

WINTER SKILLS WEEKEND

2 days, 2 nights

The unique challenges and unrivalled rewards of the winter mountains require you to know a whole host of skills including the correct use of crampons and ice axe, avalanche evaluation, etc.

If you:

- wish to extend your hillwalking into the winter season
 - plan to make regularly weekend trips into the winter mountains this season
 - have a good grasp of navigational skills already*
 - & want to learn the correct techniques and skills for safe movement across snow & ice covered terrain
- then this is maybe the winter skills course for you.



The course takes place in the Cairngorm Mountains - universally recognised as providing Britains most consistent winter conditions. Through our experience of instructing in this environment Mountain Innovations have developed a clear, concise and structured approach. Our courses are delivered in a fun and progressive manner providing you with a clear understanding of all the necessary skills.

*** If your navigation skills need a boost to deal with winter white-outs, you can combine this course with our weekend Advanced Winter Navigation course. It concentrates on the vital skills to confidently navigate should you find yourself in the worst of winter mountain weather - an essential winter skill.**

STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

The course takes the form of 2 practical days and begins with an

introduction to suitable equipment and moves through the various skills required for secure and efficient movement over steep, snow covered terrain. This is followed by the various techniques that are required in the event of a loss of footing or a sliding fall.

COURSE CONTENT

Boots, ice axes and crampons:

- *Suitable boots*
- *Suitable length, design and carrying of the axe*
- *Various types of crampons, their uses and boot attachment systems*

Basic avalanche assessment:

- *Snow pit analysis*
- *Appreciation of the conditions under which windslab forms and its recognition*
- *Avalanche triggers, precautions and emergency procedures*

Skills:

- *Good foot placement and step kicking*
- *Step cutting on various types of snow and ice*
- *Use of crampons and various techniques appropriate to the terrain*
- *Self belay and self arrest techniques*

2011 Dates: 28 - 30 Jan; 11 - 13 Feb; 25 - 27 Feb

Price: £216 (2 days, 2 nights)

all inclusive of:

accommodation Fri & Sat nights at Fraoch Lodge, Boat of Garten; full board (from Sat breakfast to Sun packed lunch); 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.

If you would like to join us for dinner on Friday night please enquire (2 course evening meal - £12). Additional accommodation may also be available to you for the Sunday night - D,B & B at reduced rate of £31 per person.

Mountain Innovations advises all clients to take out suitable insurance cover - particularly to cover transport, cancellation & personal accident as we can not be held liable for circumstances



beyond our control.

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

FITNESS & EXPERIENCE INFORMATION

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

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

- Waterproof jacket (+ old one if you have it for self-arrest) - a duvet jacket is no substitute.
- Waterproof trousers/salopettes
- Gaiters - large enough to go over winter boots - essential to prevent snow getting into the top of your boot
- Winter boots* (preferably B2 or B3) which are compatible with crampon use
- Torch (preferably head torch style)
- Crampons*
- Ice axe* preferably approx 55cm
- Walking Poles (optional)
- 30 Litres plus Ruck sack - i.e. one that is of adequate size to contain ALL YOUR GEAR WITHIN,



not on the outside.)

- Fleece jacket/tops
 - Warm Hat & spare
 - Warm Gloves & spare
 - Warm trousers (not jeans and not made of cotton, preferably fleece or salopettes)
 - Walking socks
 - Sun block (optional)
 - Ski goggles - double lens, anti-fog (essential - sun glasses aren't adequate). For those who normally wear glasses you may want to consider contact lenses. Anticipate wearing contact lenses for 8hrs plus alternatively you might want to spray your glasses with de-mister.
 - Water bottle/flask preferable (Hydration bladder hoses readily freeze - fill with warm drink & empty hose after each drink)
 - Thermal underwear
 - Towel
 - Slippers/indoor shoes
 - Outdoor shoes for bus, etc
 - Helmet - if you have one for self-arrest
- * These items can be hired. Please call to check for hire rates.

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 all biodegradable 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

Alternatively you could take the train to Aviemore. Direct services run from London with GNER & Scotrail (the sleeper). **For clients travelling exclusively by public transport, Mountain Innovations offers a green travel discount of £15 per person booked on the course.**

