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Alpine Ski-Mountaineering Equipment List

Dressing properly for the mountains can make a huge difference between an enjoyable or uncomfortable trip. Clothing needs to give the right degree of warmth for the activity and resting. We recommend utilising a layering system, which provides a versatile method of regulating your body temperature.

Experienced skiers may find it best to use their own tried and tested clothing so use this as a checklist. During the ski day or our multi-day trips you will be expected to carry your share of communal travel equipment. This may include one or two of the following items supplied by the guides; rope, first aid, spares kit, Emergency sat phone, shovel, and avalanche probes. Spare ski skin, spare glue and a small ski repair kit.

Please use this list as a guideline only. (Do try and keep your rucksack and contents as light as possible.

Head and face

Wool hat and baseball type cap/sun hat.

Face/Neck guard/tube/buff- some people bring a cotton scarf as it can double as a lightweight towel as well as preventing your neck getting sun burnt! Not all clothing is carries just to keep you warm so please bear that in mind and do bring some long sleeved tops with turtle zip necks!

Ski Goggles and sun/glacier spectacles.

Sun creams, lip salves, cold air creams.

Ski Helmet- most people do not use these for long hut to hut trips and it is down to personal choice.

Upper Body:

Wicking T shirt/ thermal vest

Long sleeved wicking thermal shirt (Zip-T Neck –long sleeved)

Fleece jacket (Wind-proof Soft shell is popular although not as warm as traditional fleece!)

Gore-Tex outer shell jacket (or similar) outer Shell Jacket with hood

Thin gloves, (wind stopper felt. fleece or light thin fleece)

Water resistant Gloves / Good ski glove

Spare Gloves or Mittens (especially for high summits such as Mont Blanc)

Lower Body and Legs:

Underwear... spares as required

Power Stretch type trouser or soft shell trouser. (They should offer some warmth and wind resistance, NOT cotton)

Gore Tex outer shell trouser/pants - Full-length leg zips useful, (lightweight)

Warm Socks and spares (loop stitch)

Ski Mountaineering Boots (rigid sole and suitable for crampons)*(ensure they are comfortable for skiing, skinning and walking!)

Snow cuff type gaiters (or outer trouser bottoms may have suitable ankle closures)

Equipment:

Rucksack/Backpack (30-35 Litre minimum size). With Ice axe loop, side compression straps or other straps for strapping skis on to the sac for carrying skis when climbing up couloirs etc)

Avalanche transceiver (this is a compulsory item!) - can be hired in most ski resorts)

Light weight ice axe, shorter length best (50 -55cms) as often longer ones can protrude from your sac and cause accidents. (We often use ski poles for walking)

Crampons (12 points preferred - lightweight ski mountaineering models are adequate with anti-balling plates compatible with your ski mountaineering boots)*

Lightweight sit-harness. Black Diamond Alpine Bod, or similar

2 Large pear shaped screw gate Karabiners*

1 Long Tape Sling (and or some prussic cord 2 meters is plenty)*

Thermos Flask/ Water Bottle/Camel Back (1 litre minimum)

Compass and Maps* (Optional, your guide has them, and they can be bought locally or try

www.stanfords.co.uk)

Ski Mountaineering skis, complete with ski mountaineering bindings, skins and ski crampons (all well serviced and in good condition!)*

Ski- poles with good baskets.

Small head torch c/w batteries-

Spare warm top (Puff Ball top or light Duvet)

Camera – optional (please keep it light, small and have a system c/w a small lanyard which you find easy to use when on your skis in exposed and cold conditions!)

Small first aid kit. - For personal use only, blister kit and any personal medicines.

It's a good idea to have a large plastic bag or waterproof bag/pouch to use inside your rucksack to keep things dry.

Pen Knife... (For packed lunches etc)

Tiny wash kit and small light travel towel- wet wipes are handy, as some huts do not have washing facilities.

Avalanche transceivers: you must have one and know how to use It.* (*ask your guide for refresher if he does not run a practice session!*)

Lightweight shovel- if you have one please bring it.

