



Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School

Director Jon Tierney, IFMGA/UIAGM Certified Mountain Guide
Accredited by the American Mountain Guides Association since 1993



Trip Information Packet Introduction to Mountaineering on Katahdin

Thank you for registering for an Introduction to Mountaineering on Katahdin, Maine's highest peak, through Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School. We are looking forward to climbing with you.

Trip Dates

Thursday through Monday, March 11- 15, 2010

Trip Description

The remote location and arctic environment of Katahdin make this one of the most rewarding winter alpine ascents in New England. Reaching the summit of Katahdin at any time of year is an accomplishment but in the winter it holds just a little more magic and a lot less people. The first day and a half of our trip will be spent hiking 15 miles to Chimney Pond. Chimney Pond is nestled in the bottom of a massive cirque known as the South Basin of Katahdin. Once at Chimney Pond we will have instant access to the biggest alpine terrain East of the Rockies. The view from Chimney Pond alone is worth the trip in. The following two days will be filled learning about backcountry winter camping and mountaineering, and then applying these new skills to attempt the summit of the highest point in Maine. Our fifth day will be spent returning to the trailhead and eventually giving our tired feet a well-deserved rest. This trip is physically demanding but requires no previous winter climbing or camping experience. The trip will be led by Jon Tierney, an IFMGA Licensed Mountain Guide, along with other AMGA trained mountain guides who have extensive mountain experience and training in avalanche assessment and wilderness medicine.

NOTE: Extreme weather, avalanche conditions, inadequate personal fitness, difficult terrain, or park weather / travel closures may make it impossible to achieve our stated objective of the summit of Katahdin. No refunds will be made in anticipation of inclement weather or for not reaching the summit.

General Itinerary

Day 0 (March 10th): Meet at 8:00 pm at Acadia Mountain Guides office at 92 Main Street, Orono, ME for Pre-trip meeting. We will review our itinerary and have a general trip discussion followed by the fitting of rental gear and equipment checking.

Day 1: Leave Orono at 6 a.m. and drive 1 1/2 hours to Baxter State Park. Where we'll hike 11 miles of access road to Roaring Brook Campground. At camp participants will be introduced to the fundamentals of winter camping, learning to work with nature, and to have fun doing it! Staying warm and dry, melting snow and cooking efficiently, setting up winter shelters (including a snow quinzhee!) and how to use and repair our most important piece of backcountry equipment, our stove, are some of the skills covered early in the course.

Day 2: Getting an early start, we will hike an additional 3.5 miles, gaining approximately 1500', to reach our camp at Chimney Pond. Afternoon will be spent practicing a variety of mountaineering skills and avalanche safety skills. Use of the ice axe and crampons will be introduced, and depending on conditions, we will focus on either snow or ice climbing movement and techniques. After our calves simply cannot take anymore, and we have warmed ourselves with soup and hot chocolate, we will retire to our sleeping bags with visions of the summit on the following day.

Day 3: Summit bid! After a quick breakfast we will pack our daypacks and make our way towards the summit. Depending on conditions, there are several route options to the top. Possibilities range from basic mountaineering to more technical snow and ice ascents, possibly including a traverse of the famed "Knife Edge". Regardless of route, our objective is the highest point in Maine, the summit of "The Great One". Expect to spend the entire day working toward our goal.

Day 4: Theme of the day – options! The fourth day of our trip can be spent accomplishing a wide variety of things. More mountaineering or ice climbing, avalanche skills (including beacon usage and mock burials) snow shelter construction, weather forecasting, mountain navigation, below treeline hiking, or any combination of these things. Or if you're feeling a little tired, take a well-earned rest day and soak up the views from around camp! In the case of questionable weather or conditions, days 3 & 4 can be switched to give us a greater chance of reaching the summit.

All seasons
92 Main St., Box 121
Orono, ME 04473
207-866-7562

www.AcadiaMountainGuides.com
888-232-9559

Summer
198 Main St.
Bar Harbor, ME
207-288-8186

Day 5: After a big breakfast (and even bigger stretch session!) we will pack our gear and begin the hike back to the trailhead. Finally, return to Orono for a nice meal and a warm bed.

Transport: Taxi service is available at Bangor International Airport (cost is approximately \$15.00). AMGCS will provide transport between our base in Orono and Baxter State Park. An airport drop-off will be run on the day following the course (March 16th) and will leave Orono at 7 a.m.

