

ASTRO CARTOGRAPHY:
TRAVEL BY
YOUR STARS

Porthole **Cruise** and Travel

02.2026

Cleaning Copenhagen
Volunteers kayak free

Melbourne Remembered
Literary Chinatown tour

Car to Castle
Palatial Dutch drive

BEER ON BOARD

TAPPING INTO
CRUISE BREWS

MOOREA'S DOCTOR DOLPHIN

TAHITIAN TRADITIONS
HELP MARINE
MAMMALS THRIVE

LOSE WEIGHT... ON A CRUISE?

IS THAT EVEN
POSSIBLE??

Living at Sea

THE REAL STORY OF RESIDENTIAL CRUISES



Paddling with a Purpose

One way to incorporate volunteering into a port of call visit.

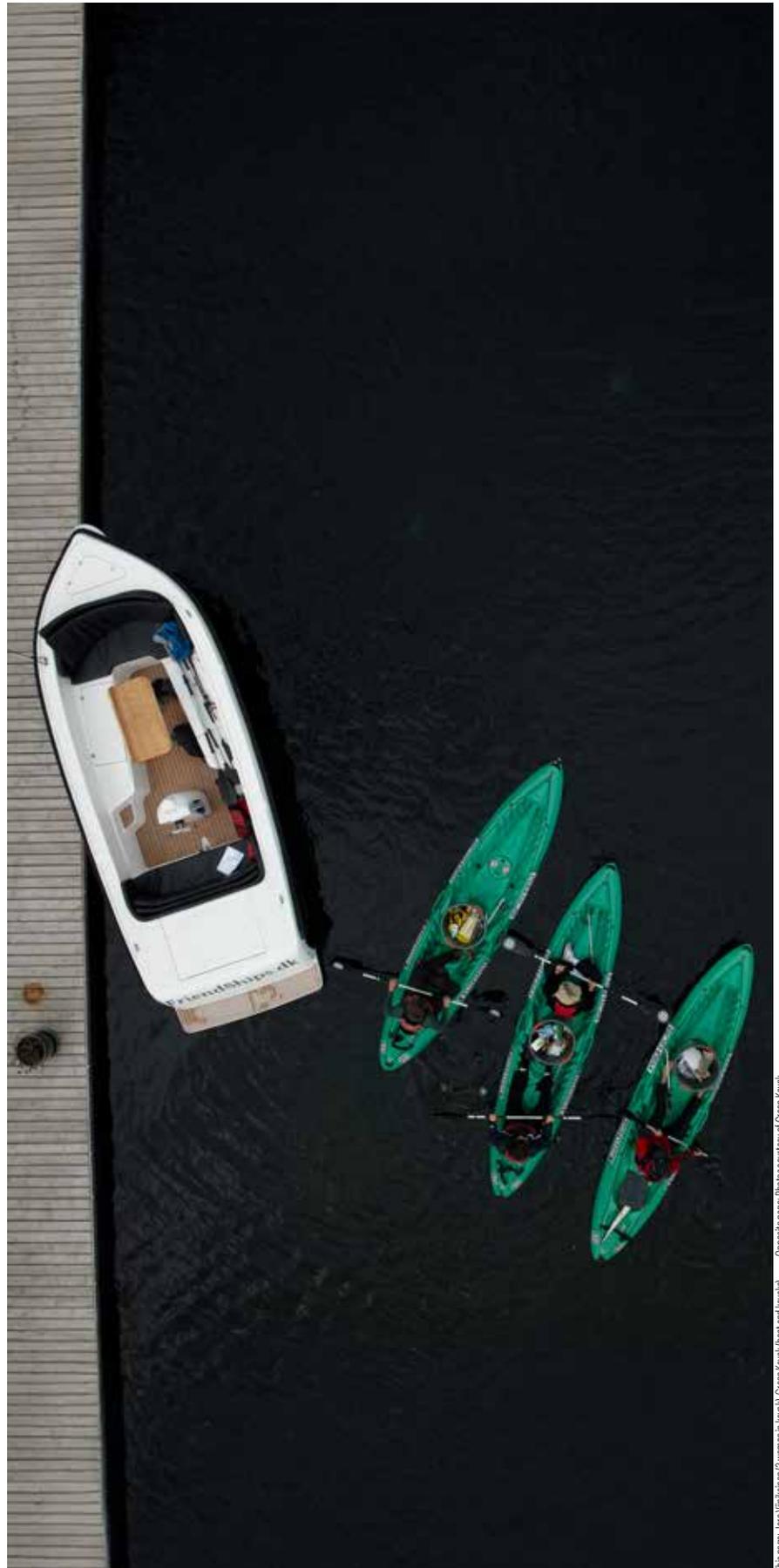
by Wendy Helfenbaum



UNDER THE BRIGHT

Scandinavian sun, my family glided out onto the Copenhagen Harbour in our kayaks with a mission: to collect as much garbage as we could. Instead of renting boats to explore the city's gorgeous canals, we spent a few hours giving back through GreenKayak.org, an environmental NGO which provides free two-person kayaks in Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, and Germany in exchange for filling an onboard bucket with floating trash found during your paddling adventure.