Other Items:

Sometimes worth taking if you are travelling a lot and staying in bunk houses/Mountain huts/ hotels etc. These are generally kept in your travel bag and not normally carried during the ski- days (if you are joining us for haute route, remember that we start in Chamonix and finish in Zermatt. So you have to store your spare gear and return to it at the end of the trip or forward it to another pre determined pick up point.

Spare valley clothing and footwear

Small warm Sleeping bag (you do not need sleeping bags in the Alpine huts as blankets are provided, some people like to use a **light weight silk liner in huts as the blankets are wool and can be scratchy!**)

Ear Plugs

Wash Kit

Towel

Swim Trunks/bathing suit – only if you are staying in smart hotels or if there is a spa near by!

Small sewing/ repair kit

First Aid Kit

Passport/ identity papers

Driving licence

Climbing /rescue/ medical insurance card

Money (Most areas have access to ATM's for local cash) (all mountain huts take Euros, some take credit cards. Swiss huts take Euros but it's a better exchange rate to use Swiss currency)

European Health Insurance card (if you are a UK resident)

For health related travel advice check www.dh.gov.uk/travellers

Alpine Club and other mountain related membership cards sometimes give discount in Mountain Huts and local climbing shops.

Notes:

*1. Equipment marked with a * is (normally) available for loan from us or available for hire/rental from the local shops. People outside "average" sizes, (very small or very large) should check availability*

2. Team Ascent guides will supply all ropes and ice screws etc.

3. Shovels. We try and have as many light weight shovels in the party as possible although it's always a trade off, as other spares and equipment have also to be carried. If you have a good lightweight ski - shovel, which you love to carry, please bring it.

4. SKIS have been much improved for ease of skiing over the past few years and are continually evolving. Generally they are shorter, wider and more "waisted". This allows for easier turning but still keep the skier afloat on off-piste snow. Heavy skis are usually better for descent as they give a more rigid and solid platform to ski upon, although lightweight touring skis are much easier for uphill work. There are many good skis for ski touring; Examples are: Rossignol (Bandits 2B's), Movement, K2 and Atomic. These are all excellent skis, which are great for ski touring. Many mountain guides use a good free ride ski with a Diamir binding for much of their daily ski work. The rough rule is that the length of ski should reach up to just above eye level when holding it vertically up in front of you.

5. BINDINGS For ski mountaineering the Diamir binding is the current market leader, they are all for step I use and have good toe and heel release making them a safe option in a fall. Many skiers now use the same binding for on or off piste skiing. The Diamir also comes with ski breaks and Leashes. Both have their pros and cons, to have a ski break is extremely useful and in very deep snow or crossing crevasses leashes have their uses. The D Explore is one of the newest models, and the Diamir Free ride is stronger and a bit heavier but also popular.

The Diamir ski crampon (Couteau or Harscheisen) are easy to install and are essential when touring as they give an excellent grip in hard and wind packed snow.

6. Ski poles, there is a huge range out there, the baskets should be useful for powder snow, and if they have good grips with an adjustable wrist loop which can break out in an emergency fall is a useful but not compulsory feature. Fixed length ones are stronger than telescopic ones and give fewer problems in remote places! Many mountain guides use the type that can transfer into an avalanche probe, which can be handy and reduces weight in your rucksack!

7. SKI BOOTS: Choosing the correct ski touring boot is a very important decision. A comfortable down hill boot will work for ski touring, but if a lot of time is spent skinning uphill they can be a little too stiff for comfort and the boot will need constant readjustment when changing from skinning mode to skiing mode. A much better solution is to buy or rent a ski mountaineering boot. They come in various shapes and sizes and of course as you are to walk and skin in them they tend to be more floppy

and forgiving than a downhill ski boot. The solution here is to have a "Thermo fit" inner boot or liner, with a customised foot bed insole which will ensure a good comfy but precise fit. A comfortable boot is really important and we recommend breaking your boots in before joining any of our courses. Scarpa make an extensive range of Ski touring boots, The Scarpa Laser and Magic are ace. Garmin and Lowa make some nice ones too!

8. Avalanche Transceivers: Tracker. Orthodox, Barryox are good makes. The newer digital models are easier to use. Ensure you have a fresh set of batteries!

9. Skins: These should be cut and shaped to fit your skis should be kept clean, dry and well glued. A good ski mountaineering rental/hire shop should give you a good set of everything you need