

winter backcountry awareness course



winter season
july to september
2010



Price
4 days
NZ\$1150 per person
plus helicopter
(approx NZ\$190)



access
fly in, tour out



guide ratio
1:5 maximum



Bonus
1 day weather contingency



Dates 2010

WBA#1 Jul 20-21-22-23*

WBA#2 Aug 6-7-8-9

WBA#3 Aug 18-19-20-21

WBA#4 Aug 27-28-29-30

WBA#5 Sept 3-4-5-6

*NB no weather contingency
day available on WBA#1



This is a stunning adventure-course for the strong skier/boarder. We fly by helicopter to the summit of Black Peak, ride down to our hut to drop our gear. Black Peak is nestled in the heart of the Harris Mountains, Lake Wanaka, with Mt Aspiring and Treble Cone Ski Area close by. Our hut sleeps 4 comfortably, and can manage up to 6. It is stocked with sleeping bags, lighting, cooking equipment, and outside toilet.

We have access to some of the world's most spectacular alpine sunrise and sunsets not to mention views of surrounding peaks. Our private hut (1800m) on the mid reaches of Black Peak (2283m) is an ideal base for our overnight backcountry touring trips and courses.

course content

The objective of this course is PRACTICAL BACKCOUNTRY SKILLS - to teach you how to move safely in the backcountry and alpine winter environment. It is designed specifically with the independent mountain traveller in mind. Topics include: Avalanche Awareness, Snowpack Analysis and Stability Tests, Rescue Techniques, Navigation, Terrain Assessment & Selection, Transceiver searches.

experience required

For your safety and enjoyment it is important that you can ski or board the untracked and can carry a pack.

access

Black Peak is a 5-7 hour skin/snowshoe from the summit of Treble Cone Ski Area or a 10 minute helicopter flight from the valley floor. While the reasonable cost of flying in saves time and energy for the ensuing days of instruction, we like to travel out on skis/snowboard as part of the course. In doing this, we make informed judgement calls on the route taken, slopes to ski, slopes to avoid, and ongoing objective analysis of weather and snow conditions.



sample itinerary

prior to departure Meet with your guide at our offices 5pm on the evening prior to departure. Equipment is reviewed and your guide checks on the equipment required for the tour. Rental equipment is issued and last minute purchases can be made. A plan is made for the following morning.

days 1-3 We drive to the magnificent Matukituki Valley and fly up to Black Peak by helicopter. Our backpacks are light because sleeping bags, cooking gear and other necessities will already be in the hut.

Depending upon conditions, we may choose to circumnavigate Black Peak itself and enjoy a vista of Mt Aspiring. Checking out the surrounding mountains, we may drop into Escapade Bowl on the lake side of Black Peak which offers steep chutes and excellent terrain for freshies. Focus will be on terrain evaluation (steepness of terrain, exposure, snow conditions). We will also talk about laying a proper track (considering climbing efficiency, steepness, speed, objective dangers etc.).

Each evening, lectures are held in the hut. Further topics on the field excursion will be : Avalanche Rescue; Terrain Analysis, Mountain weather in New Zealand, Snow Stability, Transceiver skills; Group Travel, emergency snow shelters.

day 4 Everything learned up to now will be applied for the trip out of Black Peak. In addition we will be talking about use of compass and topographic maps. Arrival at the snowline by early evening marks the end of the course, and our heads full of information on snow-snow-snow!

2010 course dates

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logistics

duration 4 days - plus 1 weather contingency days
(book your private group for any 4 days this winter)

price NZ\$1150 per person - helicopter extra (approx. NZ\$190)

access Fly-in, tour out

season July & August & September

guide-client ratio 1 guide : 5 clients

prerequisites Strong Intermediate skiing or boarding

accommodation Private hut



bonus

- ▲ 1 day weather contingency
- ▲ course certificate
- ▲ avalanche handbook

The course price includes: NZMGA qualified guide, course certificate, all meals and energy foods, warm hut and bedding, avalanche handbook, and 12.5% NZ Goods and Services Tax.

we care about you

We want to maximise your chance of having a mountain experience that is successful and enjoyable therefore we offer a bonus one day weather contingency on all courses, trips and ascents. Our philosophy here at Aspiring Guides is such that we aim to cover all aspects of a backcountry trip with you. This includes preparatory housekeeping matters too: let us know what you do/don't like eating, any allergies/medical conditions, and any special requests. We recognise that the world of mountaineering presents a challenge right from the start; namely; getting the detailed information, selecting the right option and having faith in the guiding company you decide to invest your time and money with.

