



Introduction to Backcountry Skiing

BanffLIFE:	Christine LaRocque w-760-2423	banfflife@banff.ca
ACMG Guide:	Erica Roles	
Date:	December 15, 2011, or February 16, 2012 or March 16, 2012	
Departure:	Meet at 8:00 at 302 Buffalo Street (across for the CIBC)	
Returning:	Around 6pm	
Transportation:	12-passenger van	
Equipment:	See Gear List below...	
Food:	Please provide snacks, lunch	

Course Information

What is it?

These courses are a one-day introduction to winter touring on skis, or split boards. They will teach the basics of touring and familiarize students to the terrain. There will also be some fun turns to be had!

Who should go?

These courses are appropriate for anyone who is comfortable on blue runs and can make their way down a black run (maybe with a couple of falls!). Some experience skiing in soft snow is helpful but not essential. If you are keen and want to experience the backcountry without a lot of effort this course is for you! And if you have already been riding outside the ski area boundaries without any previous training in safe travel techniques and terrain familiarization you need to come on this course!

Safety

Safety is our first priority on all BanffLIFE trips and courses. Instructors on all courses are members of the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides with the appropriate certification. These guides have gone through a rigorous training and certification process to ensure the trip is as safe as possible. Please listen and pay attention to the guides and follow their instructions. It is important that you understand that you are skiing with a group and that you have to work with the team to make the day safe for everyone. Safety equipment is provided and you are required to use it as instructed at all times.

Risk

All mountaineering and skiing activities involve some element of risk. You will be required to sign a waiver where you assume that risk, waive your right to sue, and releases the guides and BanffLIFE of all liability in case of an accident.



A Little about Banff

Welcome to Banff National Park! Established in 1885, Banff is Canada's first and best known national park. It is a part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site that covers 20,000km² of some of the most spectacular and ecologically significant areas in the Canadian Rocky Mountains. From the beginning, Banff National Park has provided inspiration, rejuvenation, and relaxation to millions of people each year. It is a place where residents and visitors can participate in activities that help them understand and respect Canada's natural and cultural heritage. Banff National Park is truly a sacred and special place where the richness of Canada's mountain heritage is respected, experienced and celebrated for all time. As new members of the Banff community, you are about to embark on your very own Banff National Park adventure. BanffLIFE is happy to be a part of your adventure and we are looking forward to introducing you to your back yard!

Course Outline

The following will be covered on your course:

- Discussion of risk and signing of the waiver
- Equipment familiarization and use
- Pre-trip planning
- Safe travel techniques in the backcountry
- Backcountry hazards
- Avalanche rescue
- Terrain familiarization
- Backcountry ski technique

Gear List

Clothing Systems

- Bring lots of warm clothes! You may be outside for most or all of the day.
- The clothing you use at the ski hill will work well.
- Layering works best for the stop and go activity of ski touring. Plan on bringing several thin and medium layers rather than only a couple of thick ones.
- Synthetic fabrics should be chosen if possible, avoid cotton.

Participants need to provide the following:

Long underwear top and bottoms: Wool or synthetic is best.

Pants: Your regular ski or snowboard pants will work well. If you have softshell pants or thinner hardshell pants we often like to use those as well, especially in warmer conditions.

Softshell or fleece jacket: We like a hooded jacket, but it's not absolutely necessary.

Insulated parka: A thick insulated parka is great for when you are stopped for a break or having lunch out in the field. Down filled or synthetic materials are both fine.



Shell jacket: A jacket that keeps the wind and wet out. Again, your ski or snowboard jacket should work fine.

Hats: We like having a warm toque for the downhills and a lighter weight one for walking uphill.

Gloves: Bring warm ski-type gloves. A lightweight pair of gloves should also be brought for warm conditions and/or for walking uphill. If you have mitts bring them too if the weather forecast is for cold conditions.

Boots: Your regular ski or snowboard boots will be fine as the uphills are short. If you have access to ski touring boots you can bring them if you wish but they are not essential.

Touring Gear: You will need to provide the following equipment. All of this may be rented at Mountain Magic (Banff), Wilson Sports (Lake Louise) or Gear Up (Canmore). Contact the BanffLife office to ask if there is a group trip to get rental gear for your course.

Skiers

- Skis with alpine touring bindings, or “Alpine Trekkers”, or telemark bindings
- Skins
- Avalanche transceiver

Snowboarders

- Split board
- Poles (for walking uphill)
- Skins
- Avalanche transceiver

Other Safety Gear

We will provide the rest of your safety gear (collapsible shovel and avalanche probe). The guides will carry rescue and first aid equipment as well as a radio and/or cell phone for emergency communications.

Other Stuff

You need to provide the following:

Lunch and water

We recommend a thermos with a hot drink.

Sunglasses, sunscreen, sun block for your lips

Heat packs for your gloves come in handy

Toilet kit There will not be toilet facilities in the backcountry! It’s best if you avoid defecating out in the field. But if you really need to then have toilet paper and a plastic bag handy. Shit at least 60 m away from water sources and well off trail. Toilet paper needs to be packed out in the plastic bag.

Backpack: Bring a pack big enough to fit all this gear and clothing into!



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This program is sponsored by Parks Canada

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