

## MOUNTAIN SKILLS AND NAVIGATION

### 5 days, 6 nights

You plan to go out in the mountains today. What will the weather be like on the hill? How strenuous will it be? How long will the route take? How do I navigate safely? What hazards will I need to avoid? What do I need to take with me? The skills covered in this comprehensive course provide the answers to these questions & a whole lot more.

The variety of terrain found in the Cairngorm Mountains provides an ideal practice ground, from the low level feature packed moorland to the test piece high plateau.

This fun course is delivered in a well-structured and progressive manner and through developing the right tactical approach to navigation you quickly become proficient. It provides adequate time to firmly cement a high level of proficiency so that you can make objective and accurate judgements. You will finish the course feeling confident to tackle summer hill walking anywhere in Britain.



## STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

The course consists of 5 practical days on the hill. The instruction during the day is complemented by informal discussion in the evening both on and off the subject and benefits of the day.

As your confidence and proficiency build we move onto more demanding terrain and more specialised techniques. Towards the end of the week we will then be putting it all into practise with the planned ascents of Britain's second highest peak: Ben Macdui.

## COURSE CONTENT

### Day 1:

- Suitable gear & navigation gear.

- Different map scales - pro & cons
- Map reading - extracting all the info.
- Feature & gradient recognition
- Setting the map by the landmarks & features
- Timings & pacings - estimating distance

### Day 2:

- Contour & slope interpretation
- Compass bearings
- Determining aspect of slope
- Collection features
- GPS - its appropriate use and relevance in modern Mountain Navigation\*

### Day 3:

- Distance estimation in mountain terrain
- Setting the map by the compass
- bringing it all together: ascertaining one's position and route by the 5 elements of mountain terrain: aspect of slope, distance, direction, features and gradient.
- Tactical navigation techniques incl., attack points, aiming off...

### Day 4:

- Route planning - weather considerations, size & ability of group, escape routes, etc
- Navigation around hazards: boxing, dog-legging.
- Grid references - common mistakes

### Day 5:

- Planning your own route
- Opportunity for shadowed leading.
- Search techniques

\* Clients should provide all their own personal gear. (GPS receivers are not necessary for the course). Please contact us for details.

**2009 Dates:** Arrive 10th April; arrive 10th July

**Price:** £529 (5 days, 6 nights)

all inclusive of:

accommodation Fri & Sat nights at Fraoch Lodge, Boat of Garten; full board; transport between Fraoch Lodge and the mountains if required; transfers between Aviemore Station/Inverness Airport if required



We advise guests to arrive at Fraoch Lodge between 7 - 9 pm if possible.

Additional accommodation may also be available to you - D,B & B at our reduced rate of £30 per person.

Mountain Innovations advises all clients to take out suitable insurance cover. For clients resident in the UK we can offer insurance cover against personal accident, cancellation and lost/stolen baggage. Please phone 01479 831 331 for full details.

\* Mountain Innovations Ltd will pick up from Inverness airport at approx. 5pm, unless otherwise arranged.

## FITNESS & EXPERIENCE INFORMATION

No previous experience is required other than a good level of fitness to cope with 5 days in the mountains.

It's important for your own and the rest of the group's enjoyment, that you choose the right course for your ability. If you are in any doubt to the suitability of a particular course please don't hesitate to give Andrew a ring on 01479 831 331 so we can better advise you.

## ABOUT US

Established in 1998, we're an owner-run provider of guided walking holidays and mountain courses in the Highlands of Scotland. We firmly believe 'the day' doesn't finish with the walk; we don't hand you over to someone else, you arrive back to 'Cake O'Clock' - a welcoming mug of tea and some of Rebecca's home baking.

Andrew's knowledge of the mountain environment is extensive. Having a background in geology and being interested in natural history and conservation from an early age, he's a mine of information. The fine food and relaxed atmosphere mean

that access to some of the wildest places in Britain is a safe, fun and exhilarating experience.

We are always on hand to ensure your stay exceeds expectations and are very proud of all the great testimonials we receive. Come and enjoy an adventure with us.

### YOUR HOSTS

Both Andrew and Rebecca have travelled widely. Andrew's mountaineering experience of 15 years is complemented by a number of independent expeditions to such places as the Karakoram mountains of Pakistan, the Indian Himalaya, the Alps, Mount Kenya and the High Atlas of Morocco.

