down on stability. Exit the canoe.

So, we're at kayaks. Truthfully, I worry about them. Everyone says they're stable, but I dunno. Still, I started looking and some kayaks are capable of having people stand upright, carry heavy weight, and generally be useful. OK, a kayak. So, that's how I ended here, more or less with the thought that it was a kayak or bust.

I think I've come full circle. It was HA's Scadden that showed me there's a few 'toons out there that can support heavy weight. Of course, they're not cheap, but then again, neither are fishing kayaks (seriously, $850+ for a hunk of injection molded plastic?!).

A pontoon boat still seems like the most logical choice given my requirements. Stable, compact, purpose-built to fish and capable of what I'm looking for. The downside is the cost. The Skykomish ST seems to hit the optimum point, $950 for 600# of overbuilt boat, and that's on par with the kayak.

Anyways, my order of preference is pontoon, kayak and a distant last with the canoe. Since I'm focussed on lakes/ponds and at most a lazy float down a local river, I guess we'll go back to pontoons, for now.

ps: Oh, and for those who suggested using a canoe or even a kayak with a second seat to take a kid out? Over my wife's dead body. And against my better judgment, too. :)