

Performance Winter Climbing Week

This is a special week for dedicated winter climbers looking to push their grade to the next level. The emphasis is on climbing high-quality ice and mixed routes, with some coaching in steep ice and technical mixed climbing techniques. 1:1 guiding gives complete flexibility to select appropriately challenging routes, and make the most of prevailing conditions.

Location

Our preferred venue is Fort William on the West coast of Scotland, with an amazing variety of climbing within 30 mins drive, and some of the most reliable venues in Scotland including Glencoe, Ben Nevis and Aonach Mor.

Sometimes the climbing conditions are better on the East side of Scotland, in which case we will focus on the Cairngorms and the granite mixed climbing of the Northern Corries and Loch Avon Basin. This can be done in a day trip from Fort William, or by basing in Aviemore instead of Fort William. Likewise, if you prefer exploring the Northwest for part of the week then we're happy to oblige, so please contact us to discuss travel and accommodation arrangements.

Available on dates of your choice throughout the season.

Sample Itinerary

This is entirely subject to weather and conditions, but examples of venues and routes include:

Day 0 Fri	Friday evening - meet in Fort William for course briefing and weather check.
Days 1-5 Sat- Wed	<p>Ascent of classic ice/mixed routes, depending on your objectives and conditions – up to grade VI or above.</p> <p>Classic Routes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Slab Route VI, 7 – Ben Nevis • White Magic VI, 7 – Northern Corries • Tilt VI, 7 – Glencoe • Fallout Corner VI, 7 – Northern Corries • Minus One Gully – Ben Nevis • Orion Direct – Ben Nevis • Gargoyle Wall – Ben Nevis <p>Skills</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistics – planning the day and what to carry • Equipment selection – rack, tools, boots, crampons, clothing systems • Venue choice – weather influences, ethics and conditions • Movement skills – footwork, axe placement, using knees... & other body parts • Finding protection • Resting and general strategy
Day 6 Thur	Wed PM/Thur AM - Depart

Cost

The various components of the trip that are included in the price are detailed below. Approximate costs for items not included in the price may be found on our website.

Included in the price

- 5 days of guiding and instruction
- All guides expenses
- Local transport in guides vehicle to complete the itinerary

Not included in the price

- food and accommodation
- travel to Scotland
- equipment hire

Accommodation

Our preferred base is the Highland centre of Fort William – the ‘Outdoor Capital of Scotland’, under the shadow of Ben Nevis. The course runs on a guiding & instruction only basis – so your own food and accommodation must be paid for separately. Fort William has plenty of bars, shops and restaurants and a wide choice of accommodation. Aviemore is similarly situated on the East side of Scotland, with bars, restaurants, and good rail links to the South. Hotel details can be found on our Accommodation page.

Travel

By Road: Fort William lies on the A82 about 2 hours North of Glasgow and Aviemore lies on the A9 about 2 hours north of Perth. Typical driving times are six hours from Sheffield and eight to nine hours from London. Use the RAC or AA online route planners online for your best route by car.

By Train: There are regular trains to Fort William and Aviemore and the scenery is excellent. Both venues are also served by sleeper trains from the south of England. Use the Travel Line website to plan your journey.

By Coach: It can be done but is incredibly long and tedious! Allow a full day.

By Air: If you plan to fly, then Inverness, Edinburgh and Glasgow are all served by budget airlines. Driving times to Fort William are two hours from Glasgow, up to three hours from Edinburgh, and one and a half hours from Inverness. Aviemore is one hour from Inverness, three hours from Glasgow and 2.5 hours from Edinburgh. Two of the cheapest car-hire companies we can recommend are www.auto-europe.co.uk and www.holidayautos.co.uk.

Meeting Point

You should arrange outward travel in order to meet your guide at the agreed venue at 7am on the first day of guiding. Return travel should be arranged after 5pm on the last day of guiding.

