

# **POLAR TRAINING**

## **NEW ZEALAND**

**2018 COURSE NOTES**



**Polar Training Course**  
and  
**Private Polar Training Course**  
**New Zealand**  
**Course Notes**

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The **Polar Training Course** has been designed to introduce you to the skills and techniques you'll need to prepare for a polar expedition. We operate one scheduled Polar Training Course each winter in late July to maximise the 'polar' conditions to be found in the New Zealand mountains at that time. This is a 5-day course that is run in the mountains but also introduces some planning and preparation components.



Initially, on the course, you will learn about the equipment and how to plan and pack for an expedition. Your guides spend as much time as possible with you out in the field on skis, dragging sleds, putting up tents and sleeping in cold environments. You will learn skills such as food preparation, navigation, camp management and even how to go to the toilet in a storm!

This course will provide you with an introduction to the essential polar skills, and a greater confidence in the judgment and decision-making aspects of polar travel. Participants need not have any prior training although confidence on cross-country skis will be a big advantage and we can arrange some days training at this beforehand if you are not yet a skier.

We also offer **Private Polar Training** for individuals or groups that can be run during the New Zealand winter/spring, which is July through to November. You can choose specific dates and durations that suit your own timeframe. Private Polar Training can be tailored to run from 4 or more days depending on your final polar objectives. These courses can target specific skills such as glacier travel and crevasses extraction as well as a more comprehensive syllabus that is popular with teams preparing for longer polar objectives.

While no course can prepare you fully for the real thing, this course based in the New Zealand mountains offers a variety of terrain that enables you to develop the skills you will use in polar environments.

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### Which Course – the Scheduled or the Private?

Our scheduled **Polar Training Course** is designed to introduce you to polar specific techniques and knowledge to get you started as polar travel adventurer. There is a huge amount of information and learning required to operate safely in these environments as conditions can be so harsh that a minor period of inattention can lead to disastrous consequences. Generally, someone coming through our Polar Training Course would use this as preparation for expeditions such as our Greenland Crossing or North or South Pole Last Degree Expeditions.

Should you aspire to partake in self-sufficient polar journeys your level of training would need to be a lot more intensive. In that case, we recommend you partake in a longer duration course that we can custom make to suit your requirements and timeframe. Another option is to complete our scheduled Polar Training Course then complete some **Private Polar Training** as an add-on afterwards.

If you come to us as a group we can schedule a programme to suit your needs. In some cases, this can be done just prior to departure on the expedition so you become completely immersed in the environment with a seamless transition from training to the event itself. No matter what training you receive from us, we strongly advise a progression towards the longer duration and more serious expeditions through a progression of ever more difficult trips. Following your training with us, we'd suggest you move on to a trip like our Greenland Crossing or Last Degree Expeditions so you can put your skills into practice under the supervision of an expert who can help you further develop your skills by having you partake in some of the leadership of the expedition.

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### Course Objective

Our objective is to pass on the skills to enable you to partake in a polar expedition.

- Good planning and preparation skills

- Basic mountain/polar awareness
  - Sound judgement of your own ability
  - Good decision making
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### **Skills Covered**

We endeavour to cover the following skills during the course, however, factors such as weather and conditions may dictate that some skills are not covered in full.

- Planning and preparation
- Equipment requirements
- Route finding and navigation
- Navigating crevassed terrain
- First aid and health management
- Erecting tents and snow walls
- Camp management
- Glacier travel and self-rescue skills
- Weather analysis

Note: Participants on Private Polar Training may decide to focus primarily on one or two aspects of training so you can increase your skill set in that area.

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### **How the Course Operates**

We start the course by introducing the basics of polar clothing and equipment, what each item is, how it functions and what to do when it wears out or breaks! Being a good fix-it person really helps when you are thousands of kilometres from the closest store! You will learn what foods to take and how to pack your sled. We spend the remainder of the day learning skills such as navigation, use of stoves, tents, sleeping systems and you'll get many other vital pieces of advice that you will need in your quiver of knowledge such as how to avoid frostbite and how to deal with it if you come across it. You'll have the night free staying at accommodation in Wanaka to take it all in and prepare yourself for the upcoming days ahead.

The next morning we're off to the snow to get the skis on and begin a journey into the wilderness. You'll travel to a good location to set up camp for the night. It takes some time to get to know how best to establish camp and get ready for the night ahead. Factors such as wind direction and strength need to be considered and it's very important to manage your equipment well. Leaving something on the ground will likely lead to it being lost when it gets covered in snow overnight!

Each day your journey will take you to a new location where you will need to become proficient at setting camp and being totally dialled with your gear. Along the way, as you travel you will be consolidating skills such as the all-crucial navigation while you crank out the miles dragging your sled behind you.