The concept is simple yet brilliant: Enjoy a leisurely ride soaking up the city's vibrant vibe while plucking debris with a long grabber tool along the way. Back at the dock, weigh your catch with a portable scale, register it in the GreenKayak app, and pose with your bounty for a social media send-off using #GreenKayak before tossing the trash in big bins — instead of it ending up clogging the ocean.



LAUNCHING A MOVEMENT

“The idea of giving people the opportunity to paddle for free in exchange for collecting trash came to me while I was out running,” explains GreenKayak’s founder, Tobias Weber-Andersen, a sea-kayaking instructor and former manager of the popular Kayak Bar restaurant who started cleaning up Copenhagen’s canals during private tours.

Frustrated to see trash reappearing every day, Weber-Andersen decided to think bigger: In April 2017,

school graduate with start-up experience. Sharing a love for the ocean and convinced that local action could drive global change, the duo joined forces in 2018 to scale the organization into an international movement for cleaner water.

Since then, GreenKayak has worked with other NGOs and organizations in Denmark and across Europe, boosting ocean-friendly tourism and garnering international acclaim. In 2019, the organization received the Svend Auken Environmental Award, and it became a UNESCO Green Citizen project in 2020.

adventure through the GreenKayak app. We picked up our boats at Kayak Republic — one of 16 host locations on Copenhagen’s waterfront — where volunteers handed us life jackets and a map of the canals. They instructed us to stay near the shore away from boats.

“On average, each kayak collects three kilos (6.6 pounds) of waste during one trip,” says Weber-Andersen.

To fund its operations, GreenKayak has partnerships with companies that pay to feature their logo on the kayaks; sponsors



GreenKayak founders -
Oke Carstensen and Tobias Weber-Andersen

We collected about 15 pounds’ worth of floating debris.

he introduced the first free kayak, originally called Miljøkajakken, which means “Environment Kayak.”

“It was an immediate success, which I honestly didn’t expect,” he recalls.

After adding two more kayaks, demand surged, with people booking weeks in advance. Then, on a surf trip, Weber-Andersen met Oke Carstensen, a business

To date, 105,542 GreenKayak volunteers — half of them tourists — have removed 158 tons of waste from local waterways. GreenKayak is one of many voluntourism programs around the world tailored to travelers and cruisers of all ages. Beginners are welcome, and paddling is a family-friendly way to spend a port day.

SMALL ITEMS, BIG IMPACT

There are 68 GreenKayaks available at 41 locations in 19 cities, and they get snapped up fast so it’s best to book far in advance. We found it easy to book our water-based

receive monthly reports listing how many tourists and locals used their branded kayak and how much trash they picked up. We collected about 15 pounds’ worth of floating debris — mostly paper cups, plastic bags, and cigarette butts.

GreenKayak also plays a key role in CopenPay, an initiative introduced in 2024 by Wonderful Copenhagen, the city’s official tourism organization, to inspire visitors to act more sustainably by offering discounts to popular attractions in exchange for environmentally-friendly actions and activities — including collecting trash with GreenKayak.



“It's free, it's fun, you'll get some exercise, and you can explore the city from the water while doing something good for the environment. So, there's no excuse not to do it.”

FUTURE FORWARD

Working with other local companies, GreenKayak hopes to expand to 100 locations across the globe over the next few years.

“Our 2025 season was another record-breaking year — our paddlers increased by 15 percent. I'm so excited to see so many people signing up to spend a few hours of their time helping to keep our waterways clean and free from trash polluting the environment,” says Weber-Andersen.

He believes many tourists welcome the chance to give something back and leave destinations in better condition than they found them, and then take that experience home with them so they can make greener choices.

Weber-Andersen also hopes the hands-on activity connects participants to the ocean while raising awareness about how we handle plastic and other waste — he wants people to feel that if we're all in the same boat, we can have a huge impact battling pollution in aquatic environments.

“It's free to use our GreenKayaks, it's fun, you will get some exercise, and you can explore the city from the water while doing something good for the environment. So there's no excuse not to do it,” he says.

“This movement is what I'm most proud of, and it warms my heart to think about all the people who are fighting for cleaner oceans from our GreenKayaks.” ●



Photos courtesy of GreenKayak