



IWLS

International Wilderness Leadership School

24 -Day Patagonia Sea Kayaking

Leadership & Guide Training Course Information



Course Location

We will begin and end our course in the picturesque city of Puerto Natales, located just over the crest of the Andes at the southern reaches of the South American continent. Founded in 1911 as a port for the sheep industry, Puerto Natales is a friendly fishing village surrounded by a seemingly endless maze of fjords, islands, and glaciers! Interactions with the friendly people of the region give insight into the culture that has changed little over the last 100 years.

From our base in Puerto Natales, students will explore the lush fjords teeming with life on land and sea, tidewater glaciers calving huge icebergs in the sea, and enjoy the long days of the austral summer. We paddle the Ultima Esperanza Sound and access stunning glaciers such as Balmaceda and Serrano. Patagonia, a land of legendary allure and mystique, is home to lofty Andean peaks, massive glaciers, and a primeval wilderness area. Tidewater glaciers spill off of the 3rd largest non-polar ice cap in the world and shape the majestic fjords and waterways of Patagonia. Students will explore this verdant landscape and travel by lush temperate rainforests, giant icebergs, and waterfalls cascading down sweeping granite walls.

This UNESCO world heritage site hosts endemic Chilean species such as the monkey-puzzle tree and the pine-like araucaria. Andean condors or albatross may be spotted soaring high above the fjords. The Andean wolf, the fox-like chilla, guanaco, and puma are some of the large mammals found in the area. The vibrant marine ecosystem supports orcas, sea lions, and six species of seals.

Few places on Earth compare to the wild, untouched landscape and rugged beauty of Patagonia. The dynamic weather and terrain of this glaciated wilderness make for exceptional sea kayaking expeditions. This comprehensive sea kayaking course is the perfect setting to achieve your goals whether you are looking to become a professional guide, hone your technical abilities for personal adventures, or expand your leadership skills. It focuses on teaching students to be safe, efficient, knowledgeable and confident outdoor leaders in a coastal environment and is an unforgettable experience for our IWLS students.

Experts in **Technical Instruction**
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Course Goals

- Students will gain a strong technical sea kayaking skill set and appropriate traveling techniques.
- Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to professionally deal with emergency scenarios while in the field.
- Students will be able to use and teach state-of-the-art minimum-impact camping and travel techniques to move a group through terrain with minimum impact.
- They will be able to exercise good quality judgment and decision-making skills within a leadership position to help avoid potential accident and survival situations and develop a comprehensive understanding of safety considerations while sea kayaking in a coastal environment.
- They will be able to recognize their own leadership abilities and limitations within the context of a group. Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to make decisions and lead small groups while sea kayaking.

Course Itinerary

Below is a flexible trip itinerary that shows the general progression of the trip. Our exact schedule will depend highly on the weather, strength of the group, and time of year.

Day 0: Arrive at Punta Arenas

Day 1: Transportation from Punta Arenas to Puerto Natales. We discuss expectations for the course from the students and from the instructors.

Day 2: We'll spend the first day preparing, planning, and packing food and equipment for our expedition. We'll head out onto the water in the afternoon.

Day 3: Our first day on the water will include basic paddling stroke technique, an introduction to the wet exit and a short paddle to our first wilderness camp. We will begin paddling south through the Ultima Esperanza Sound (Last Hope Sound), navigating through the maze of waterways and taking in all sights and sounds along the way.

Day 4: This will be our first ACA course. As a group we'll learn and practice paddle strokes, maneuvers, and rescues. We'll spend the entire day on and in the water and make our way through the Señoret Channel which forms a navigation route connecting Puerto Natales to several protected areas in the region.

Days 5-12: Intensive technical skill instruction and development.

Days will be spent in the field addressing points of the course curriculum. Students will plan the route and destinations in advance, with flexibility incorporated into the day-to-day route and itinerary. This will provide for many opportunities and teachable moments related to judgment and decision-making. We aim to spend 6-8 hours daily on skill development and traveling our route, with time spent on shore participating in lessons, problem solving activities, and discussions and debriefs.

Day 13: Mid-course evaluations.



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Lead instructors will assess participants' level of involvement in accordance with the assessment rubrics of the ACA and IWLS curriculum.

Day 14-23: Leadership, judgment and decision-making development.