Food: AMGCS will provide all meals for this trip beginning with lunch on Day 1 through lunch on the final day. Please let us know if you have any special dietary needs or are vegetarian or vegan. You are welcome and encouraged to bring a few easy to eat trail snacks to suit your personal tastes.

Pre/Post Trip Lodging: Several hotels and inns are located within 5 - 10 minutes of the Acadia Mountain Guides office. The Black Bear Inn can be reached by calling 207-866-7120 or on the web at <http://blackbearinnoronono.com>. Another option is the University Inn at 207-866-4921, which is on the web at www.universitymotorinn.com.

Risk and Rescue: Enjoying the outdoors necessitates a certain degree of risk-taking. You are participating in this trip and entering the winter backcountry environment of Baxter State Park at your own risk. Ultimately, it is your responsibility to minimize various hazards through the application of good judgment gained from a foundation of education and experience. Some of the hazards that can lead to injury associated with this trip include but are not limited to extreme cold, demanding physical travel, avalanche, vehicle transportation, skiing and camping. Please be sure that you are fully aware of such risks. Self-reliance in the face of adversity is expected on the part of the wilderness traveler entering the wilderness areas of Baxter State Park. Cellular phones and radios should not be relied upon in an emergency. Use of radios or cellular phones is prohibited within Baxter State Park. While most risks cannot be completely eliminated, it is our goal to interpret the environmental, situational and group variables and to make educated decisions to minimize dangers to you while at the same time providing an enjoyable and memorable experience.

Baxter State Park rescue policy - "Although it is the policy of Baxter State Park to attempt to assist those in need, a rescue effort on the mountain or in the park backcountry should not be expected. Search and rescue operations are conducted on a discretionary basis. The level and urgency of the response is determined by field personnel based on their evaluation of the situation. A rescue will be initiated only when necessary and when within the reasonable technical ability of available personnel and provides rescuers with a reasonable margin of safety. A helicopter rescue is risky and expensive and will only be used when medical or technical demands warrant it. Rescue is not automatic. For all practical purposes, a party is alone and must depend upon its own resources for self-rescue and be equipped for an extended emergency."

Release and Assumption of Risk, Health Statement and Registration Forms: Please complete these forms and return it to us at least three weeks in advance of the trip. Please provide us with emergency contact information at the time of registration.

Footwear / Skis: You will need a mountaineering double boot for this course. Snowshoes are often necessary if new snow or posthole conditions occur (rentals available). A second option, if you have them and are proficient, is to use a traditional ski touring (cross country set-up) and carry your double boots for the ascent. Don't forget your wax unless you have waxless skis. If you need double boots from us, please call us with your size.

Gear Discount

You are entitled to a **10% discount** coupon on **all future outdoor equipment purchases** at Alpenglow Adventure Sports, our outdoor equipment retail store located at 92 Main St., Orono, ME and on the web at alpenglowgear.com.

Additional Information

If possible, please familiarize yourself with the booklet on [Winter Use of Baxter State Park](#). It contains several nuggets of useful information for winter camping, skiing, and mountaineering. This booklet was prepared for Baxter State Park by Jon Tierney, owner of Acadia Mountain Guides Climbing School. It is available on the AcadiaMountainGuides.com website.

Personal Equipment Checklist

** = provided if need be

- Large, sturdy internal or external frame pack (>5000 c.i. or 80L)
please leave enough empty space in your pack to accommodate a stuff sack of group gear about 12" x 18" in size.
- Climbing ** double boot capable of attaching crampons
- EVA 1/2" foam full length ground pad (rentals available)
- Adjustable Ski poles (rentals available)
- High gaiters or supergaiters
- Insulating mittens and gloves
- Thin wicking sock liners and / or vapor barrier sock
- Balaclava that covers entire head
- Mid - heavy weight insulating jacket or sweater
- Wicking innerwear (long underwear) top and bottom
- Waterproof / breathable jacket and pants with side zips
- Unbreakable bowl, insulated cup & spoon, personal toiletries
- Headlamp with fresh batteries (rentals available)
- Climbing Helmet **
- 20 degree sleeping bag (rentals available)
- EVA 1/2" foam pad 3/4 length or ThermoRest ground pad
- Sunscreen and lip balm
- Goggles and sunglasses with side protection
- Waterproof mitten shells
- Insulating wool blend socks
- Warm hat
- Expedition weight down or synthetic jacket
- Insulating pants with side zips
- Mountaineering Ice axe and Crampons**
- Insulated, wide-mouthed, water bottles or thermos
- Avalanche transceiver **
- Snowshoes (rentals available)