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Chamonix – Introductory Off Piste & Ski Mountaineering

Course Starts: 1800hrs on Sunday 19th February 2012
Course Closes: 1700hrs on Friday 24th February
Departure Saturday 25th Feb

Is It For Me?

As the ski resorts become busier, more and more people look toward the ungrooved slopes beyond the patrolled ski areas. The joys of skiing in this big new environment are huge, and we intend to explore the possibilities.

From a hotel base in the Chamonix valley we will alternate off-piste days with day tours. Due to the scale of the stunning high mountain scenery in this area this course will be more of a guided experience than our Silvretta week. Therefore a good level of hill and ski fitness is necessary to make a day out touring with a rucksack a pleasure.

You should be able to ski steep red / black runs on piste using linked parallel turns, and generally be confident on steep terrain.

Aim

Where reasonable we will offer coaching and education chosen from the following areas:

- sourcing pre skiing information (weather forecasts, avalanche forecasts, route selection and planning)
- practicing evaluating the snow pack (visual observations, digging into the snow pack for more information, making shear tests)
- search techniques (use of transceivers, simple probing)
- skiing technique (hard snow, powder snow, crud)
- route selection (map work, ground navigation, skinning technique and routes)
- Glacial travel including; crevasse rescue and skiing roped
- Alpine navigation – the use of altimeters and GPS
- The rudiments of planning a tour

The Programme

We will offer an interesting and varied course although the exact itinerary will be dependent upon a number of factors: the fitness and skill level of the group, the weather, snow conditions, avalanche hazard etc.

For the 5 days that we plan to be skiing, we will utilise the variety of ski areas within the valley. We will have to take each day as it comes, deciding very often, where it is best to go at breakfast time.

What we need is a good level of preparation and a bit of luck with the weather and snow conditions.

Pre-Tour Preparation

Your plan is to get a fit as possible. The fitter you are, the more you will enjoy the course.





If you're more of a skier: Some of the days are quite long, so stamina would be a good asset. Perhaps try and get out into the mountains carrying a rucksack with a 10/15kg load in it. Doing some work in the gym or aerobics will certainly help, and hilly cycling is also very good.

If you're more of a mountaineer: Make sure you get some ski lessons at your local ski slope to freshen up your technique. It's useful to have a range of different types of turns you can use to suit the varying snow conditions encountered off piste. These can range from deep powder ... to windslab ... to perfect spring snow ... to ice !

If you're a bit of both: Do a bit of everything.

Remember: To enjoy the course fully, when you arrive, you should have a good level of fitness and stamina and be a good parallel skier; completely at home on red runs, and have on occasion ventured onto some black runs.

Equipment

If you could please complete the attached equipment request form and return to Glenmore Lodge as soon as possible. If you have your own equipment and would like to use it for the course that is fine, please indicate on the attached list.

We will certainly do our best to accommodate your requirements with equipment. It is possible to hire equipment in our valley base if you prefer, but this would be an additional expense to yourself.

We work very closely on equipment with our sponsors at Mountain Spirit. They are a retail outlet offering good advice, sales and hire on a range of backcountry equipment.

<http://www.mountainspirit.biz> 01479 811788

Personal Equipment List

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ski Trousers/Salopettes • Waterproof Shell Jacket • Waterproof Overtrousers • Ski Gloves and Spare gloves/Mitts • Fleece Jacket • Spare lightweight fleece • Thermal Underwear • Ski hat • Sun hat • Ski socks and spare pair • Sunglasses with high UV protection • Goggles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 litre water bottle/Camelback system • Thermos flask • High Factor Suncream essential • Glacier Cream for lips • Passport • Insurance Cover (see important detail below) • Spending Money
<p>Additional Items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Camera - lightweight compact? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reading material. <p>Maps can be bought in resort</p>	





Use of Helmets on Glenmore Lodge Ski Courses

Whilst it is clear that the use of ski helmets does reduce injury in the event of certain accidents, it is not our policy to demand their routine use on our courses. Our courses cover a broad range of skiing activities: piste; off-piste; touring and mountaineering. Within each branch of these sports the current norm for helmet use varies and therefore we would generally leave this decision up to the individual client. Where we feel it appropriate, such as on steep ski clinics, helmets may be mandatory, in which case we will provide them.

Currently on our touring courses, the majority do not wear ski helmets, however some folk choose to. There is a trend towards more people wearing helmets for snowsports, and they are available to hire or buy in all of the valley bases we use.