On the final day of the course, you will return to base and, after sorting out the gear, have a good debrief and discussion about where to go from here and develop a training program to help get you ready for your upcoming Polar Journey!

The curriculum for Private Polar Training may include the above and move on to focus in greater detail on the skills required for independent polar travel.

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### **Level of Skiing Required**

The skiing component of polar travel is not very technical. The skis are used to slide along the snow and to stop you 'breaking through' the snow surface. It is a much faster mode of travel than going on foot. Having stated that, it is important that you have good balance on your skis and are very familiar with the motion of skiing. Injuries could occur to those not familiar with skiing and any self-respecting polar traveller will make a point of learning the skill (Robert Falcon Scott decided against using skis on his journey to the South Pole with disastrous consequences!).

If you are not already a skier we suggest you come to Wanaka early to spend some time developing the skills and we can help arrange tuition.

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### **Course Venue**

We operate the scheduled Polar Training Course in the Pisa Mountain Range or the Old Man Mountain Range close to our base here in Wanaka, New Zealand, during the months of July and August. Please be aware that factors such as weather and snow conditions can affect the venue and time we spend in the mountains. The course will commence and finish at our Wanaka office.

On our Private Polar Training, we can programme a course similar to our scheduled one that would still operate either in the Pisa or Old Man ranges. Alternatively, in the higher glaciated mountain regions, we can specifically focus on glacier travel and crevasse rescue techniques along with operating in the later months of spring – Sept/Oct/Nov. On this Tasman Glacier option, we can undertake journeys through the high alpine glaciers in the Aoraki Mount Cook region for the most dramatic environmental conditions using helicopters or ski planes to give us quick access to the snow line. These journeys will require the additional use of ice axe and crampons on the steeper slopes that you will encounter along the way. Full training will be given in these techniques as well as rope work specific to this type of terrain.

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### **Our Guides**

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

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### **Communications and Messages**

Our guides are in radio/cell phone/satellite phone communication with our operations base throughout the trip. This assists us with schedule and weather forecast updates and safety back up. Urgent messages can be relayed via our office to the field if required. Each party carries a locator beacon for additional security.

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### **Polar Training Season**

We operate the scheduled Polar Training Course in July/August each year and we can run Private Polar Training from July through November. The temperatures are coldest in July and early August making conditions more akin to polar travel although cold temperatures are still possible through October and November in the high mountain regions.

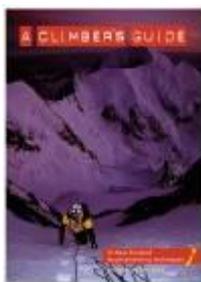
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### **Weather**

New Zealand has a maritime climate, and the weather is always a consideration in the high mountains. You can expect temperatures in July and early August to be as cold as -15C or as high as + 10 degrees

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### **Guide Books and Maps**



Included in your Polar Training Course fee is a complimentary copy of 'A Climbers Guide to New Zealand Mountaineering Techniques'. Written by Adventure Consultants guides Guy Cotter, Dean Staples and Mark Sedon, the 'ACG' was published specifically as reference material which you will find useful before, during, and long after your course has finished. Whilst the Climbers Guide does not focus on polar travel techniques there are plenty of useful sections for alpine environments that are applicable to polar travel.

It is useful to have your own map for navigation exercises. Your guide will advise you of the relevant 1:50,000 topographic maps required when the course begins. The training area for your PTC will generally only be decided just prior to course commencement date to ensure the most favourable area is utilised. The above books and maps can be purchased from our office in Wanaka.

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## **Equipment**

We will send you a complete equipment list and you can bring what you already own or make use of our equipment rental facility. Full information will be sent to you after we receive your booking.

Your guide will go through an equipment checklist with you at the beginning of your trip. Actual equipment taken may vary subject to seasonal weather and route conditions. All group equipment including sleds and harnesses, camping gear, navigation equipment and cooking equipment will be provided by Adventure Consultants while you will be required to bring or rent the rest of the gear needed.

We can offer secure storage at our office for your luggage and valuables during the trip.

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## **Ground and Air Transport**

Return ground transport from Wanaka to the course venue is included in the cost of the Polar Training Course and the Pisa Rang Private Polar Training Course option.

When we travel to the high glacier regions on the Tasman Glacier Private Polar Training Course we utilise aircraft access onto the glaciers to start the trip. This alleviates long and tiring walks into the alpine region with heavy packs. It allows you to start the course fresh, gain more valuable instructional time and take advantage of fine weather periods. For this reason, we utilise helicopters or ski planes depending on availability and the region we operate in.

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## **Fitness and Health**

To make the most of your training experience we encourage you to work on your fitness prior to the trip. If you can, prepare yourself by cross-country skiing or ski touring prior to the course. If this is not possible you could consider coming to Wanaka early to spend some time developing the skills.

