



YURT EDUCATION EXPERIENCES

WHAT IS A YURT?



Yurts are the traditional nomadic home from Central Asia. The yurt is a collapsible framework of wooden poles covered with felt and/or canvas. The design of these ancient shelters has been kept unchanged for over one thousand years. Having proven themselves over many centuries, they remain one of the oldest indigenous forms of shelter still in use today.

Today, yurts provide shelter for many people and can act as space for a wide number of educational and creative purposes.

WHO IS INVOLVED

Selene and Alex Cole from Little Foot Yurts have run highly successful educational programs and yurt building workshops throughout Nova Scotia and the United Kingdom.



Building one's own shelter is incredibly empowering and takes the participant on an experiential education journey involving many aspects of traditional and natural building practices.

The yurt creates a safe space for empowered learning and brings participants together as a team.

OVERVIEW

Learn about sustainable living through experiential education! Our yurt education experiences include erecting a traditional style yurt. Learn about the origins and cultural background of yurts – a low impact sustainable shelter. The session will also explore green woodworking and coppicing as an ancient silviculture technique. The principles behind the yurt's strength and why yurts are a sustainable shelter will also be discussed.

hand-made coppice wood yurts

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SKILLS DEVELOPED THROUGH PARTICIPATIVE & COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

- Forestry (traditional and ancient)
- Greenwood working
- Tree species attributes
- Geometry
- Rope work
- Introduction to yurt making hand tools



OUTCOMES FOR PARTICIPANTS

- Enables ownership over a project and brings participants together as a team
- Learn the importance of an individual's worth in a team
- Empowering individuals to feel confident in erecting a yurt
- Broadening the participants understanding of the structure, history, and cultural background of the yurt
- Expanding the participants understanding of sustainable development

COST

A full day workshop, which can run from 2 - 6 hours, is \$350 per day, not including travel or tax. If you would like to keep the yurt up and use it for other purposes, then our normal rental charge of \$250 would be applied.

EXAMPLES OF LITTLE FOOT YURTS EDUCATIONAL WORKSHOPS

Residential Yurt Building Workshops, January 2006 and ongoing

Over two hundred people from all over Canada and the United States have participated in our residential yurt building workshops. People with various backgrounds, ages and experience come together to learn about yurt construction, yurt living and have formed a yurt building community to support each other.

Canadian Adventure Therapy Symposium, October 17-19, 2014

Participants erected a yurt and learnt about yurt construction and the benefits of using natural building as a platform for working with groups.

Lawrencetown Education Centre, February, 2013

Class learn about green woodworking, using hand tools and built a break. A woodland walk introduced participants to Acadian tree species and ideal wood for yurt building. Group cut poles and built their own yurt walls.

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Chester Recreation and Parks, April 13, 2013

Participants set up 17ft yurt and discussed the structure, history and cultural background of the yurt. Green woodworking techniques were explored and a woodland walk introduced local species as a material resource for yurt construction.

Love Out Violence Nova Scotia, May 26, 2008

Youth participants erected a 17ft yurt and had a group discussion about symbolism, culture and the origins of yurts. We shared how we started a small business in rural Nova Scotia and how we gained start up support.

Halifax Regional Development Agency, Make Way for Youth, Jan 28th, 2007

Erected a yurt with the group and discussed opportunities for youth in rural Nova Scotia, using our business as a model.

Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication, Oct 19, 2006

Youth participants erected a 17ft yurt and explored yurt components, forestry, greenwood working, construction techniques and yurts as a sustainable shelter.

Laing House, July 10, 2006

Erected a 17ft yurt, discussed yurts as a sustainable resources, demonstrated tools using a shaving brake.

Atlantic Straw Builders Conference, May 20-22, 2006

Erected a 17ft yurt with conference participants. Emphasis was put on practical issues unique to yurt living, such as heating and insulation.

Halifax Independent School, May 9, 2006

Ran a one-hour workshop with 6-8 year olds for their Shelter and Geography class. Students learned about the origin and history of yurts and erected a 12ft yurt.

ReGeneration: A symposium on community youth development, March 25, 2006

Co-ran a three-hour workshop with Kim Thompson on natural building, and focused on integrating natural building projects into youth programs. Erected a 12ft yurt, discussed yurts as a sustainable resources, demonstrated tools using a shaving brake.

The Second International Conference on Gross National Happiness, June 2005

A youth team erected a yurt and discussed the history and origins of yurts and learned about the building processes involved. The group also created a natural build site showcasing various types of natural building, such as straw bale construction.

Dalhousie School of Architecture Free Lab, May 05 and Aug 2004

Students erected a yurt and shared information on the structural strengths of round wood construction, mandalas in architecture and coppice as a form of sustainable forestry. Participants learned about green woodworking basics in order to apply new knowledge to their practical projects.

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Nova Scotia Youth for Positive Energy, Sierra Club of Canada, Nov 2004
Climate change youth conference showcased the yurt as a sustainable building and was used for a unique workshop space.

EcoTopia, The Roots Collective, July 2004
Atlantic youth-run weekend gathering used the yurt as a workshop space. Topics explored were the origins and history of the yurt, forestry, greenwood working, construction techniques and yurts as sustainable shelters.

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