

Cascades Backcountry Skiing and Snowboarding Instructional Tours with IMG

© 2018 International Mountain Guides

Have you ever wondered what the skiing is like beyond the ski area? Crystal Mountain offers some of the best and most easily accessed backcountry skiing in the Northwest. International Mountain Guides and Crystal Mountain have teamed up to offer guided backcountry ski mountaineering and snowboard instructional tours. This is your opportunity to experience this phenomenal terrain and learn the skills with the added security and direction of an experienced, professional guide service.

Why Choose This Program?

Our curriculum is designed to give downhill skiers (intermediate or better) the chance to explore and experience the rapidly growing sport of ski mountaineering. You will have an opportunity to ski untouched "wild snow" away from the crowds. Some will want the training to prepare for bigger ski mountaineering trips such as Mt. Rainier or the Haute Route in the Alps. Others will want to develop the skills to do ski mountaineering trips on their own.

Prerequisites:

All participants must have good physical fitness and intermediate to advanced skiing ability a variety of snow conditions. On the overnight trip you will have to carry personal a pack with your personal overnight gear.

Dates:

One-day ski mountaineering instructional tour

Daily January - April (Trip length: 1 day)

Registration with IMG office 48 hrs in advance is required.

Cost: \$500 (1-3 people; \$125 each additional person)

Client/Guide Ratio: Maximum 6:1

Meeting place: Alpine Inn Restaurant at Crystal Mountain

Two-day overnight ski mountaineering instructional tour

Weekends January - April (Trip length: 2 days)

Registration with IMG office 48 hrs in advance is required.

Cost: \$600/person (two days, minimum two people)

Client/Guide Ratio: Maximum 4:1 (minimum two guides)

Meeting place: Alpine Inn Restaurant at Crystal Mountain

Cost Includes:

Guides, group equipment including tents, stoves, climbing ropes and hardware, permits

Cost Does Not Include:

Ski equipment, ski lift tickets (if you decide to use lifts), food and lodging, **REQUIRED Insurance:** IMG requires that all* trip participants purchase [Travel Insurance](#) that includes coverage for medical evacuation, repatriation and medical expenses for the duration of their IMG program. Trip Cancellation Insurance is strongly recommended. Trekking and mountaineering programs are true "adventure travel." **The insurance requirement does not apply to IMG customers on programs within the continental USA, but is strongly encouraged.*

Cascades Backcountry Skiing and Snowboarding Custom Touring and Training Itineraries

On the first day of your trip, plan to meet your guide/instructor at the Alpine Inn at Crystal Mountain at 7:30 am. This can also be an opportunity to have breakfast (meal cost not included). For directions to the Alpine Inn and if you plan on staying at Crystal Mountain please check <http://www.crystalhotels.com/> for more information. If you are coming from out of state you will need to arrive in the greater Seattle area or SeaTac Airport no later than the evening prior to your scheduled trip. Current conditions and driving information can be found at www.skicrystal.com

Specific itineraries depend on the training tour planned as each excursion is custom, however example itineraries might be as follows:

One-day ski mountaineering instructional tour:

A typical day will begin at 7:30am meeting your guide and discussing the curriculum and the day's tour plan. After a review of basic transceiver skills and backcountry travel, we will either use the lifts or begin our tour from the base of Crystal. We can tour to Silver Basin, Bullion Basin, or head out into the amazing ski terrain of the Morse Creek area. We will hone techniques for efficient uphill travel. The guides will help you find the best powder stashes in the area. The amazingly diverse and varied terrain of the Crystal backcountry ensures that there will be something for everyone; from the strong intermediate to the eager expert.

The training curriculum for the day includes the following skills:

- Use of skins and touring ski/board set-ups; AT, telemark, or splitboard
- Transceiver function and use
- Route finding and terrain assessment
- Skiing variable snow conditions
- Intro to avalanche hazard evaluation
- Environmental awareness and LNT principles

Two-day overnight ski mountaineering instructional tour:

For those looking to venture a little deeper into the backcountry, our overnight backcountry instructional tours are the perfect option. This two day course will allow us to drop over the Pacific Crest Trail and into the Morse Creek Basin. This program will provide more training solitude and more skiing! With so much terrain to offer, an overnight trip is the ideal way to learn the latest skills and techniques to efficiently and enjoyably experience the Crystal Mountain backcountry.

In addition to all of the skills covered in the one day tour curriculum, participants will also learn winter camping techniques and more in depth avalanche hazard assessment.

The training curriculum for the instructional tour includes the following skills:

- Skiing with an overnight pack
- Rescue considerations
- Extended route finding and terrain assessment
- LNT principles for winter alpine camps
- Skiing variable snow conditions
- Route selection and travel techniques in avalanche terrain

Cascades Backcountry Skiing and Snowboarding Equipment List

Avalanche transceivers can be rented from IMG. Ski mountaineering gear may be rented locally. For more information please contact paul@mountainguides.com

Clothing

- Long underwear top and bottom (light or medium weight)
- Fleece or soft shell jacket
- Soft shell pants (Schoeller or similar)
- Waterproof/breathable shell with hood
- Waterproof/breathable pants (full side zips preferred)
- Lightweight down or synthetic jacket
- Wool or fleece hat
- Baseball or sun cap
- Insulated ski gloves
- Light fleece or wool gloves
- Balaclava or neck gaiter

Gear

- Day pack with strapping system for skis or board
- Skis with AT bindings, splitboard or telemark
- AT, snowboard, or telemark boots
- Ski poles (adjustable are best)
- Climbing skins (cut to skis)
- Collapsible snow shovel
- Avalanche probe
- Avalanche transceiver
- Ski crampons
- Sunscreen and lip balm
- Sunglasses
- Ski goggles
- Helmet (optional)
- Headlamp with new batteries
- One liter water bottle
- Camera and film (the smaller the better)

Additional Gear for Overnight Trips

- 50-60 liter backpack with ski attachment points
- Sleeping bag (rated to 0° F or better)
- Sleeping pad
- Warm insulated parka
- Insulated pants (synthetic or down is preferred)
- Warm mittens
- One pair of extra socks
- One liter water bottle (total of two)
- Cup, bowl and spoon
- Light toiletries: toothbrush and toothpaste, small roll of TP
- Personal first aid kit, to include moleskin, band-aids, tape, ibuprofen, etc.
- 2 large garbage bags
- Personal lunch food (bring a variety of your favorite foods, including easy to eat snacks)