



IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School

Baja, Mexico

Pre-Departure & Travel Information

Reminders

Please make sure you have completed the following before your course departure date:

- Registration Form (needs to be submitted along with a deposit to secure your space on a course)
- Health Form (30 days prior to departure)
- Rental Equipment Form (30 days prior to departure)
- Release, Acknowledgment of Risk and Indemnity Agreement (30 days prior to departure)
- Travel itinerary to IWLS office (30 days prior to departure)
- Copy of Passport to IWLS office (30 days prior to departure)
- Paid in Full (90 days prior to departure)

Baja, Mexico

The colonial town of La Paz is a thriving town that also offers insight into the cultural history of Mexico. The town of La Paz was founded in 1535 by Hernando Cortes; its 19th century cathedral and lively marketplace make this capital city an enticing place to experience Mexico.

The islands and coastline of the southern Baja peninsula around La Paz and is renowned for its beauty and remoteness. Many of the islands in this area are completely uninhabited, creating a pristine wilderness of untouched beaches. We'll explore islands such as Isla Espiritu Santo and Isla San Jose as we make our way along the rugged coast. Much of the course takes place in the Islas De Golfo De California Special Biosphere Reserve.

Arrival Information

Day 0: Pre-trip meeting at 6pm at the hotel in LaPaz, Baja California Sur, Mexico

Day 1: This is the start date listed on the website. Meet at the hotel in La Paz, Baja California Sur, Mexico at 9:00 AM.

We will have an IWLS representative available for pickup the day prior to the start date of the course. If you are arriving early in the morning or late in the evening please contact us for special arrangements. Again, please notify the IWLS office of your expected arrival or flight information as soon as possible and let us know of any delays for changes.

Airline Tickets

Make certain that your ticket matches the full name on your passport. Plan your arrival in La Paz no later than 6pm the night before your course start date. If time permits, we recommend arriving one day early to provide leeway for any flight or baggage connection trouble. Please make certain that we have your flight and arrival information so that we can meet you at the airport! Always reconfirm your flights within 72hours of departure time.

Airline Routing and/or Other Travel Options

The La Paz International Airport (LAP) is easily accessed via most major airlines. Alaska Airlines, Continental, Aeromexico and Delta have daily flights from many major US cities.



Experts in **Technical Instruction**
and **Outdoor Leadership Training**

1-800-766-3396

www.iwls.com

A Division of Alaska Mountain Guides & Climbing School Inc.



IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School



Baggage

Typically you are allowed one 50 lb. bag at no extra charge. For bags weighing 50-70 lbs. there is usually an additional charge per bag. It is often cheaper to have two bags over 50 lbs. than a third bag. If you travel through other countries for a stopover you may be charged excess baggage fees for anything over 44lbs. (20 kilos) each flight. If possible, pack your backpack and gear inside a large duffel bag.

Photocopy all Documents

Make certain to copy your passport, airline tickets, credit cards, traveler's checks, immunization book, etc. This can be very helpful in the event that anything is lost or stolen. It is also a good idea to send an electronic copy of your documents to a personal email account.

Passport

A passport is required for all international travel with IWLS. Please make a photocopy of your passport and send it to the IWLS office. Check the expiration date of your passport and have it renewed. Some countries will not allow you to enter the country if your passport expires within 6 months of your return date.

Visas

No visa is required before arriving in the country.

Immunizations

There may be some suggested immunizations based on the location of your course. We recommend that you check with your doctor for the most current immunization information. Another good resource is the [CDC website](#). If you have received immunizations, either in the past, or for this trip, make certain to bring your immunization book/card.

Arrival and Departure Taxes

Currently there is no arrival or departure taxes in Mexico.

Currency

In Mexico the exchange rate is about ten pesos to one dollar. Traveler's checks and cash are both easily exchangeable. ATM's with the Cirrus network are widely available and work well. You can usually withdraw up to \$300 a day from your account, check with your bank before traveling.

Language

Spanish is the official language, but English is common.

Sending Money

We recommend bringing at least \$500 USD for international courses in cash or travelers checks. This money is to cover any personal expenses before or after your course. If you are planning on traveling in-conjunction with your course



Experts in **Technical Instruction**
and **Outdoor Leadership Training**

1-800-766-3396

www.iwls.com

A Division of Alaska Mountain Guides & Climbing School Inc.



IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School



the suggested amounts above may not be enough. Always carry a credit card for emergencies as well, however they are not accepted in all locations so make sure you have enough cash for the necessary expenses.

Local Transportation

All transportation needs during your course are included. Please consult your instructor for specific transportation questions before or after your course.

Time Zones

Baja is in the Pacific Time Zone (East Coast time minus three hours).

Climate

The climate is mild, with temperatures averaging 75°F during the day and 55°F at night in mid-winter. In the summer, temperatures average 90°F during the day and 80°F at night. The climate is dry, with annual rainfall averaging 12 to 24 inches per year.

