



ASA 108, Offshore Passagemaking Course Pacific Coast Adventure with Modern Sailing



Sausalito to Marina Del Rey with a stopover at Catalina

Price Per Berth: Members \$3,695 / Non-members \$4,495

Overview

Are you dreaming of taking your sailing experience to a whole new level, far beyond the sight of land and over the breathtaking open sea? Do your biggest sailing ambitions include nonstop multi-day passages, crossing an ocean, or sailing around the world? If so, Modern Sailing's ASA 108, Offshore Passagemaking will help prepare you to meet the challenge.

The ASA 108, Offshore Passagemaking certification marks the pinnacle of the ASA certification journey. This course will prepare you with the knowledge and skills that are crucial to any sailor considering long-distance cruising and offshore passagemaking. Students will gain an understanding of yacht preparation, long-term passage planning, watch-standing, use of celestial navigation, weather analysis, storm avoidance, heavy weather sailing techniques including use of a trysail, storm jib, and drogue, use of radar and AIS, emergency procedures, safety and seamanship, as well as other elements involved in ocean passagemaking.

This course is led by two highly experienced USCG licensed captains who will serve as the captain, first mate, and ASA-certified instructors. Crew consists of 3 to 4 ASA 108 students on one of Modern Sailing's blue-water equipped and capable 40ft+ monohull sailing yachts.

Itinerary

3 weeks prior to the offshore sessions a half-day hands-on orientation and preparation seminar will be conducted for all interested clients. A zoom recording will be available for review.

The offshore portion of the course consists of a trip south out of Sausalito to Marina del Rey with a short stopover in Catalina, if weather permits. The class begins with a one-day hands-on orientation and preparation seminar conducted onboard the yacht prior to departure. The passage covers 450+ nautical miles for 5 to 6 continuous days and nights, with a planned one-night stopover in Santa Catalina Island off the coast of Southern California

Prerequisites

Candidates for this course must be in good health and fit for activities aboard a sailing vessel underway continuously for multiple days and nights. Prerequisites include ASA 106, Advanced Coastal Cruising, and ASA 107, Celestial Navigation. It is possible to fulfill the ASA 107 prerequisite with either ASA 107, Celestial Navigation or ASA 117, Basic Celestial Endorsement, both of which are available online at <https://americansailing.com/starpath>.

The coveted ASA 108 certification is awarded to students who have met the course prerequisites and have demonstrated mastery of the [ASA 108 standards](#) by means of on-the-water skills evaluation and an essay-style written exam.

Due to the broad range of topics covered in this course, there is no single textbook that covers everything you need to know to successfully complete this course and prepare for your future offshore passages. A recommend (but not required) reading list is included in this Information Packet that can help you in your studies and provide valuable reference material for your future sailing adventures.

Fitness Requirements

There are no “passengers” aboard this passage and course. You must be physically agile and mentally alert. In order to participate safely on this ocean passage and respond as necessary if an emergency arises, you are required to be “able bodied” and capable of hearing, understanding, and responding to the Captain or First Mate’s instructions.

Situations may arise where there are:

- erratic and heaving motions on or below deck
- slippery conditions on deck
- moving parts of the vessel’s rigging
- movements causing motion sickness

Every person on board must have the physical strength to:

- actively respond to any of the conditions listed above

- climb the vessel's companionway ladder (6' high) while the vessel is in motion
- participate in hauling lines and grinding winches to raise, set, and trim sails
- use footholds and arm strength to climb over the side of the vessel when boarding or disembarking at dock

The following is a list of conditions that may inhibit safe participation on the voyage that should be disclosed and discussed with the Modern Sailing School Director prior to booking:

1. Medical conditions which could require treatment during sailing such as epilepsy, hemophilia, etc
2. Limited agility due to factors such as:
 - a) Use of canes, crutches, or other walking aids
 - b) Severe arthritis – rheumatoid or other forms
 - c) Significant obesity – BMI >35
 - d) Poor balance or dizziness
 - e) Advanced pregnancy
 - f) Frailty
3. Significantly impaired vision or hearing
4. Inability to tolerate stressful situations (physical or psychological)
5. Conditions which are not fully diagnosed or well controlled with medication such as: diabetes, chest pain, high blood pressure, seizures, etc.
6. Severe cognitive impairment
7. Life-threatening allergies
8. Contagious illness
9. Dependence on tobacco or other substances (smoking of any substance, including e-cigarettes/vaping, and consumption of any substance which may cause impairment is strictly not permitted on the vessel)

What to expect?

An ocean passage is a blend of many parts and is much more than just pure sailing. It requires a mindset of cooperation, tolerance of others and teamwork while maintaining enthusiasm and pulling your weight with onboard chores, watchkeeping and other assigned duties. Being tidy and careful is paramount. Also, on sea voyages, various elements can present difficulties and challenges, such as:

- Boat systems may break
- Weather systems may present challenging conditions
- Destination anchorages may not be available
- Weather and boat repair related delays
- And other safe seamanship concerns

Watch Routine

The watch routine is set depending upon the number of crew and experience as well as weather. Normally, the Captain and First Mate will use a four-on-four-off model, while the crew will use a two-on-four-off model with a crew of 3 or more.

Vessel

[Coho II \(Spencer 1330\)](#) is our legendary offshore racer/cruiser.

At 44.4 feet overall length and 24,000 pounds of displacement, *Coho II* is built for crossing oceans with speed, seakindly motion, and good performance in both big winds and light airs.