Insurance

Although not compulsory, we recommend you buy holiday insurance covering cancellation and curtailment risks. The following companies provide specialist mountaineering insurance:

The British Mountaineering Council	www.thebmc.co.uk	0870 010 4878
Snowcard	www.snowcard.co.uk	01327 262 805

More information, including advice for non-UK residents, can be found on the Insurance page of our website here: <https://www.alpine-guides.com/climb/planning-your-climbing-trip/insurance/>

Equipment

A full kit list is enclosed. All communal safety equipment (ropes etc.) is provided by us. You are responsible for bringing all clothing and personal climbing kit. For the more specialist items (helmet, harness, ice axe, crampons) hire kit is available either direct from the guides, or via gear shops in Fort William (the shops also stock hire boots). If you need to hire kit, then get in touch with your requirements and we will advise you.

Local hire is available from *West Coast Outdoor Leisure*: 01397 705777, info@westcoast-leisure.co.uk or from *Ellis Brigham* next to the station. Boots must be 3 or 4 season models and fully waterproof (ie summer trekking boots with canvas uppers are not allowed!) Please see the 'Advice Articles' section on our site for more information on boots, axes and crampons.

Maps and Guidebooks

If you want to buy a map or climbing guidebook, then we suggest one of the following:

Ben Nevis & Glen Coe (1:25 000. Outdoor Leisure 38)

Ben Nevis & Fort William (1:50 000 Landranger 41)

'Scottish Winter Climbs' by the SMC

Weather and Conditions

It's Scottish winter, so the weather can do anything at any time! Please check the forecast and come suitable prepared, with full waterproofs and/or sun cream.

What Next?

- Bookings can be made online via our website. The balance is due 8 weeks before the course start date - we will email you a balance reminder including your invoice and possible payment methods.
- We will email you 2 weeks before the course start date with any final info including your guides contact details and any other final info.

More Info

Please contact us for more info regarding any aspect of the trip - info@alpine-guides.com or 0113 8151904 (we might be out skiing or climbing - if so please leave a message and we'll get back to you asap, thanks!).

Scottish Winter Kit List

The extremes of Scottish weather should not be underestimated. Shell garments in particular need to be durable and high quality as do boots, gloves and other warm clothing.

Technical Clothing

- **Waterproof Jacket** – full weight breathable model preferred
- **Waterproof trousers** – durable model with 3/4 or full length side zips
- **Socks** – warm ‘Smartwool’ type, plus thin liner socks and spares
- **Gaiters** – made from breathable material
- **Wicking thermal baselayer tops** – synthetic not cotton!
- **2 fleeces** – or equivalent insulating mid-layers
- **Belay jacket** – synthetic insulation best for Scotland, down insulation ok for icefall/alpine winter
- **Powerstretch tights** or warm mountain trousers – should fit comfortably under your waterproof trousers
- **Thin inner gloves**
- **Warm mountain gloves** – Goretex or equivalent water/windproof model
- **Second pair of mountain gloves as above** – one pair will often get wet
- **Hat or balaclava** – must fit under a helmet.
- **Spare mittens** – especially if you suffer from cold hands

Personal Items

- **Water Container** – 1 litre, or 0.75l flask
- **Headtorch** and batteries
- **Map, compass and whistle** (optional, but a good idea)
- **Personal medications and blister kit** – zinc oxide tape, compeed, painkillers etc
- **Sun Glasses(!)** – CE rated 3 or 4 with side protection
- **Goggles** – for windy/snowy conditions

Technical Equipment

- **Rucsac 40-50l** – to handle extra winter kit
- ***Rigid 4 season mountaineering boots** – see Axe, Boot and Crampons advice
- **#Harness**, locking karabiner and belay device
- **120cm sling** and locking karabiner
- **#Climbing helmet**
- **#Technical ice axe and ice hammer**
- **#Crampons** – vertically orientated front points or monos are best, or sharp new mountaineering crampons are also fine

These items can be hired locally. Further guidance on selecting appropriate boots, crampons and ice axes can be found on our website.

