

New Zealand Sailing - Adult

Course Description

Challenge yourself to learn the skills for a lifetime of coastal exploration. Explore New Zealand's coast and see the island's unique wildlife, and test your growing leadership skills. If you're ready for an exhilarating expedition to grow as a leader and explorer, then this is the course for you.

Features

- Duration: 14 days
- Route length: 75-125 nautical miles
- Average group size: 10 students / 2 instructors
- Average age: 30 / minimum age: 23
- Skills: sailing, coastal cruising, and coastal navigation
- Watercraft used: 34- to 39-foot keelboats
- Location: Marlborough Sounds—comprising Queen Charlotte Sound, Pelorus Sound, Tennyson Inlet and the Cook Strait of New Zealand's South Island
- Emphasis on New Zealand natural history
- Notable wildlife: tui, bellbird, kaka, parakeets, bush robins, mountain falcons, morepork owls, dolphins, orca, cormorants, blue penguins, and fur seals.
- Excellent opportunities to see marine life and hike into the hills surrounding various inlets and bays

Overview

On this course, you'll learn diverse skills in the marine environment of Marlborough Sounds, a partially submerged mountain range at the northern end of the South Island. Get ready to explore the coast, see wildlife only found in New Zealand, and develop your skills as a leader.

This course emphasizes sailing skills and seamanship, which includes learning nautical terminology, sail theory, boat handling under power and sail, docking and anchoring theory and practice, tides, currents and weather, rigging, knots, charts and coastal navigation, rules of the road, aids to navigation and crew overboard drills. The boats you will use are modern, 35- to 39-foot sloop-rig vessels. You will live, cook, and sleep aboard the sailboats.

As you learn to sail, you'll also learn about other aspects of seamanship, including coastal navigation, tides and currents, leadership, and communication. Marlborough Sounds is a remote rural area, not a wilderness area. You will see farms, forestry plantations, roads and forest reserves, with potential opportunities for cultural interaction as well as sailing experience.

By the end of this course, you will have the experience to pursue your own coastal exploration in any environment.

Weather and Other Challenges

Weather

Located between 40 and 45 degrees south of the equator, the South Island lies within the “roaring forties,” strong westerly winds in the South Pacific. These winds are known for bringing damp weather and cold temperatures to this part of the world. On your course, temperatures can range between 70° or 80° F to 25° F with strong winds, rain, or snow at higher elevations.

IMPORTANT: The South Island of New Zealand is a cool temperate environment, *not* a subtropical environment. Because we are on an island in a large ocean, weather patterns are variable and unpredictable. Expect to encounter heavy rain and possibly snow, as well as hot, sunny, or humid conditions during your course.

Seasickness

Dealing with seasickness is a reality of any ocean adventure. Seasickness can be managed to some extent by medication, diet, and hydration, but in sustained rough seas we may have to look for shelter in protected bays to obtain some relief. In rough sea conditions, students may not be permitted on the open deck of the boat. Other sailing hazards include the possibility of falling on the boat or overboard, or being injured by moving equipment on board the boat.

Remoteness

The changeable weather and variable sea conditions combined with remote locations means emergency help may take hours or even several days to arrive. Because of this we will be teaching all students to maintain a very high standard of personal and group well-being. Identifying and managing the risks from hazards will be a consistent theme in our instruction. Managing risks and assuming responsibility for yourself and your peers will help make your expedition in these wild and beautiful places healthy and fun.

Tsunamis

Offshore earthquakes located in the South Pacific have the potential to cause tsunamis. Instructors are trained to respond appropriately and inform NOLS New Zealand in case of exposure to rising sea levels.

Learning Goals at NOLS

NOLS courses teach wilderness and leadership skills on expeditions and in classrooms. You will apply these skills to challenges in a supportive learning culture with high expectations. Your course will provide you with the opportunity for a positive, transformative experience intended to inspire you and empower you to act.

We craft NOLS courses so graduates will be able to assume leadership roles; live and travel in the outdoors; act with confidence and competence; respect and collaborate with others on expeditions, on teams and in communities; care for themselves and others; understand their strengths, habits, and areas for growth; function under difficult circumstances; make informed and thoughtful decisions; communicate effectively; connect with natural places; and appreciate living simply.

We believe positive, ethical leaders change the world. Join NOLS and become one of these leaders.