Rebecca has trekked extensively in New Zealand and Australia. She has worked in Taiwan and travelled throughout Asia. She brings her knowledge of global cuisines to the preparation of her highly regarded and creative menus.

### FRAOCH LODGE - YOUR ACCOMMODATION

Our Highland base is Fraoch Lodge. The Lodge provides a very comfortable dining room with wood burning stove & a separate lounge with open fire.

Single guests generally share a twin room with a member of the same sex. If you would prefer single occupancy of a room please enquire for availability (surcharge may apply).

Full details of Fraoch Lodge are available from our web site at [www.scotmountain.co.uk](http://www.scotmountain.co.uk)

### CATERING

Rebecca's meals have been described as 'blue-ribboned events'. Bread is baked daily and all dishes are home-prepared using as much of our organic, home-grown ingredients as possible. There are a variety of options for breakfast. Packed lunches are imaginative but practical. There are home made cakes on our return and the evening meal consists of 2 courses, with the option for seconds, followed by tea or coffee.

We operate a BYO policy for dinner.

### RECOMMENDED KIT LIST

- Windproof/Waterproof jacket with hood
- Windproof/Waterproof trousers



- Gaiters (optional)
- Proper Walking boots (walking shoes & sneakers/approach shoes are not appropriate) Please bear in mind that at times, you may have to cross soft boggy ground or streams, so it's therefore essential that your footwear comes high enough up the ankle if you are to avoid wet feet. Walking boots also help to support the ankle on rough terrain. If you are planning to purchase walking boots we would recommend you go to a retailer whose staff have specifically been trained to fit outdoor footwear.
- Walking socks
- Walking poles (optional)
- Ruck Sack (30 litre plus capacity if on residential holiday or course)
- Warm clothing - (e.g. fleece or 2 x thin wool jumpers)
- Warm Hat - bring one you may well need it
- Gloves - bring a pair you may well need them if you are climbing mountains
- Walking Trousers (not jeans)
- Sun block
- Sun glasses (optional)
- Water bottle/flask
- Towel
- Digital stop watch (if on navigation course)
- Slippers/indoor shoes
- Outdoor shoes for bus, etc
- Thermal underwear top or warm shirt (preferably not cotton)
- Shorts and T-shirt (optional)
- Compass: Silva Expedition 4 preferred using degrees & not military mills, etc
- Map: O.S. 1:50000 preferred (Sheet 36: Grantown & the Cairngorms) - required if on course
- Waterproof map case Ortleib A5 document wallet preferred though does tend to restrict use to 1:50 000 scale. If you would like further advice please phone.

Clients are advised to avoid wearing

clothing made out of 100% cotton for mountaineering since cotton loses a lot of its thermal potential when wet. It is far more versatile to opt for a number of thin layers, as opposed to a couple of thick layers with regards to warm clothing.

If you have any doubts on the suitability of your kit please don't hesitate to contact us:

01479 831 331.

### OUR RESPONSIBLE POLICY

On all our holidays we have a 'leave nothing, take only photographs' policy. Our guides are asked to explain and encourage this policy. For example, leaving an apple core or feeding a seagull on a mountain summit may seem innocuous but it detracts from the 'untouched wilderness' aspect and can have a detrimental knock-on effect on the indigenous wildlife. Our guides are there your safety & enjoyment & to informally share their knowledge of the mountain environment - from its geological beginnings through to contemporary land management and its associated politics.

We compost our waste in 3 large compost heaps built from scrap wood and use this to fertilise the garden, especially our vegetable patch. We are in the process of reorganising our plot with the help of volunteers on the WWOOF scheme, so we can supply more fruit and vegetables from the garden.

The lodge is mainly heated by radiators fed from a biomass boiler fueled by Scottish wood pellets.

**We have been awarded Gold in the Green Tourism Business Award Scheme.**

### TRAVEL TO THE HIGHLANDS

If you are intending to fly you can find all options on the Inverness airport web site at [www.hial.co.uk](http://www.hial.co.uk)

Alternatively you could take the train to Aviemore. Direct services run from London with GNER & Scotrail (the sleeper).

