



Ski & Snowboard Mountaineering Course

2012 Course Notes

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Welcome to Adventure Consultants' Ski and Snowboard Mountaineering Course. Our 5 and 7 day courses are designed to provide you with up-to-date techniques and safety skills for skiing in New Zealand's high mountains. It is directed toward fit and motivated people who have a background in resort based skiing or snowboarding and wish to extend their skills into the backcountry.

WE operate the course in one of the following venues; Westland National Park, Mt Cook National Park or Aspiring National Park, depending on where conditions are best. Each has its own huge selection of glaciers, bowls and peaks to explore while learning skills. We will be based from one of the local mountain huts after accessing the glaciers by helicopter or ski plane. This allows us to start skiing the minute we get up each morning.

You will share the experience with other people hungry for knowledge and skills. At the end of the course participants will have the skills to plan and explore backcountry skiing and/or snowboarding terrain almost anywhere in the world.



The skills that you will learn

Following is an outline of skills taught during the course.

- Rope handling skills applicable to Ski Mountaineering
- Crevasse Rescue
- Avalanche Awareness and safe travel
- Route finding
- Ski and Snowboard touring techniques
- Trip planning and navigation
- Search & Rescue techniques

Factors such as weather and snow conditions may at times dictate that not all topics are covered in full.

The way the course operates

We will spend as much time in the mountains as possible actually skiing and riding, whilst developing skills. Initially we will develop and reinforce skills in a contained environment and move onto more challenging terrain during the course if conditions permit.

The emphasis of the course will be on route finding and avalanche awareness techniques and will involve fairly long days where your guides will progressively introduce a wider range of skills and techniques.

Weather plays a major factor in any mountain experience and the New Zealand's Southern Alps get their share. We intend to run the course according to schedule however as we at the whim of the weather we often have to adjust our program accordingly. This in itself is an important lesson for the group in versatility and objective selection based on the present and forecasted conditions.

Course outline

The course begins at **9.00 am** on day one at the Adventure Consultants Office in Wanaka, **but if possible**, please pick up your skis from local rental outlets before this time (ie. 8.00am) if you are renting your ski touring equipment. This will enable us to leave Wanaka ASAP on the Monday morning to get to the mountains. Following the Monday morning introductions, your guide will present the course syllabus outlining how the week will operate.

Equipment pertinent to the course will be discussed and you can get all the advice you need concerning equipment from the guides. We will ensure that you rental equipment fits and final purchases can be made.

We then drive to our chosen destination (between 1-3 hours), load up the helicopter or plane and fly into the mountains. Leaving our gear in the hut, we're off for a ski / board!

Each day, depending on conditions, you will be touring around the glaciers while doing workshops on different aspects of ski and snowboard mountaineering techniques. A few turns are high on the list, as well as a little time to take in your surroundings.

At the end of the course we will make our way to a lower elevation and fly back to our vehicle (weather permitting) with an approximate 5pm finish on the Friday.

Our Guides

Professional and experienced mountain guides run the course. Adventure Consultants have a commitment to ensure the highest standard of instruction and guiding practices and we only employ guides who share in our philosophy. Our guides will offer you the best possible learning experience, and

a safe and enjoyable time. An open and helpful approach is encouraged within the group to help communicate and reinforce the learning process.

Our guides are all NZMGA and / or IFMGA internationally qualified. They have been trained and assessed through the New Zealand Mountain Guides Association, and operate to the high standards and guidelines set out by the association.

The course fee

The course fee is NZ \$1,950 per person for the standard five day course and NZ \$2,450 per person for the longer seven day course.

The price includes; *Guide and permit fees, all trip related meals and energy foods, hut fees, group technical equipment, avalanche rescue equipment, handbook, 'A Climber's Guide to NZ Mountaineering Techniques' by Guy Cotter and Mark Sedon, helicopter/plane access flight and landing fees, 15% NZ Goods and Services Tax.*

The course will run with a minimum number of three people and a maximum of eight. The guiding ratio is 1:4.

Course dates

Dates: Winter / Spring 2012

- SMC 1 August 6 - 10
 - SMC 2 August 20 - 24
 - SMC 3 September 3 - 7
 - SMC 4 September 16 - 22 (7 day course)
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Equipment

Climbing in winter in the New Zealand mountains requires good personal gear due to the potential cold weather conditions. Our focus is on having the essential clothing and equipment, whilst keeping pack weights as light as possible for your comfort and ease of travel.

Upon receipt of your deposit and registration form we will send out a comprehensive equipment list. We carry a good range of modern rental equipment. If you will be renting equipment from us please advise your requirements in advance to ensure correct sizing and availability. If you intend on buying any equipment items, we are happy to advise on recommended brands and models, and of key importance - their suitability to the type of activity. We offer our clients discounted prices on a selection

of climbing equipment and clothing, and can arrange for the equipment to be available upon your arrival.

Your Guide will go through an equipment checklist with you prior to the trip. All group equipment will be organised by your Guide. We have snowshoes available for rent for snowboarders or we can help you rent a split board and climbing skins. For skiers we can help you specialised touring skis, boots and climbing skins.