You will find that training with a 20 kg + pack on is good preparation for the mountains, with the aim of getting 'pack fit' and building your endurance. 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.

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## **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.

## **Insurance**

We strongly recommend that you take out trip cancellation and travel insurance to protect yourself in the case of injury or mishap prior to/or while 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 Commission (ACC) will pay rescue costs upon review of the circumstances and authorisation by the Police. This service may not apply to evacuation costs for medical conditions. You may not be eligible for bulk compensation payments from ACC, and you are responsible for any medical or evacuation costs beyond the cover provided by ACC.

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## **Travel and Accommodation**

We commence the course from our base in Wanaka. Air New Zealand and Qantas/Jetstar provide daily services for flights from Christchurch, Auckland and Wellington to Queenstown. There are also direct international flights from most major Australian cities to Queenstown.

A shuttle service operates several times daily between Queenstown and Wanaka (approximately one hour driving time and at a cost of \$35 each way), check <http://www.alpineconnexions.co.nz> for details.

Bus services operate daily between Christchurch and Wanaka (approximately 6 hours travel time).

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

We are happy to assist with your accommodation and bus transfer arrangements.

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## **Accommodation during the Course**

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 course. All food and accommodation outside this time will be at your expense. When in the mountains you will stay in tents with limited facilities where you will be exposed to the elements.

For overnights in Wanaka, you will be accommodated 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.

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## How to Find Us

Our office is situated in the Wanaka town centre at 20 Brownston Street.

**The course begins at 9.00 am on Day 1 at our office at 20 Brownston Street, Wanaka.** You will need to arrive in town the night prior to the course commencing. Please give us a call to confirm your arrival in town.

You will find some of New Zealand's best ski resorts in the Wanaka region from as close as a 30-minute drive from our office. Two ski resorts and a cross country area provide plentiful winter activity and all year-round fishing, boating and numerous other recreational activities abound.

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## Polar Training Course Fee

**Course Dates: July 23 – 27, 2018**

**The cost per person is: NZ\$2,250**

*All prices are in NZ Dollars. The price includes; Guide and permit fees, all trip-related meals (except dinner day 1) and energy foods, group equipment such as, tents and stoves, sleds and harnesses, ground transport ex Wanaka, course manual (A Climber's Guide to NZ Mountaineering Techniques, by Guy Cotter, Dean Staples and Mark Sedon) Department of Conservation fees (Concessions OT-29503-GUI & CA-22930-GUI), NZ Goods and Services Tax (15%)*

- We strongly suggest you purchase trip cancellation insurance from your normal travel agent.
  - All prices are subject to change without notice.
  - Minimum numbers apply to all scheduled instruction courses.
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## Private Polar Training Course Fee

**The cost per person is:**

Pisa Range 4 day Private Polar Training Course NZ\$2,980

Tasman Glacier 4 day Private Polar Training Course NZ\$5,500

*All prices are in NZ Dollars. The price includes; Guide Fees and hut accommodation fees, all meals and snack foods whilst on the trip (except dinner day 1), group equipment such as ropes, tents and stoves, ground transport ex Wanaka, course manual (A Climber's Guide to NZ Mountaineering Techniques, by Guy Cotter, Dean Staples and Mark Sedon) Department of Conservation fees (37125-GUI), NZ Goods and Services Tax (15%) and the Tasman Glacier Option includes aircraft access and egress.*

- We strongly suggest you purchase trip cancellation insurance from your normal travel agent.
  - All prices are subject to change without notice.
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### Course Registration and Payment

In order to confirm a guide and your course, we require a completed Registration Form and a deposit of NZ\$1,000. The balance of payment is then due 60 days prior to the start date.

Please complete the online registration form from our website at:

<https://www.adventureconsultants.com/climbing-schools/climbing-school-new-zealand/polar-training-course/book-now>

All payments should be made by bank transfer to the following bank and account:

Bank: **Bank of New Zealand**  
For the account of: **Adventure Consultants Limited**  
Account number: **02 0673 0043443 00**  
Account Type: **NZ Dollars**

We can also accept your deposit and balance payment by credit card (Visa, Mastercard, Amex) plus a 3% credit card fee.

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

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### Course Cancellation Policy

1. Up to 60 days prior to the departure date a NZ \$500 fee applies.
  2. Inside 60 days of the departure date, we reserve the right to retain 50% of the full fee.
  3. Inside 30 days of the departure date, we reserve the right to retain 75% of the full fee.
  4. Inside 15 days of the departure date forfeit 100% of the full fee.
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**We look forward to welcoming you onto your Polar Training Course or Private Polar Training with Adventure Consultants.**

Contact us:

**Adventure Consultants Ltd**  
PO Box 739  
20 Brownston St  
Lake Wanaka 9343  
New Zealand



<https://www.adventureconsultants.com/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.*

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