During this segment of the trip, the group will continue to tackle paddling objectives. Participants will have the opportunity to be in leadership roles, develop teaching styles, and be active participants in group decision-making and safety management. We will continue to explore remote islets and sinuous fjords that make up this region of Patagonia. The exact itinerary will vary depending on the group.

Day 24: Return to town. In the last few days of the course we will have final peer and instructor evaluations. Students will be evaluated on their understanding and completion of the ACA and IWLS curriculum.

A Typical Day

A typical day starts around 7AM with breakfast and hot drinks. If a big travel day is planned, you may find yourself awake just before sunrise. While water is heating you will most likely be preparing for the days' adventures.

You will play an integral part of the expedition team by setting up camp, cooking meals, or carrying a portion of the group gear. You may be leader of the day, responsible for planning the day, accomplishing objectives, or facilitating a lesson plan.

The day's activities will vary depending on weather, location, and progression of the course. We may work on developing your technical skills set, learn about different leadership styles, or get an early start and make a big crossing. Regardless of the day's activities, it will be full of learning and adventure.

Dinner could be anything from thanksgiving to pasta, to backcountry pizza. Students often walk away from our courses with a newfound love for cooking good and original food.

The day will finish with a debrief session where we'll discuss the days events, what you learned, and how you'll be able to use your newfound skills in the near future.

Course Curriculum

The International Wilderness Leadership Schools' educational model nurtures leadership development and creates an awareness of the guiding mentality essential for leading safe, fun adventures in the wilderness. The combination of technical skills training, experiential education and practical leadership experience make the IWLS curriculum world class.

We believe that experiences drive our learning, and therefore we use formal and informal classes taught by both instructors and students. Instructors are eager to help facilitate the learning process, but, ultimately, how much you learn will be dependent upon the amount of effort you put into the course.

A detailed curriculum will be provided at the beginning of the course. Below is a partial list of curriculum points that will be covered throughout your course.

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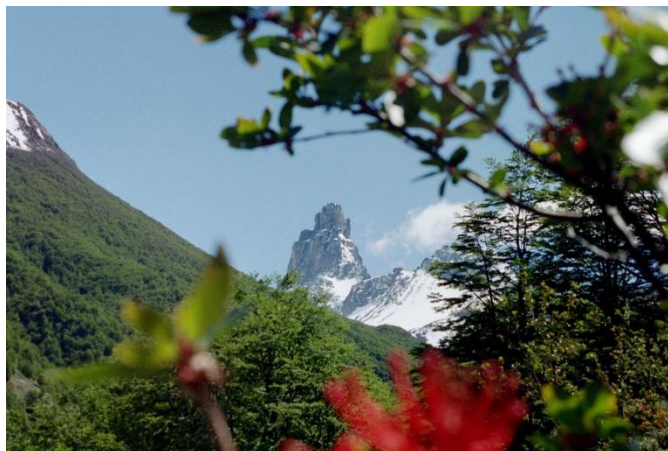
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IWLS General Curriculum

- **Leader of the Day:** Opportunities to lead the group will be abundant and you'll have the time to learn and practice multiple styles of leadership.
- **Situational Based Decision Making:** Over the course of 12 days, we'll discover ways to make effective and safe decisions in the field.
- **Focused and "Big Picture" Awareness:** Learn to identify objective and subjective hazards in a backcountry setting.
- **Logistics:** Develop the ability to efficiently plan and pack for an extended expedition in the backcountry.
- **Communication Skills:** Learn to communicate to a wide variety of audiences and provide constructive and appropriate feedback during daily group debriefs.
- **Teaching and Lesson Plans:** You'll have the opportunity to develop lesson plans, teach in front of the group, and learn the importance of progressions for teaching technical skills and leadership.
- **Expedition Behavior and Group Dynamics:** As this course is a true wilderness expedition, interactions between group members need to be supportive and contribute to the efficacy of the group. Learn the finer points of teaching these facilitation skills.
- **Camp Set-up and Maintenance:** Mastering these essential skills will prove valuable whether you are pitching a tent in gale force winds or melting snow for drinking water.
- **Nutrition and Cooking:** A healthy diet is vital for maintaining energy throughout an expedition. Learn to appropriately prepare nutritional and tasty backcountry meals.
- **Navigation:** Learn how to take a bearing, read a topographical map, triangulate your position, and navigate in a whiteout.
- **Weather:** Will the storm arrive in the next 12 hours, or the next 48? Understanding weather patterns and trends will help you plan successful trips in a wilderness setting.
- **Leave No Trace® Ethics:** As adventurers in some of the most pristine environments on the planet it is our duty to respect the natural world.
- **Natural and Cultural History:** Having a strong understanding of cultural history, flora, and fauna is an integral part of leading people in an outdoor environment. You'll learn some of the botany, ecology, and geology that apply to this remarkable area.



