

## Cairngorm Mountain Bike Expedition

### Is It For Me?

If you are the kind of person who enjoys getting away from it all this course may be right up your street. It is an expedition no frills style course that relies on self sufficiency. You will be towing your own luggage on bike trailers for up to 6-8 hours per day over varied terrain for five days in a row. The longer days can be up to 60km.

However, the idea is enjoyment and a holiday atmosphere rather than a slog or a race. Due to the nature of the terrain you will be required to push your bike over some short sections.

### Aim

The aim of the course is to travel off road, on mountain bikes, circumnavigating one of the most beautiful and remote national parks in the UK, The Cairngorms.

The intention is to wild camp but there may also be the need to camp on designated camp grounds as well, depending on the weather.

We will be carrying all our own equipment including tents, camping kit, food and stoves so that we can set up camp where we think would be best at the time. The likely places we will stay near are Kingussie, Blair Atholl, Braemar, Tomintoul and Glenmore Lodge.

The first and last days will be shorter so that there is time to sort out equipment and bikes before we leave and on our return.

### Course Content

There will be a maximum of eight people on the expedition with a 1:4 instructor to student ratio. Your guides for the expedition are all fully qualified Mountain Instructors and SMBLA Mountain Bike Tutors.

Opportunities for learning will include **cycle skills**, involving towing single wheeled Bob trailers over rough ground; **expedition planning**, involving load carrying, equipment choice, weather forecasts, menu planning and safety back up; **navigation**, involving the use of bicycle computers and GPS as well as map and compass; **bike mechanics**, including Safe bike set up, gear and brake adjustments and wheel truing; **camp craft**, involving tent pitching, cooking and personal organisation in a wild environment.

You will also have time to take in some of the most beautiful and wild scenery in Scotland.

## What Will I Need?

### Mountain Biking kit list for Expedition Riding

Please have below items before attending the course

Check List To Do	Need Done	Have
Bike Bike computer Head Torch Rear light (flashing LED is fine) Helmet & Eye wear Thin woolly hat or buff for under helmet Gloves (cycle) Spare gloves (thick) Bike or thermal top Thin fleece Thick fleece or jacket Cycle shorts Full leg covering (cycle tights, leggings) Water proof jacket & trousers Cycle shoes, trainers or boots Spare light weight sandals/trainers Socks plus spares Small personal first aid kit Maps (sheet 36, 37,42 & 43 1:50 000) compass Map case Drink system Spare inner tube Tyre levers Multi tool Pump Power bars or spare personal food (if required) Sun cream Midge cream Small rucksack (approx 25 to 35 litres) Camera plus waterproof case Sheet sleeping bag liner (preferably silk) Sleeping bag Thermo rest of carry mat Stove, pots pans etc Tent		

## **Useful Books**

### **Mastering Mountain Bike Skills by Brian Lopes and Lee McCormack**

Detailed technical instruction for cross-country, downhill, mountain cross, free riding, dirt jumping, and urban terrain from top pro mountain biker Brian Lopes.

### **Bike Scotland Trails Guide: 40 of the Best Mountain Bike Routes in Scotland by Richard Moore & Andy McCandlish**

A dedicated guide to the very best trails in the UK - a must-have for riding north of the border.

### **Scotland Mountain Biking: The Wild Trails by Phil McKane**

This book showcases 25 routes in Scotland, between 6 km and 290 km in length, suitable for all levels of mountain bikers. Scotland has been named a 'Global Superstar' by the International Mountain Biking Association (IMBA) on a number of occasions, and the variety of terrain, the locations and the jaw-dropping scenery mean it is an incredible place to ride a mountain bike.

### **SMBLA Manual by Scottish Mountain Bike Leader Association**

Manual from the SMBLA. Essential for all TCL's and MBL's.

### **Trail Riding Tips & Techniques by Emma Guy & Tracy Brunger**

This volume contains everything you need to know from the nuts and bolts of pre-ride checks and trailside repairs to perfecting weight shift, effective gearing and cone of movement, then moving up a gear to climbing, downhill, jumps, rolls and cornering.