

ROBIN BEADLE Mountain Guide - tel. (015395) 31598 - email robin.beadle@gmail.com

WINTER COURSES AND GUIDING - INFORMATION

When you walk or climb this winter you'll want expert tuition and guiding, the best possible chance of good conditions and, not least, to have a really good time. We can provide the knowledge, experience and advice you need to safely take on those tempting gullies, ridges, buttresses and snow peaks. Climbs and mountains clad in snow and ice may seem daunting and even intimidating, but we can give you the skills and confidence you need to tackle new plans and challenges. If you already have some experience and want to try something more advanced, we can help you.

I started running my own programme of winter courses and guiding in Scotland back in 1992, having previously gained experience working with other organisations. In partnership with March House Guest House, I provided structured courses from a homely base, and we were assisted by the Highlands and Islands Enterprise. Now I spend increasingly long periods of time working in the Alps and Greater Ranges, and we have a family, so I spend shorter periods of time in Scotland, "to order". I organise tailored courses and itineraries for individuals and small groups. This means you get just what you want, and it is also economical if there are two of you or more. Notes on cost for groups of any size follow the course descriptions. Many people see mountaineering in winter as a step towards the Alps or Greater Ranges. With me, you will receive the training you need to give you a relevant experience.

I travel to all areas of Scotland to suit you, or given the conditions and a flexible approach, can offer instruction and guiding in the Lake District or any venue of your choice. I lead the courses and guiding myself, on dates to suit you, and the programme will be tailored to your experience and requirements.

GUIDED ASCENTS AND PERSONAL INSTRUCTION

ANY TIME ANYWHERE BY ARRANGEMENT!

Do you want to tackle a specific challenge, or do you just want a really good day out on the hill? Our established range of courses described below caters for the climber or walker wishing to develop their winter mountaineering skills. Private guiding and instruction is available for individuals or groups, by the day or longer. We will meet your precise requirements. One of the courses described can be tailored to your specific needs; you may require a guided ascent of a chosen route or a day's instruction on a particular topic. I normally undertake all instruction and guiding personally, but I can of course arrange for extra guides and instructors for one or more days where larger groups are concerned.

We can arrange your accommodation for you. This can be whatever you choose: there is hotel, guesthouse, B&B and self-catering accommodation available: the choice is yours. Packed lunches and evening meals can normally be provided if required for anyone not self-catering. Sometimes it is possible to arrange accommodation in a climbing "club hut". I can make all the arrangements for you and confirm the price.

If we are based in the Cairngorms you could take full board accommodation at March House, perfectly situated in the beautiful surroundings of Glen Feshie, 7 miles south west of Aviemore. Your host Caroline Hayes, is herself an outdoor enthusiast, so March House is well set up to cater for the needs of our activities. Warm and comfortable with excellent facilities and an informal atmosphere, March House is an ideal place to relax by a log fire at the end of the day. It is well located to make use of Scotland's major and most accessible winter playgrounds, and also to visit some less frequented mountain areas. The Northern Cairngorms and Creag Meagaidh are close at hand, and Ben Nevis is within easy reach. The locality has much to offer the walker, including the Ben Alder Forest, the Monadh Liath Mountains and right on the doorstep are the Glen Feshie Hills. Further a field, the wild and remote North West Highlands can be reached in two hours, and in good conditions have much to offer both climber and walker alike.

Of course, we always make every effort to use the prevailing conditions to their best advantage.

We will prepare an itinerary to your specific requirements - just ring to discuss your plans!

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

All the courses described are five days duration, but I run short courses for those with less time available. All courses will begin with an introduction to, or revision of, essential ice axe and crampon skills in terrain appropriate to the course. This will include at least one thorough session on ice axe self arrest. We can arrange an evening slide show and a discussion or practical session relevant to the course (e.g. snow and avalanche, rope work and belaying). We may also wish to take advantage of any local entertainment, and take some time off to relax!