Weather

Weather is an integral facet of any mountain range and getting to understand and work with this major environmental factor is what will distinguish you from the others. The New Zealand weather can be fierce but also benign. A climber who learns to optimise their opportunities here will have the skills to climb in any other mountain environment on earth.

Our ski mountaineering season runs from August through to December. Our experience with New Zealand weather shows that August has more stable weather conditions, and in October the glaciers are 'nice and full' (less crevasses) with longer days and warmer weather. Daylight hours are approximately 9 in winter. Temperatures will drop to as low as -10° Celsius and could rise too as high as 15° Celsius.

On your course it is probable that some adverse weather may affect our touring plans however we will attempt to anticipate what best moves to make for the positive outcome of the course. If adverse weather affects our access into the high mountains we can utilise the excellent back country skiing terrain accessible around Wanaka with day trips until it improves.

Adventure Consultants reserves the right to cancel, or alter the course at any time if the glaciers are not in condition due to climatic influences, or if the mountain conditions are perceived by Adventure Consultants as being too hazardous. However we will, to the best of our ability, endeavour to find alternative suitable touring venues in order for the course to take place.

Fitness and health

To make the most of your skiing experience we encourage you to work on your fitness and skiing/snowboarding prior to the trip. You need to be a strong intermediate skier or snowboarder to get the most out of the course. Your guide places special focus on fitness levels and will regulate the pace accordingly.

Our registration form requests that you advise us of any medical problems you may have and if you are on any medication. Any information you supply will be treated as confidential.

Food

We place emphasis on providing nutritious meals and a good supply of snack food throughout the trip. If you have any special dietary requirements, please advise us at the time of registration. For special diets such as vegan and gluten/dairy free we will call you to discuss your needs and how this will work in the group cooking situation.

Insurance

We strongly recommend that you take out trip cancellation and travel insurance to protect yourself in case of injury or mishap prior to/ or whilst on our trips.

Whilst our focus is on safety and our track record supports this, the mountains do have hazards and there is always the potential for mishap. If you were injured whilst on the trip the New Zealand Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) will pay rescue costs, however you may not be eligible for bulk compensation payments. You are responsible for any medical or evacuation costs beyond the cover provided by ACC.

Travel to, and from Wanaka

We commence our Ski and Snowboard Mountaineering Course from our base in Wanaka. Air New Zealand and Qantas provide daily services for the 50 minute flight from Christchurch International Airport to Queenstown. There is also a daily flight from Christchurch to Wanaka and direct flights from Australian cities to Queenstown on a limited seasonal basis.

A shuttle service operates 5 times daily between Queenstown and Wanaka (one hour driving time and at a cost of \$30 each way) check www.time2.co.nz for details. Bus services operate daily between Christchurch, and Wanaka (approximately 4-6 hours travel time), also between Dunedin and Wanaka (approximately 3-4 hours travel time).

Wanaka has a range of accommodation from backpackers, youth hostels, motels, and hotels to luxury lodges.

We can help you book your accommodation / airport transfers if required.

Please note: Adventure Consultants will provide food and accommodation while the course is running which is from **9.00am on Day 1 until 5.00pm on Day 5 (Day 7 on the 7 day course)**. All food and accommodation outside this time will be at your expense.

Accommodation during the trip

Adventure Consultants will provide your accommodation while the course is running which is from 9.00am on Day 1 until 5.00pm on the last day of your trip. When in the mountains you will stay in mountain huts with shared bunkrooms and basic facilities. There are no single rooms available and unlike European huts you need to provide your own sleeping bag. Some mountain nights may be spent in tents or bivvies where you will be more exposed to the elements but the final decision on this will be made by the guides after weighing up all the factors.

For overnights in Fox Glacier and Mt Cook villages you will be accommodated in dormitory style Alpine Club huts and in Wanaka in dormitory style backpackers with shared bathroom facilities. You may decide to upgrade to single accommodations in Wanaka at your own expense, should you require.

Course registration and payment

In order to confirm a place on the course, we require a completed Registration Form and a 25% deposit of the trip fee (NZ\$487.50 or NZ\$612.50 for the 7 day course).

You can also use our online registration at:

<http://www.adventureconsultants.com/adventure/BookingForm/>

The balance of payment is then due 60 days prior to the start date.

Payment can be made by a NZ Dollar bank draft or cheque, Visa/MasterCard/Amex or Telegraphic Transfer to our bank account - details on registration form.

Please note: In order to reserve a place on a course we recommend that you book well in advance.

Course cancellation policy:

- Cancellations outside of 60 days incur a NZ\$250 cancellation/admin fee.
 - For cancellations made within 60 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 50% of the full fee.
 - For cancellations made within 30 days of the trip commencement date we reserve the right to retain 75% of the full fee.
 - For cancellations within 15 days of the departure date a cancellation fee of 100% of the full fee applies.
 - We recommend you take out trip cancellation insurance via your travel agent.
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We look forward to welcoming you on to your Ski and Snowboard Mountaineering Course!

Contact us

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Adventure Consultants – is affiliated to the New Zealand Mountain Guides Association (NZMGA), New Zealand Alpine Club (NZAC) and a corporate member of the American Alpine Club (AAC). Adventure Consultants perform to IFMGA/UIAGM standards and are world leaders in high altitude guiding.