More detailed information is available from:

[http://www.eurosafe.eu.com/csi/eurosafe2006.nsf/wwwAssets/C5674B101FF45387C12576E4003C2E1E/\\$file/Policy%20briefing%2010%20Snow%20sports%20helmets.pdf](http://www.eurosafe.eu.com/csi/eurosafe2006.nsf/wwwAssets/C5674B101FF45387C12576E4003C2E1E/$file/Policy%20briefing%2010%20Snow%20sports%20helmets.pdf)

Insurance

You must have appropriate medical and rescue insurance for the duration of the course. Please **bring the certificate of cover with you.**

Your insurance will require you to have a European Health Insurance Card. This is free and easy to get online. You can apply for an EHIC, free of charge by :

- Clicking on the link <https://www.ehic.org.uk/Internet/home.do>
- Calling 0845 606 2030; or
- Picking up an application form from the Post Office.

There are many sources of insurance these days. As we are involved in a mountaineering activity at times on glaciers, it would seem reasonable to contact, initially, organisations such as the British Mountaineering Council or Alpine Clubs, and compare the types of cover and costs offered.

- BMC, 171-179 Burton Road, Manchester, M20 2BB. Tel 0161 445 4747
- Austrian Alpine Club, PO Box 43, Welwyn Garden City, Herts. AL8 6PT. Tel: 01707 324835 (this also gives you reciprocal rights)

Arrival/Departure Information

Please could you aim to meet at 1800hrs on Sunday at the accommodation for a course introduction and the issue of any equipment requested. Accommodation Confirmed as:

Hotel de la Couronne,
285, Rue Charlet-Stratton
774400 Argentiere

Tel 0033 450540002

Web: <http://www.hotelcouronne.com/>
hotelcouronne@wanadoo.fr

The course officially ends at 1700hrs on the Friday evening; however you are booked into the hotels this evening.

If you wish to book additional nights before or after the course please book with the hotel directly.



Marmot



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Food

The course is inclusive of Breakfast. Lunch and snacks can be purchased from nearby shops in Argentiere. You might want to budget for buying a hot meal or at least a hot drink from the restaurants up on the ski fields.

Dinner is not included in the course fee, this allows us to go to a variety of restaurants throughout the week, and allows everyone a greater selection from the menus. Usually we will go all together for dinner, but if you have friends in the valley or just need a bit of space, going for dinner elsewhere is great.

Cost Includes

- Valley accommodation: Bed and Breakfast
- Instruction/Guiding
- Equipment borrowed from Glenmore Lodge
- In course valley transport

This **does not** include:

- Ski mountaineering insurance (see important detail above)
- Dinner / Lunches / Snacks
- Additional social expenses
- Lift passes
- Additional accommodation out with course dates

Transport

PLEASE NOTE: We would advise you not to book any travel until your course is confirmed. As with all of our courses we need a minimum group number to make your course economically viable.

If you have any doubts please ring the Lodge.

Flying: Fly to Geneva, Chambéry and Lyon airport all offer either bus, train or a minibus taxi transfers to Chamonix/Argentiere.

- For airport transfer consider <http://www.a-t-s.net>

Car: You could arrange to share transport with other course members who are interested in car sharing, please contact Glenmore Lodge.

Bus: from London to Chamonix and then by bus, train or taxi to Argentiere.

If you still have any questions, please give, Ian Sherrington, or Nigel Williams a call at the Lodge.

If you have a problem during your journey, you could let us know of any changes to your arrival by ringing the Lodge - +44 (0)1479 861 256. or Ian's mobile – 00 44 7 919 595 412

Yours sincerely

Ian Sherrington, IFMGA Guide
Chief Instructor, Glenmore Lodge



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PLEASE COMPLETE + RETURN THIS FORM TO US A.S.A.P - EVEN IF YOU DON'T REQUIRE ANY EQUIPMENT FROM US

EQUIPMENT Request Form			
Name:		Intro Ski Mountaineering Chamonix Date:	
Height:	Weight:	Shoe Size:	
PLEASE INDICATE WHICH ITEMS YOU WOULD LIKE US TO PROVIDE			
Item	Size	Pls Tick if rq'd	Pls Tick if bringing own
Ski Mountaineering Skis; with skins and harschiesen	Length:		
Ski Mountaineering Boots	Size:		
Rucksack	30-40L		
Ice Axe (lightweight)	45/50cm		
Crampons with anti-balling plates (to fit your ski mountaineering boots)			
Harness with adjustable leg loops	Waist size:		
Ski Poles	Length:		
Avalanche Transceiver 457 KHZ			
Snow Shovel			
Probe 2.5m			
Head Torch (Battery not supplied)			