WINTER MOUNTAIN WALKING

Course aim: To teach the skills you will need as a competent winter mountain walker

This is the course for enthusiastic summer hill walkers who would like an introduction to the Scottish winter environment. We will concentrate on the personal skills needed for safe mountain travel in winter. Detailed instruction will be given in self-arrest, and ice axe and crampon techniques on all types of terrain likely to be encountered by the winter walker. Practical sessions during our days out will cover navigation, assessment of snow conditions and avalanche risk, and building survival shelters. During the week, consideration will be given to route planning, use of weather forecasts and choice of equipment. An overnight bothy, camp or snow holing expedition can be included. Rope work will not normally be covered.

There is a maximum of six participants to one guide/instructor.

WINTER MOUNTAINEERING

Course aim: To help you develop as an all round winter mountaineer

This course will appeal if you wish to reach your summits by more ambitious mountain routes, and sample some roped climbing. A minimum of good summer hill walking experience is required, and some previous summer scrambling and/or winter hill walking would be useful. The essential skills, outlined for the Winter Mountain Walking course will be covered, but we will move onto steeper and more difficult ground than normally chosen when walking. Rope work and belaying will be introduced from first principles, so no climbing experience is necessary. The course will include roped ascents of some easier graded climbs, such as a snow gully and classic ridge route, which will be selected to suit the prevailing conditions and aspirations of the party. An overnight expedition can be arranged.

There is a maximum of four participants to one guide/instructor.

GRADE 2 MOUNTAINEERING

Course aim: A progression for winter mountaineers

If you have already participated in a Winter Mountaineering course or have similar experience, this is your chance to go a stage further with others at the same level. **The theme for the week is adventurous and interesting days, which will enable you to reinforce and enhance your skills.** Everyone on this course must have some experience of the basic techniques covered on "Winter Mountaineering", and this will enable all members of the group to learn by taking the initiative in the mountains wherever possible. Grade II is for our regular guests and others with the necessary experience.

There is a maximum of three participants to one guide/instructor.

SNOW, ICE AND BUTTRESS CLIMBING

Course aim: To enable you to become a self-sufficient winter climber

A concentrated climbing course, aimed at those with some winter experience who wish to learn to look after themselves safely on winter climbs, and progress onto more difficult routes. You may be graduating from more general mountaineering or transferring from rock climbing. Some previous roped experience on multi-pitch climbs would be useful, though not essential. The vital winter skills will be revised and practiced as necessary, with greater emphasis on belaying, placing all kinds of protection and ice-craft on steep ground. We will address the subjects of navigation to and from our climbs, route finding, and dealing with problems which could arise during the ascents. However, the course will focus on the routes themselves. The climbing will be at a technical standard to suit the participants' needs, but at whatever grade, the low student ratio will mean our choice of route is unrestricted. The 1:2 ratio will enable you to work together as a team, under close supervision, to gain the skills and experience you need to tackle graded winter routes. There will be the opportunity to lead pitches with your tutor alongside you to instruct, advise and assist if required. You may also like to try some harder climbing on the "blunt end", maybe even one of the "Classic Grade Fives". Every effort will be made to use the prevailing conditions to their best advantage, and we will visit a variety of climbing areas to sample both snow/ice and mixed/buttress routes. An overnight expedition would normally only be included to reach a remote corrie.

There is a maximum of two participants to one guide/instructor.

I now offer all Winter Courses on a private tuition basis at any time during the season. Please phone to check the dates you would like are available. This is economic for two or more people, having the advantages of a good guide:client ratio and flexibility of venue.

COSTS

The guiding/instructional fee for an individual or for a private party is normally £190 per day, and this may be split between group members if applicable. A 25% deposit is required on booking. If you are coming alone and wish to lead, I can usually find an assistant instructor at no extra cost. This means there is someone else to belay you whilst I concentrate on supervising your gear placement etc.

Additional costs to be considered are travel, accommodation and meals, and mountaineering holiday insurance if used. Occasional use of ski lifts may be made in Scotland for fast access into the mountains.

Finally, for your own enjoyment of the course, please try to do a little training before your holiday, if you feel you need to!

Please get in touch if you have any questions.

ROBIN BEADLE, BARE SYKE, BACKBARROW, ULVERSTON, CUMBRIA LA12 8QF
tel. (015395) 31598 - email robin.beadle@gmail.com