



Patagonia Sea Kayaking - Spanish Immersion (Full Immersion Sea Kayaking Course in Patagonia)

The 14-day Patagonia sea kayak course offers a unique opportunity to learn navigation techniques in remote areas, immersed in an environment that will captivate you with its beauty and dynamism. Among your classmates you'll develop leadership, risk management, and navigation skills while learning to travel with minimum impact, enabling you to organize your own expeditions in the future.

2024 will be NOLS Patagonia's 35th anniversary and we want to celebrate it with an expedition that reflects the values of multiculturalism and diversity for which we are known for. This year, for the first time, the Sea Kayaking course in Patagonia will offer spots for non-Latin American students whose native language is not Spanish and want to take on the challenge of joining a transformative expedition 100% in Spanish navigating through the Patagonian fjords.

Therefore, the predominant language used in this course is Spanish. Participants need to be fluent in Spanish language in order to understand class content and be able to communicate with classmates and instructors.

Course description

The course is designed to improve leadership skills and teamwork in an ambiguous environment, in which decisions have real consequences. During this course, you will paddle along the coasts of the Aysén region, known for being rugged and remote. In this classroom, you will practice leadership, learn outdoor living, navigation skills, and Leave No Trace principles.

The program includes the following contents:

- Wilderness skills

- Risk Management
- Leadership
- Environmental studies
- Navigation and paddling techniques

Wilderness skills

In this area, the course is developed as an expedition through the fjords of Chilean Patagonia, where students live outdoors, camping and preparing their own meals. The group will travel in double and single kayaks, loaded with all the expedition equipment, (they will paddle every day when the weather allows it, learning to read nautical charts, analyzing the conditions of the sea, the terrain and the weather). Normally, the weather conditions are adverse and present a great physical and mental challenge; but they are undoubtedly an important part of the curriculum and course experience.

Risk Management

Risk recognition and management are critical to leadership development, safety, and health of expedition members. We accept risk as an integral part of the learning process and the environment through which we travel. We firmly believe that risk management can be carried out with good judgment, based on experience, training and knowledge. In each course participants learn to face real challenges and risk assessment is an integral part of each day. NOLS has a positive history of managing safety in courses, and we believe this is possible only when our students learn how to recognize hazards and evaluate the skill of group members.

Leadership

Throughout the course we explore different leadership styles, including collaborative models for decision making. Having responsibilities is an important part of the educational experience of each participant and that is why during the course there will be the opportunity for students to lead the group. Arriving with a flexible, open attitude and the desire to take a responsible and positive role within the group is extremely important. Also, it is required that the students develop initiatives to take good care of themselves in the face of the challenges presented by the environment and the human group.

Environmental studies

Minimum impact techniques are taught under the “Leave No Trace” program. This program presents minimal impact techniques under 7 general principles, facilitating their application in different environments. “No Deje Rastro” is an adaptation of the program

led by the Center for Outdoor Ethics from Leave No Trace www.Int.org (course does not include certification).

Navigation and Paddle Techniques

An essential part of kayak traveling and exploring seawaters is learning various techniques, specific to this discipline, such as: kayak packaging, oars/in-water communication, wind and waves identification, currents and tides reading, types of paddling, and more. Our skilled instructors will go deeper into these techniques in Spanish.

Course Format

Previous to course: Traveling to Coyhaique

Day 1

We meet in Coyhaique's main square early in the morning and drive to the NOLS Patagonia Campus for breakfast and a quick orientation. Then, you and your classmates will check your personal equipment with your instructors, group equipment, and the food that you will take to the field. The day ends with a review of group goals and a plan for the next day.

Days 2-13

The progression of the contents to be taught during these days will depend on the conditions of the terrain, weather, interests of the students and the instructors' evaluation of all these conditions and others that may arise.

The "Leader of the day" model, responsibilities, decision making, navigation curriculum, paddling, campsite selection and "Leave No Trace" techniques will be presented as part of the topics to be taught.

Day 14

Pick-up at designated meeting point and return to NOLS Patagonia Campus for a nice hot shower, course graduation and back to Coyhaique.

Methodology

"What I hear, I forget; what I see, I remember; what I do, I know." This Chinese proverb recreates the NOLS educational philosophy. With more than 55 years of experience in outdoor education, NOLS has developed a methodology whose roots are founded in experiential education. Where formal classes in the field are the minimum, since learning occurs during doing and then reflecting on what has been learned and

reapplying it. There will be constant check-ins and feedback from the instructors in all areas of the course and there will be a self-assessment of the student's performance at the end of the course.

Equipment

NOLS Patagonia supplies all group equipment. A document will be delivered specifying the requirements for the personal equipment necessary for the course. It is recommended to bring equipment that you have already used before. If you miss something, we encourage you to borrow from a friend. Buying or renting equipment from outfitters should be a last resort.

NOLS Patagonia has equipment for rent and/or sale. For more detail, see the Personal Equipment Description document, which clearly indicates what NOLS provides and what is available for sale and/or rental.

Important information

Climate conditions greatly influence the pace and curriculum, therefore, the described curriculum could undergo modifications depending on climatic conditions.

Each course is a unique experience that is defined by a set of factors such as the environment, the weather, the route, and the human group. The course route varies each year. The group of instructors will decide the route days before the start of the course, based on their experience, the course curriculum, objectives, level of the participants and exposure to weather conditions.

Participant requirements

- Being over 18 years
- You must have an adequate physical condition to be able to paddle a kayak for long periods of time, sometimes 8 hours a day, and for several days in a row.
- The participant has to be psychologically prepared to put in the learning and challenge involved in this expedition.
- It is not necessary to have previous experience, however, if you wish to take this course, come with the willingness to be open to learning and facing difficulties in a difficult environment.

- During the course we travel through isolated areas of medical services, telephone communications, human settlements and roads.
- Participants need to be 100% fluent in Spanish language in order to understand class content and be able to communicate with classmates and instructors. Also, the enrollment and admissions process would be carried out in Spanish. A personal interview or a presentation video may be requested in order to assess language skills.