



dark sky ecotourism

Module 4: Experience from Iceland – Northern Lights Sightseeing Boat Trip



Introduction

Welcome to our educational module on crafting a Dark Sky Ecotourism Experience!

This module was inspired by the Icelandic whale watching company, North Sailing, that used the resources they already have, e.g., an electrical sailboat and highly skilled staff to make a successful dark sky ecotourism experience:

Northern Lights Sightseeing Boat Trip.



Ópal, Northsailing electrical sailboat and the majestic northern lights
www.northsailing.is

Designing the Experience

Focus on Dark Sky Tourism

Embrace the unique appeal of dark skies by designing an experience centered around stargazing and natural phenomena such as the Northern Lights.

Blend Nature and Culture

The sky is not predictable - Integrate the natural beauty of the Arctic night with cultural elements, such as local folklore and landmarks to make sure you can always offer a memorable experience.



www.northsailing.is

Crafting Tour Highlights

Aurora Borealis Immersion

Develop a captivating narrative around the Northern Lights, highlighting their significance and unpredictability.

City Lights Exploration

While sailing away from the lights towards dark sky quality - incorporate city lights for a multi-dimensional experience, showcasing urban areas from an alternative perspective.

Exclusive Access to Landmarks

If applicable, secure access to iconic landmarks like Yoko Ono's Imagine Peace Tower for select dates.



Reykjavík seen from Ópal, Northsail's sailboat www.northsailing.is

Efficient Coordination for a Seamless Experience

Strategic Dock Location

Choose a dock location that enhances accessibility and aligns with the overall theme. For instance, Reykjavík Harbor is central to the Northern Lights Sightseeing Boat Trip. It is very accessible for tourist and can include city light exploration and

Yoko Ono's Imagine Peace Tower

Comprehensive Inclusions

Offer a complete package with knowledgeable guides, refreshments, appropriate attire, and other essentials for a comfortable journey



Northsail's guide www.northsailing.is

Eco-Friendly Transport

Technology

Integrate eco-friendly elements into the experience, like the hybrid-electric sailboat Opal, to enhance sustainability without compromising authenticity.

Educational Components

Train staff and guides to educate participants about the eco-friendly features and the importance of responsible tourism.



Schooner Opal -The silent electric sailboat www.northsailing.is

Enhancing the Educational Aspect

Guide Training

Train guides to provide insightful commentary, blending scientific knowledge with engaging storytelling.

Cultural Narratives

Integrate cultural and historical narratives into the tour, sharing stories about islands, lighthouses, and local traditions.



Tourists having a once-in-a-lifetime dark sky experience

www.northsailing.is

Marketing and Communication

Emphasise Unique Selling Points

Highlight the uniqueness of the dark sky experience, promoting it as a **once-in-a-lifetime** experience.

Collaborative Marketing

Collaborate with cultural and environmental organizations to amplify the experience's positive impact on society and environment.



Click on the above video by North Sailing Iceland for an example of effective marketing and communication or check them out here - <https://www.northsailing.is/>

Managing Expectations

Transparency

Set realistic expectations by clearly communicating that the sighting of the Northern Lights is not guaranteed.

Flexible Scheduling

If relevant, allow for flexibility in scheduling to align with specific dates chosen by artists or for astronomical events.



By managing expectations, you can make it a positive dark sky experience even if the northern lights are not visible www.northsailing.is

Educational Outreach

Workshops for Other Businesses

Consider organising workshops to share insights and best practices with other tourism businesses interested in dark sky ecotourism.

Community Involvement

Foster a sense of community by involving local businesses and residents in the development and promotion of dark sky tourism.



www.northsailing.is

Continuous Improvement

Gather Feedback

Establish mechanisms for collecting participant feedback to continuously refine and enhance the experience.

Adapt to Technological Advances

Stay updated on technological innovations that can further enhance the dark sky ecotourism experience.



Thank you for reading
Learn more at
www.darkskytourism.eu