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IWLS Sea Kayaking Curriculum

- **Paddling Equipment:** Safely traveling the remote waters of Southeast Alaska requires that you have a thorough knowledge of your equipment and proper use. We'll talk about kayak design, appropriate clothing, rescue gear, guide gear, and more!
- **Strokes:** Forward, reverse, sweep, beam draw, and sculling draw: we'll cover them all, and you'll get ample opportunities to practice and refine your strokes.
- **Maneuvers:** When coming in for a rescue, speed and efficiency are of utmost importance. We'll learn and practice maneuvers such as the low brace turn, bow rudder and hanging draw.
- **Braces:** Paddling in rough conditions requires solid bracing skills. We'll learn and practice the low brace, high brace and sculling brace in a fun, controlled environment.
- **Rescues:** What happens when you're paddling with clients in the frigid waters of Southeast Alaska and a boat capsizes? We'll learn everything from the paddle-float rescue to the assisted bow rescue to kayak rolling.
- **Towing:** Whether you are pulling an injured kayaker away from booming surf or lending a helping hand to a seasick client, you'll learn the finer points of a towing system and the criteria for towing.
- **Navigation:** Expeditions in the meandering waters of Alaska require solid navigational skills, including how to use deck compasses, read charts and position off land features.
- **Group Management:** Managing a pod of kayaks on a windy day is challenging. You'll learn techniques for managing safety with a group on the water.
- **Tides and Currents:** Southeast Alaska is home to some of the largest tidal changes in North America. We'll learn about tide charts, the "Rule of 12's", and how to identify and avoid strong currents.
- **Communication:** VHF marine radios, satellite phones, EPIRBs, and signaling devices are among some of the communication devices that we'll review during the course. You'll learn the protocols for effective communication in a wilderness setting.

Journal Writing

Keeping a wilderness journal can help students to record, reflect, and gain from experiences throughout the expedition. The following are examples of topics that may be assigned throughout the course: First-Aid SOAP notes, incident management forms, leadership analyses, trip reports, lesson plans and decision making analyses.





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The American Canoe Association (ACA)

These trips utilize kayak instruction by certified American Canoe Association Instructors. The American Canoe Association (ACA) has been the governing body of paddle sports instruction and active voice for paddlers in North America for over 100 years. Instructor Certification ensures quality, consistent instruction on the most current paddling techniques, rescues, and safety procedures.

The International Wilderness Leadership School is one of few programs in the state offering certified sea kayaking instruction. Quality instruction is an investment made for your own safety as well as enjoyment. Our instructors are not only certified by the ACA, they also bring a wealth of wilderness guiding, formal teaching, and risk management experience to our program.

The following ACA programs will be incorporated into the 24-day course:*

- Coastal Kayaking Basic Strokes and Rescues
- Coastal Kayaking Open Water Skills
- Self and Assisted Deep Water Rescues
- Eskimo Rolling

**Completion of ACA programs is highly dependent upon weather, strength of the group, and time of the year.*

Evaluation and Grading

Students who take this course for credit will receive a letter grade. Grading is a measurement of one's knowledge of material, participation, written and oral communication, and one's judgment and awareness. Students will be evaluated on their skills, level of participation, their knowledge and awareness of their own abilities as outdoor leaders, their level of judgment as applied to decisions, and written projects assigned during the trip. Students that don't take the course for credit will receive an evaluation in place of a grade.

Certifications

Upon completion of the 24-day sea kayaking leadership and guide-training course, students may be eligible for the following certifications.



24 Day Guide Training Certificate of Completion
International Wilderness Leadership School



ACA Certificates of Completion
American Canoe Association

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