location and itinerary

We will meet you in Wanaka at the scheduled appointment time, usually 5pm on the evening before your course start. The Aspiring Guides office is situated at 99 Ardmore Street, Wanaka on the main thoroughfare and only 50 metres from the shores of Lake Wanaka. Wanaka is the gateway to the Mount Aspiring National Park, and the Southern Alps. Our office staff can offer advice with accommodation and shuttle reservations, and of course, local attractions. Wanaka is very popular during the winter ski season. Please arrange your accommodation as early as possible.

booking and cancellations

NZ\$500 deposit per person confirms your booking. Full payment must be made 60 days before commencement date. Should you cancel your booking for any reason you will receive a full refund less a cancellation fee: more than 60 days NZ\$200 per person, between 60 and 30 days NZ\$500 per person, between 29 and 15 days 75% of the total course or trip fee. Cancellation less than 15 days or during your trip no refund will be given.

weather

Let's explain the one day weather contingency ... Aspiring Guides provide a free one day weather contingency in case the weather is unflyable on day one. Your start day could be delayed by one day.

The mountains are immune to human plans and expectations. We need to make our plans flexible to allow for inclement weather and other unfavourable conditions. When the weather is bad in the mountains we will make a decision whether to attempt entering the mountains each given day. We do not believe that entering the high country soaked to the skin and a bad forecast is a good idea. Your guides are very experienced and will attempt to the best of their ability to make the best decision they can. In the unlikely event adverse weather prevents a trip from immediately moving into the mountains, we will delay the course for a day.

If the weather continues to remain unstable and we are unable to fly into Black Peak hut, we will tour in an alternative location and activities will be introduced until such a time as the weather clears and the mountains can be entered (or) until the finish dates of the tour.

It is very rare for a course not to get into the mountains. In the unlikely event of a course being held up longer than anticipated in the mountains, for any reason, AN ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF NZ\$450 PER GUIDE PER DAY IS CHARGED (this is a cost price and will be divided between the course participants). Your guide/s are working until you return to our offices at the course finish.



meals and snacks

Energy snacks and nutritious meals are an essential ingredient in helping you perform to your highest standard. We provide excellent meals and plenty of it. We cater for your specific dietary requirement.

valuables and luggage

Additional luggage and valuables can be securely stored at our office during your trip.

insurance

We strongly recommend that all our clients carry travel insurance which covers you while travelling to and from NZ, luggage mishaps, and in case you have to cancel your trip. The New Zealand Accident Compensation System (ACC) will cover most of the expenses relating to an evacuation and/or medical treatment/rehabilitation in the unlikely event of an accident occurring. This service may not apply to evacuation costs for personal medical conditions. You are not entitled to bulk payments for compensation and you cannot claim damages for costs under the ACC act (no legal action can be made in NZ). Whilst our focus is on safety we will not be responsible for any evacuation or medical costs resulting from any accident. Likewise equipment damage or loss remain your responsibility. Some insurance companies can provide adventure activities' cover - if you wish to investigate this option further, please contact our office for information.

communication and messages

Our climbing trips and courses are in radio and satellite phone communications with our Operations/Safety base and the Department of Conservation local office that manages each National park area. We obtain weather information and coordinate helicopters through these channels. In some circumstances mountain radio links are available for the relay of any urgent messages.

how hard will the course be?

Initially the course will be structured around instruction of techniques whilst acclimatising you to the mountain environment. A few days into the course, the days will be longer and more challenging. Most days will involve 8 hours of activity. Some aspects of the mountains may seem foreign at the outset, but your guide is there to help ease you through these new challenges.

fitness & health

To make the most of your learning experience it is advisable to be fit enough to partake in the activities with enough stamina to get the most participation and enjoyment. Your guide places special focus on fitness levels and will regulate the pace accordingly.



how to book

To register for a trip, you can book online through our excellent website. Your deposit of NZ\$500 may be paid by Visa or Mastercard, or bank transfer. The forms required can be found on our website. Our booking terms and conditions are detailed on our online booking form on our website. Balance of payment is required 60 days before your trip start.

We will send an appointment email approximately 4 weeks before your trip is due to commence. We will provide final information and ask for more information from you, e.g. dietary requirement, trip objectives and/or concerns, height and weight, fitness and any equipment rental required.

*We look forward to sharing your aspirations...
and the opportunity of climbing with you in the future*

the team @ aspiring guides