***Boots:** These are VERY important to the success of your trip! It's best to have your own boots and break them in well before the start of the trip - visit <https://www.alpine-guides.com/climb/insider-knowlege-climb/axe-boots-and-crampons/> for advice.

Your guide will have all other climbing safety kit, first aid and survival equipment plus the ropes (though you may be asked to carry one!)

Alpine Guides Ltd – Booking Conditions

1. All bookings are made with Alpine Guides Ltd, company number 4901552, whose registered office is at 14 Wrenbeck Close, Otley, West Yorkshire, LS21 2BU and whose directors are Alun Powell and Richard Cross.
2. We only accept bookings from persons over the age of 18 at the time of booking. Bookings by or on behalf of persons under the age of 18 may be accepted on certain courses, when accompanied on the course by another person over the age of 18 and subject to written parental consent.
3. Unless stated otherwise, your booking must be accompanied with a deposit of £300 per person per course booked, or if booked within 56 days (8 weeks) of the course start date by the full payment. When we receive your booking application, you will be sent a confirmation email. Once we have received payment and checked all information contained within your booking application, we will accept your booking. You will then be sent further information about the current status of your trip
4. We will store and process your personal information securely and in line with our Privacy Policy which can be viewed on our website.
5. Email and PDF attachments are our primary contact method, so you must provide us with a valid email address. You must also ensure that our email address: info@alpine-guides.com is added to your safe senders list, as we cannot be held liable for communication problems caused by personal firewalls, spam filtering systems, or your inability to open attached email documents.
6. Balance of payment is due 56 days (8 weeks) prior to the course start date. We prefer you to pay full balance by a direct bank transfer. If full payment is not received by this date we reserve the right to cancel your booking without refund.
7. For courses taking place outside the United Kingdom you must purchase specialist mountaineering insurance covering helicopter rescue, medical treatment and repatriation (plus on and off piste skiing for ski courses). You must bring all insurance documentation with you on the course. We reserve the right to cancel your booking at any time if we are not satisfied you have adequate insurance in place.
8. If you wish to cancel you must notify us in writing, where upon the following charges will be applied from the date we receive your notice of cancellation:-
 - More than 8 weeks (56 days) before start date – loss of deposit.
 - Between 4 and 8 weeks (28-56 days) before start date – 50% of course fee or loss of deposit, whichever amount is greater.
 - Less than 4 weeks (28 days) before start date – full course fee.
9. Requests for course transfers must be made more than 56 days prior to original start date and are subject to availability. You also have the right to transfer your booking to another person who satisfies all conditions for the course (including health, fitness and experience requirements), subject to the same conditions above.
10. We reserve the right to cancel any course due to insufficient numbers, or transfer bookings between courses to make numbers viable. In either event clients will be informed of our decision as soon as possible and not less than 21 days before start date. You will be offered either a free transfer, a full refund, or a mutually agreed alternative program. You must inform us as soon as possible which you choose to accept.
11. In the event of guide injury or illness, we will endeavour to find replacement guide(s) as soon as possible. If replacement guide(s) cannot be found part way through a trip, we will refund guiding fees for any days of guiding not provided and you may still use remaining accommodation nights unguided. In the event that we cannot find replacement guide(s) for the whole of your trip, you may choose to use the accommodation portion of your trip and receive a refund of guiding fees, cancel your trip with a full refund, or accept a mutually agreed alternative program.
12. We do not accept any responsibility for changes to travel arrangements that you make in order to join your trip or course. We accept no financial liability that may arise from any enforced change to your travel plans due to any alteration of the trip or course dates, the itinerary or its cancellation, howsoever caused. You are advised to book transferable, refundable travel tickets with no penalties should a cancellation be necessary.
13. At the discretion of the course director, guiding ratios may be varied from the stated course ratio to cover eventualities such as staff absence or change of itinerary, so long as this does not breach accepted local guiding ratios or other professional guidelines laid out by the British Association of Mountain Guides.
14. We do not accept bookings from groups or individuals participating in sponsored climbs or 'challenge events' of any kind. If we discover that you are seeking sponsorship or participating in such an event in connection with one of our courses, we reserve the right to cancel your booking without refund, or exclude you from further mountain activities whilst on the course with immediate effect.
15. Whilst we maintain high professional standards of client care and safety, you must realise and accept that climbing, mountaineering and skiing are activities which carry a danger of personal injury or even death, as they take place in remote and hazardous mountain terrain. All clients must be aware of and accept these risks and be responsible for their own actions and involvement in such activities.
16. All information contained within our website, social media channels and other publicity is for guidance only. Whilst making every effort to ensure accuracy, we cannot be responsible for any inaccuracies or alterations beyond our control. Should any changes occur, clients will be notified before a booking is accepted.

