

Mt. Rainier: 3 ½ Day Summit Climb Camp Muir / Ingraham Glacier / Disappointment Cleaver Route

© 2012 International Mountain Guides

Why Choose This Program?

Our 3 ½ Day Ingraham Glacier/Disappointment Cleaver summit program is designed for those who want a more intimate and relaxed approach to climbing Mt. Rainier. This program allows for somewhat easier days than the traditional two-day climb by dividing the climb into more manageable sections and gives you an extra day to acclimatize to the altitude and enjoy the majestic alpine environment with your climbing team.

Climbing with a 2:1 client-to-guide ratio provides a superior level of support and safety. Our group size is never larger than twelve (8 climbers and 4 guides).

We make use of two camps on the route: IMG's shelter at Camp Muir at 10,080ft and an established tent camp at The Flats at 11,000ft. These camps make for shorter climbing days and most importantly a shorter summit day due to the higher altitude of The Flats.

We maximize training by adding a half day pre-climb orientation and instructional meeting at IMG's Headquarters in Ashford, just outside the park. We incorporate training en route during the first two days of the ascent. This increases acclimatization, minimizes total days for the trip and allows for training to be conducted on the mountain in conditions closer to those you will find on the summit day.

IMG employs a light and efficient philosophy for climbing. To minimize the weight on your backs we provide shelter, stoves, fuel, cook wear and group climbing gear (ropes, pickets, shovels, etc.) for you at each camp. Climbing without these the first day (4,600 ft. of elevation gain) is a definite advantage and allows you to arrive at camp more rested for the climb ahead. We will help you review your personal climbing gear carefully prior to departure to make sure you are not carrying any unnecessary weight up the mountain. Total personal gear including filled water bottles should be approximately 35 pounds, excluding your boots and ski poles.

IMG provides breakfasts, dinners and hot drinks for the group on the mountain. We feel this adds considerably to the experience in terms of convenience, comfort and camaraderie.

Prerequisite:

There are no prerequisites. All training is conducted during the pre-climb orientation and the two-day approach to high camp. All that is required is good physical fitness and previous training carrying an overnight pack. For training suggestions please review the information provided on our training for Rainier page: <http://www.mountainguides.com/rainier-training.shtml>

Dates: May – September (Please see the IMG website for [specific, available dates.](#))

Land cost: \$1,280

Client to Guide Ratio: 2:1

Trip Length: 3.5 days (with an afternoon meeting starting at 2:00 p.m. on the first day)

Itinerary

The Ingraham Glacier/Disappointment Cleaver on Rainier is a classic ascent route on one of the most well known and recognized mountains in the world.

Day 1 – Meet in Ashford at HQ ([Directions](#)) at 2:00pm for the pre-climb meeting. This meeting of approximately 4 hours is instrumental in getting the team outfitted, informed, packed and educated prior to departure the following morning. Topics to be covered include an introduction of the entire team, an introduction to Mt. Rainier National Park, its mission and ecology; a safety briefing; issue and fitting of gear; personal gear checks and issue of group gear; proper use of safety equipment including helmets, harnesses and avalanche beacons; introduction to knots, ropes, rope travel and a review of additional critical climbing skills.

You are on your own for lodging this night, but IMG offers a convenient and economical option with our onsite [tent camping](#).

Day 2 – Meet at HQ at 8:00am for an early departure to Paradise (5420 ft.) at the end of the road in Mount Rainier National Park. We ascend to Camp Muir at 10,080 ft. through picturesque alpine meadows and snowfields. Plan on a long day; hiking and climbing for roughly 5-6 hours and gaining 4,600 ft. over 4 ½ miles to Camp Muir. We will spend the night in the guide hut at Camp Muir overlooking the Nisqually and Cowlitz glaciers and the rugged Tatoosh range to the South.

Day 3 – This day is a fairly relaxing one and helpful for recovery and acclimatization. After a casual breakfast we conduct a glacier travel and skills training school on the Cowlitz Glacier adjacent to Camp Muir. After training, the team gathers all gear from Camp Muir and ropes up for the first glacier crossing. A short trek across the Cowlitz Glacier leads to steeper travel up a scree trail through Cathedral Gap. We'll step onto the Ingraham Glacier and climb a short bit further to a broad, flat section of the glacier. A pre-established camp at "The Flats" is waiting for us after our 1 1/2 hour hike. This camp at 11,000ft offers a stunning view of the precipitous north face of Little Tahoma, the third tallest peak in Washington, and the spectacular Ingraham and Emmons Glaciers. A summit meeting with the guides will take place in the afternoon followed by an early dinner and a short night's sleep.

Day 4 – Starts with an alpine start, up as early as midnight with a hot drink and instant breakfast. After all teams are roped up we'll make our way up the Ingraham Headwall (early season only, and all snow) or onto the Disappointment Cleaver (always by mid-season, and mostly rock) eventually gaining the upper snow slopes of the mountain leading to the summit crater. We'll spend an hour or more on top (weather permitting) and walk over to the true summit, Columbia Crest. In descent, we navigate the glaciers back down to the Flats for a short rest, and then move an hour lower down the mountain to Camp Muir for another stop. From there we'll continue on down to Paradise where our van will be waiting to shuttle us back to Ashford. Our 3 day climb and 12-14 hour summit-day culminates with a group debrief and awarding of certificates by the guides.

“Just wanted to drop you all a line and tell you how much I enjoyed my trip with you. Everything was great including the weather. Your company is first class in all respects. I knew exactly what I needed to bring and rent. All of your staff that I met was friendly, helpful, knowledgeable, and I felt safe with them. The rental equipment was also high quality. The overall experience was fantastic. If I am able to go on another mountaineering trip, it will definitely be with IMG.”

—Jason S.

For more comments from IMG climbers, please see our website at: www.mountainguides.com/comments.shtml
