



SWS Mountain Guides

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SHASTA ADVANCED WINTER MOUNTAINEERING DENALI PREPARATION COURSE With Mt. Shasta Winter Summit Attempt



General Description: Designed for **experienced** climbers in need of extended training in the winter environment. Our Advanced Winter Mountaineering / Denali Preparation Course provides training for climbers considering or planning high altitude expeditions. Gain the experience and refine the skills needed for private, and required on guided attempts of Denali, various peaks in South America, and the Himalayas. The Denali Prep/Advanced Winter Course starts with a review of the basic to intermediate skills, such as self-arrest with an ice axe, crampon techniques, before the course ventures into a much more advanced skills training. Topics include challenging route finding, winter anchor systems, avalanche awareness skills, camp selection and location, self-rescue, and more. All activity by highly experienced mountain guides, most of whom have been expedition leaders on major international expeditions to areas such as the Andes, Elbrus, the Himalayas, and Denali.

The course is typically conducted like a mini-expedition over four days. You'll establish a series of camps on Mt. Shasta's Casaval Ridge route while learning more and pushing higher on the ridge. If conditions allow, we will ultimately put it all together in an attempt at the summit of Mount Shasta. Emphasis on our Denali preparation course is an education in winter mountaineering and gaining experience climbing in the winter environment. Our summit attempt of Mt. Shasta will be the icing on the cake if successful. Mount Shasta climbing conditions in the winter can be very challenging and make the summit more rarely attained.

Itinerary

Day 1: After meeting at 8:00 am on the first day at our Mt. Shasta office, we will conduct a complete pack check and divide up the group gear. We will then carpool to the trail head at Bunny Flat on Mt. Shasta's south side. From here, we will snowshoe/ski to our base camp somewhere around 8,000-9,000 feet. As we snowshoe/ski, we will be instructing and holding informal lectures.

Day 2: On day two we will move to our advanced base camp higher up on the ridge (10,000 feet) with the balance of the day spent working on the various winter mountaineering skills.



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Day 3: On the third day we will make a high ridge camp (if warranted and if conditions allow). This will be an optional summit day, or a skills day as determined by the weather and route conditions. We will then retire early in preparation for an alpine start on the summit day if not attempted on this day.

Day 4: Summit Day!! We will be getting up early (12-1 am) for our alpine start and moving out of camp by 2-3am. The summit is approximately 3 miles/4500 vertical feet away. Our summit turnaround time is between 10 -11am due to safety concerns. We should be back to camp around 2-3pm and back to the trail head around 5:30 pm.

PLEASE NOTE - This is a best-case scenario. This itinerary is subject to change at the guide's discretion and is dependent on mountain conditions, group experience/expectations, and other factors we cannot anticipate. It is entirely possible that summit day could be switched from day 4 to day 3 or even day 2 if weather is a problem.

Experience Level Requirements: This is an advanced course and as such **previous mountaineering experience is required** (knowledge of knots, belays, crampon and ice axe use). Completion of our Basic and Advanced Summer Mountaineering Camps qualifies as sufficient training experience or completion of our Basic Winter Mountaineering Course. Advanced backcountry skiing skills are required if you are planning on using skis. Please give us a call if you have any questions about this.

Physical Conditioning Requirements: Participants must be in **excellent** physical condition. Backpacks will weigh anywhere from 45 to 65 pounds. Elevation gain on this climb is 7,302 feet from the trail head at Bunny Flat (6,860 feet) to the Mt. Shasta Summit (14,179 feet). Our base camp will be between 9,500 – 10,000 feet. If you anticipate a problem with altitude sickness, please call and talk to us. We have several techniques that can help you to avoid, or at the very least, minimize adverse reactions to altitude.

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).

Dates and Pricing: Please visit our website at swsmountainguides.com for updated pricing and dates.

Getting Here and Away: The Sacramento Airport (SMF) and Medford International Airport (MFR) are great jumping off points.

Where to Stay: Mt. Shasta is a great mountain town with several options on where to stay. Please feel free to contact us if you have questions or want recommendations.

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

Includes: Professional instruction/guide, breakfast(s), dinner(s), ice axes, helmets, harness, group equipment including ropes and safety equipment, group camping equipment including tents and stoves, permits, and license fees including Mt. Shasta summit fees.

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.

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