Photography

A small, lightweight, 35mm camera with three to ten rolls of film, depending on how much you like to shoot, is recommended. If you use a digital camera consider how many batteries and memory cards you will need to bring. Remember to keep the bulk and weight to a minimum.

Food

Snack food may be difficult to locate in international locations so flexibility is key. Avoid all foods washed with water as many sources may be contaminated, examples of these foods are lettuce and unpeeled fruits and vegetables. Your instructors will provide you direction in your food choices but the decision of what to consume is ultimately your responsibility.

Drinking Water

All of our water will be treated with iodine, water filters, or boiling. To be safe treat all water or drink bottled water, before any big trip. The Polar Pure Crystal Iodine system is convenient and works well. Filters will not go above base camp because of their weight so iodine tablets or crystals are essential.

Cultural Considerations

When travelling internationally special attention needs to be paid to local customs and laws. For example in some Latin American cultures it is considered unacceptable to wear shorts in public. Another consideration would be the display of wealth in an impoverished area, this can be seen as disrespectful and possibly lead to unwanted confrontation. We recommend reading up on the customs of the area that you are travelling to prior to your departure, The Lonely Planet is an excellent resource. Please consult your instructors for information specific to your location.

Medical



Experts in **Technical Instruction**
and **Outdoor Leadership Training**

1-800-766-3396

www.iwls.com

A Division of Alaska Mountain Guides & Climbing School Inc.



IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School



Please consult your physician and have them complete the health form provided by IWLS. If you require any personal medications, or, have any pre-existing medical problems, make certain to re-confirm with your guide upon arrival. Furthermore, IWLS requires that all students have their own health insurance. Individuals are solely responsible for any medical costs, including all associated rescue, evacuation, and transportation costs. Please take time to review your medical insurance policy. Make certain that your coverage extends to the location of your course, and that it provides coverage for any potential, associated, costs. Many policies will provide coverage for travel abroad for a small additional fee. AIG travel guard, listed below, offers temporary health insurance for an additional fee.

Medications

Please make sure you have the following medications for personal use on your IWLS course:

- All prescription and/or non-prescription medications you are currently taking.
- A broad-spectrum antibiotic prescribed by your doctor (this is required).
- Aspirin or Ibuprofen

Travel Insurance

Travel insurance is required for international courses and highly recommend for domestic courses. In many case travel insurance will cover medical expenses, evacuation costs, lost baggage, travel delays, and other costs in the event you need to cancel your trip. We have worked with almost every provider of travel insurance and feel strongly that the Adventure Travel Protection Plan from AIG/ Travel Guard is the best one available. It is one of the only plans that covers high altitude climbing and has significant benefits if purchased within 15 days of making your trip deposit. Details can be found on [our website](#).



Will there be a place for me to store my things while I'm on the course?

Please contact the office prior to departure for specific questions.

What should I bring on the first day?

All your personal clothing and equipment for your course.

Training and Fitness

Your course will consist of long days of moderate activity which will require good aerobic (endurance) conditioning. You should create a well-rounded work out plan prior to your course which combines endurance, strength, flexibility and balance. Depending on the nature of your course the training program will vary slightly but the underlying principle should be aerobic conditioning. Examples of aerobic exercises include running, cycling, Nordic skiing, and swimming. Ideally you want to start your work out with a warm up of 5-10 minutes at 50-60% of your maximum heart rate, then continue for another 20-60 minutes at 65-80% of your maximum heart rate, and finish with a cool down of 5-10 minutes at 50-60% of your maximum heart rate. This should be practiced 3-4 times a week for up to eight weeks



Experts in **Technical Instruction**
and **Outdoor Leadership Training**

1-800-766-3396

www.iwls.com

A Division of Alaska Mountain Guides & Climbing School Inc.



IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School



before your course start date. A strength training workout (ie. weight-lifting) could be a good supplement to your work out plan, but not a substitute. Good conditioning will not only improve your chances for success but will also improve the quality of your course. Don't hesitate to contact us if you have any questions on specific training programs. The possibilities are endless, so get creative and have fun!

Our Instructors

IWLS instructors are widely recognized as some of the very best in their field and have practical leadership experience from around the globe. They are well trained and have an uncommon enthusiasm for sharing their skill and knowledge, borne out of a passion for outdoor exploration. IWLS leaders are technically skilled, passionate about wilderness, and committed to each and every student. Their dedication insures each student an educational experience that will exceed their expectations!

In addition to the technical skills, IWLS instructors are equally experts in the “softer skills” of risk management, client care, and group dynamics. Not only will they insure a quality experience for each student, but will also work to impart this judgment to them.



Experts in **Technical Instruction**
and **Outdoor Leadership Training**

1-800-766-3396

www.iwls.com

A Division of Alaska Mountain Guides & Climbing School Inc.