17. Although we adhere to planned itineraries wherever possible, changes may occur to both travel and guiding itineraries due to external factors beyond our control. In particular, the guide has total discretion to alter programs at any time in the interests of client safety and current mountain, or weather conditions.

18. By booking you agree to abide by instructions and decisions made by the guide regarding individuals and the group as a whole. Our guides reserve the right to exclude individuals from a planned activity on the grounds of health, safety or the success and enjoyment of the rest of the party. Any individuals so excluded are not entitled to a refund. Any individual contravening the decisions or advice of their guide, or undertaking independent mountain activities during the course shall forfeit all protection and duty of care from the guide.

19. We accept no liability for the consequences of strikes, riots, acts of war or terrorism, disease outbreaks, government intervention, natural disasters or adverse weather conditions. If such occurrences cause us to have to cancel a course or trip we will offer an alternative holiday if possible, but accept no liability for return of fees paid prior to cancellation or curtailment.

20. If you have a complaint about the guiding or other services you receive during your holiday, you must notify ourselves or the guide involved as soon as possible, in order to give us the opportunity to put things right. Non of our guides have authority to promise refunds or compensation on behalf of Alpine Guides Ltd. Only the company directors are authorised to make such decisions.

If, despite our best efforts and having followed the above procedure for reporting and resolving your complaint, you feel that it has not been satisfactorily settled, we recommend that it is referred for arbitration under the ABTOT Travel Industry Arbitration Service. An Independent Arbitrator will review the documents relating to any complaint and deliver a binding decision to bring the matter to a close. Details of this scheme are available from The Travel Industry Arbitration Service, administered by Dispute Settlement Services Limited, 9 Savill Road, Lindfield, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 2NY. This scheme cannot however decide in cases where the sums claimed exceed £5,000 per person or £10,000 per booking form, or for claims which are solely or mainly in respect of physical injury or illness or the consequence thereof.

21. On courses that include accommodation in the course fee:

The Association of Bonded Travel Organisers Trust Limited (ABTOT) provides financial protection under The Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018 for Alpine Guides Ltd, membership number 5394 and in the event of their insolvency, protection is provided for the following:

1. non-flight packages and
2. flight inclusive packages that commence outside of the EEA, which are sold to customers outside of the EEA.

ABTOT cover provides for a refund in the event you have not yet travelled or repatriation if you are abroad. Please note that bookings made outside the EEA are only protected by ABTOT when purchased directly with Alpine Guides Ltd. In the unlikely event that you require assistance whilst abroad due to our financial failure, please call our 24/7 helpline on 01702 811397 and advise you are a customer of an ABTOT protected travel company. You can access The Package Travel and Linked Travel Arrangements Regulations 2018 here: <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2018/634/contents/made>

22. All terms and conditions between clients and Alpine Guides Ltd are to be governed by and held under the exclusive jurisdiction of English Law.

23. Making your booking implies that you understand and accept the booking conditions and agree to abide by them.