

## Mt. Rainier: 5 ½ Day Fuhrer Finger Summit Climb

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### Why Choose This Program?

The Fuhrer Finger climb is a good choice for anyone with prior alpine climbing experience looking for a more challenging route on Mt. Rainier. If you are very fit and looking to push yourself physically and technically on a climb other than the standard route this program is for you. This is a small group climb, limited to 4 climbers and 2 IMG guides.

Climbers on this program have often climbed either the Emmons or the Disappointment Cleaver routes on Mt. Rainier and have felt very comfortable on those ascents. They must be confident cramponing in firm glacier conditions on steeper slopes. This is a challenging climb that ascends the steep Fuhrer Finger, a more direct line up the south side of the mountain. The climb gets you away from the majority of the climbers in the Camp Muir corridor. It is normal to not see another party on the route. The crux of the route, the finger itself, is a narrow chute that necks down to a few hundred feet across. The steepest part of the chute is 40-50 degrees in angle. Above, the upper mountain eases off in angle and the final 2,000 feet are a more typical 20 degree slope. Hazards on this route include the potential for isolated rock or ice fall during warming conditions and we climb the exposed part of the chute rapidly to avoid prolonged exposure. The 5-day program allows enough time to do the climb comfortably, but if you have not climbed on steeper glacier slopes before, we strongly recommend choosing another route as your first attempt of Mt. Rainier. If you are looking for something more physically challenging, technical and off the beaten track, then the Fuhrer Finger route is an excellent program.

We employ a light and efficient philosophy for climbing on Mt. Rainier. We will help you pare down your personal climbing gear during a pre-climb gear check to minimize weight and make certain you bring only the essentials up the mountain.

Climbing with a 2:1 client-to-guide ratio provides a superior level of support and safety. Our group of 4 climbers and 2 guides is a perfect sized team. IMG provides breakfasts and dinners for the group on the mountain for your convenience and comfort.

### Prerequisite:

A review of basic climbing skills is incorporated into this program's itinerary. However, we expect that participants have previous climbing experience and are fit and ready for the very strenuous effort.

**All** participants must have prior alpine climbing experience either on Rainier or on other major glaciated peaks, and be familiar with basic mountaineering skills including cramponing in firm ice and snow conditions. Past experience on multi day backpacking trips is also highly recommended. This is a strenuous and more technically demanding summit climb, **not for first time climbers**.

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

**Landcost:** \$1900

**Client to Guide Ratio:** 2:1

**Trip Length:** 5 ½ days

## Itinerary

**Day 1** - The team meets at 2:00 p.m. the afternoon prior to the climb at IMG's Ashford Headquarters ([Directions](#)). This pre-climb meeting of 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** - We meet at 8:00 a.m. all ready to go, then load up the van and are shuttled up to Paradise, the jumping-off point for our climb. We spend most of the day ascending the lower Nisqually Glacier to the first camp and establishing it at approximately 7,000. The first day takes us through open alpine meadows and snow fields then we drop down onto the lower Nisqually glacier. The Nisqually glacier provides an opportunity to practice roping up and the techniques of safe glacier travel. We will brush up on ice axe arrest practice and other climbing skills enroute to the first camp.

**Day 3** - This day will be reserved for moving camp up to the base of the route, approximately 8,500 feet, and planning our strategy for the climb to come. One of the options includes an ascent of Fuhrer Thumb, an alternate route that joins the Fuhrer Finger route at 11,500 feet with a descent back down the lower Fuhrer Finger chute.

**Day 4** - We may choose, depending on conditions to move camp up Fuhrer's Finger at first light and establish a new campsite at the top of the Finger, approximately 11,500 feet. Otherwise, the team will train, climb and acclimatize in the vicinity of camp.

**Day 5** - This is the primary summit day. If a high camp is established we will depart at first light for the summit. The round trip will take approximately 8 hours. If we climb from low camp, the team will depart well prior to first light and will take approximately 10-12 hours round trip.

**Day 6** - The final day is reserved for descent to Paradise where the shuttle waits to bring us back to IMG's HQ facilities. Here we finally have an opportunity to celebrate our climb and the guides award certificates.

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***“The experience was everything I was hoping it would be. The guides were knowledgeable and helpful without being patronizing. They pretty much kept to the schedule without being over-bearing. I would absolutely travel with you again and have already recommended you to a number of my friends. Thanks for a fantastic experience!”***

—Becky J.

For more comments from IMG climbers, please see our website at: [www.mountainguides.com/comments.shtml](http://www.mountainguides.com/comments.shtml)

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