



SWS Mountain Guides

110 Alpine St.

Mt. Shasta, CA 96067

info@swsmountainguides.com

www.swsmountainguides.com

Phone: 888.797.6867

Palisades Mountaineering Camp I

Basic Alpine Mountaineering Course with Summit Climbs

The Palisades in the Eastern Sierra Nevada



General Description: This course is a comprehensive introduction to alpine climbing, with an emphasis on the tools and techniques used in rock, ice, and snow climbing. Topics to be covered: trip planning and preparation, route finding, map use, altimeter and compass use in navigation and route finding, an introduction to the technical equipment used in climbing (harnesses, ropes, and hardware, basic rock-climbing techniques, anchor systems, belaying and rappelling. Presentation and instruction in the use of ice ax and crampons in snow and ice, self-arrest, self-belay, and snow and ice protection hardware and anchors, roped team and glacier travel, glissading, physical hazards, mountain medicine, and more! Guide to client ratio is 1:3 to ensure individual attention.

Sample Itinerary

Day 1: We will meet at 8:00 am at a predetermined spot as organized by the guide. A thorough pack check will be conducted, and group gear will be distributed. We will then begin our hike to a camp at approximately 11,000 feet (Third Lake) with informal lectures taking place along the trail.

Day 2: Day two will be devoted to rock climbing instruction (equipment, technique, rappelling, etc. at a nearby crag.

Day 3: On day three we will travel to a higher camp above the snow line (12,500 feet), with the time dedicated to introducing you to ice ax and crampon use, ice and snow techniques (self-arrest, roped team travel, anchors, protection systems, and crevasse rescue.



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Day 4: Beginning with an alpine start (3:30 am!), day four will see us putting our skills to use as we attempt a peak in the Palisades (either Mt. Gayley or Winchell, depending on conditions), returning to our high camp by day's end.

Day 5: Our fifth and final day will be spent packing up and returning to the trail head by 4:00 pm.

PLEASE NOTE - This is a best-case scenario. This itinerary is subject to change at the guide's discretion and is dependent upon mountain conditions, group experience/expectations, and other factors we cannot anticipate.

Location: Big Pine, California, Palisade Glacier, Eastern Sierra Nevada.

Experience Level Requirements: No previous mountaineering experience required, but some backpacking experience is highly recommended.

Physical Conditioning Requirements: Participants should be in **good to excellent physical condition**. Our backpacks will weigh anywhere from 45 to 65 pounds. You must be able to climb 500-600 feet per an hour for 6-10 hours with a day pack. Recent hiking or backpacking experience is highly recommended. Please call us if you have any questions about this.

Food: Breakfasts, dinners, and hot beverages are provided while on the mountain. We will have a variety of options available, however, we cannot guarantee specific choices of flavors or meals. If you have a favorite breakfast or dinner that only requires hot water, we encourage you to bring it. Make sure to bring your own favorite, high-calorie, high-carbohydrate lunches, and snacks. Examples: bagels, cheese, dried fruit, trail mix, Clif bars, chocolate, etc. Note: you will need approximately 200-300 calories per hour (7-9 hours on summit day alone).

Getting Here and Away: The closest major airports are in Reno, Las Vegas, or Ontario.

Where to Stay: Bishop is the closest town with a multitude of hotels to choose from.

Group Size: 2-6 Guests (Guide to Guest ratio is 1:3)

Includes: Professional instruction/guide, freeze dried dinners, breakfast items & hot drinks, helmets, harness, group-climbing equipment including ropes and safety equipment, group camping equipment including tents and stoves, and permits.

Not Included: Mountaineering Boots, Snowshoes (early season) and Crampons are NOT included but are available for rent from SWS Mountain Guides as well as backpacks, sleeping bags, sleeping pads, down jackets, and Gore-Tex jackets. For more details about equipment, please see our equipment list for this course or give us a call at 1-888-797-6867