Accommodations

An individual berth will be assigned (no hot racking) for each participant on the voyage. For the crew there are two single berths on either side in the saloon and the v-berth is split into 2 single berths with a privacy curtain down the middle. The Captain and First Mate are assigned the two single berths on either side at the stern of the vessel. Everyone will bring their own bedding (e.g., sleeping bag and pillow). *Coho II* is equipped with a single head, a spacious galley, and there is an abundance of storage areas throughout the vessel for stowage of personal gear and provisions.

Provisioning

The crew will decide together based collective tastes on board and the provisions will be purchased at a local grocery store on Day 1 by the crew. These costs will be split amongst everyone on the vessel. Be sure to bring up any dietary restrictions and special dietary needs in the planning process. You may feel free to bring your own special meals and snacks that cannot readily be accommodated. Cooking and cleaning duties are shared equally amongst the crew while on passage. There will be at least one meal ashore at Catalina Island at individual expense.

Travel Considerations

Those enrolled will need to make their own flight arrangements from LAX to return to their place of residence at their own expense. From Marina Del Rey where the course ends, LAX is a short ride by car (< 7 miles).

General Weather Conditions – California Coast in September/October

- For September 80% of time winds are out of the NW to N that are on average 13-24 kts (Force 4 to 5) in strength with 2% calms.
- .4 kn mean southbound current
- <5% of ship reports on avg report gales (Force 8) in late September
- Wave height of at least 12ft. 10% or more of the time.
- Mean Air temp 18° C, while mean Sea surface temp 20° C
- September will see improving visibility.

What to Bring

Luggage

We suggest traveling light. Your bag(s) should be collapsible for easy storage on the vessel in a small space. Please do not bring bags with hard frames as they are difficult to stow.

Suggested Packing List

GEAR	CLOTHING	NON-CLOTHING (OTHER)
PFD – coastal or offshore rated preferred ¹	Shorts (1)	ID appropriate for air travel
Sailing gloves	Pants – quick dry (2)	Sunscreen
Foul weather gear appropriate for coastal sailing for rain, fog and cold	Shore shoes, closed toe suitable for light hiking (1)	Personal hygiene items (travel size)
A harness (if not integrated w/PFD) and tether – will be provided if you don't have your own	Quick dry t-shirts (4) Clothing appropriate for dinner ashore and travel (1)	Medications w/prescriptions
Appropriate sailing footwear for dry and wet conditions	Mid layer, fleece (1)	Sunglasses, prescription eyewear + backup
Watch cap	Flip flops (shower shoes)	Motion sickness remedy ²
Sailing knife or multi-tool	Socks and underwear (4)	Towel, wash cloth
Optional personal locator device	Sleepwear, e.g., sweatpants or pajamas	Ear plugs and eye patch

¹ Please discuss PFD options with your instructor. Ideally, you want a coastal-rated PFD with integral harness. Disarming your inflatable PFD is a relatively simple procedure that will allow you to put the PFD in checked luggage. Most airlines allow an inflatable PFD and two spare cartridges onboard. Check with your carrier for details. If bringing it through security as a carry-on, the best practice is to announce it to the TSA officer. Alternatively, you can use Type III PFD and harness with tether available on the vessel.

² Motion sickness can afflict anybody, even those who do not normally suffer motion sickness problems. Talk to your doctor and bring appropriate motion sickness meds, whether prescription or over-the-counter.

Recommend Reading List

TITLE	AUTHOR	APPROX. PRICE	WHERE TO PURCHASE
Mariner's Weather Handbook, 1 st ed	Steve & Linda Dashew	Free PDF download	https://setsail.com/free-books/
Surviving the Storm, 1 st ed.	Steve & Linda Dashew	Free PDF download	https://setsail.com/free-books/
Practical Seamanship, 1 st ed.	Steve & Linda Dashew	Free PDF download	https://setsail.com/free-books/
Offshore Cruising Encyclopedia, 1 st ed.	Steve & Linda Dashew	Free PDF download	https://setsail.com/free-books/
Heavy Weather Sailing, 8 th ed.	Martin Thomas & Peter Bruce	\$37 Kindle \$40 Hardcover	Amazon
Storm Tactics Handbook, 3 rd ed.	Lin & Larry Pardey	\$10 Kindle \$23 Paperback	Amazon
The Care and feeding of Sailing Crew, 4 th ed.	Lin & Larry Pardey	\$10 Kindle \$23 Paperback	Amazon
Chapman Piloting & Seamanship, 69 th ed	Chapman & Jonathan Eaton	\$20 Kindle \$45 Hardcover	Amazon
Annapolis Book of Seamanship, 4 th ed	John Rousmaniere	\$42 Hardcover	Amazon
Advanced First Aid Afloat, 5 th ed.	Peter F., MD Eastman, John L	\$17 Paperback	Amazon
Reread all your ASA Textbooks from Basic Keelboat to Advanced Coastal Cruising.			

Where to go to get your questions answered about the course.

Contact Modern Sailing at (415) 331-8250 or office@modernsailing.com. There will also be an information session at Modern Sailing with the instructor in July. The date and time will be posted in an upcoming announcement in the Modern Sailing weekly email newsletter.

How to reserve and book your seat in the course.

Contact Modern Sailing at (415) 331-8250, office@modernsailing.com, or stop by in person at either of our locations. You may [book online](#) if you took ASA 106 at Modern Sailing.

Modern Sailing Sausalito - 2310 Marinship Way, Sausalito, CA 94965

Modern Sailing Berkeley - 1 Spinnaker Way, Berkeley, CA 94710