



# Alpine Institute

## Ski Mountaineering Itinerary

### Program Details

In this course, we begin with the fundamentals of backcountry skiing, such as the use and function of touring equipment, terrain selection, track setting, route finding, and traveling safely as a group. We then set up camp at the base of Mount Baker and step it up with winter camping, glacier travel for skiers, and traveling on steep terrain with an ice axe and crampons. If the weather and the conditions allow, this sets us up for a possible descent of Mt. Baker's Coleman Glacier. **The itinerary below may not be exactly what your course does. The actual itinerary will be dictated by weather, avalanche conditions, road conditions, and skier ability.**

### Difficulty Grade

Intermediate to Advanced

### Inclusions and Exclusions

**Inclusions:** Permits and access fees, guide, group technical equipment, and biffy bags.

**Exclusions:** Food, personal equipment, lodging during the frontcountry portion of the course, personal health, baggage and trip insurance, and transportation.

## Itinerary

#### Day 1 -

We begin at the **AAI Equipment Shop at 7:00am** to review equipment and the itinerary before heading up to Mt. Baker. You will then rendezvous at the Heather Meadow Lodge at the Mt. Baker ski area. Our first step is introducing avalanche beacons, shovels, and probes by practicing their proper storage, function, and use. We will also learn about basic backcountry equipment such as skins, bindings, etc. With this knowledge, we begin our first tour moving slowly to introduce many of the big concepts such as terrain selection and evaluation, track setting, route finding, proper use of ski touring equipment, and safety.

**You are responsible for your own lodging and transportation this night.**

#### Day 2 -

We will meet in the ski lodge and introduce navigational equipment covering the skills required for a tour plan. We then head to the backcountry where we will cover more terrain and have the opportunity for downhill track setting and safe efficient group movement. We will introduce navigational skills and continue to review and fine-tune all of the skills up to this point.

**You are responsible for your own lodging and transportation this night.**

**Day 3 -**

On this day we head onto the north side of Mt. Baker and set up camp at around 5,200 ft near the lower Coleman Glacier. We will practice track setting with bigger loads, we will also learn winter camping techniques and give an introduction to mountain weather. There is also the possibility to go on short ski runs right out of camp.

**Day 4 -**

From camp, we descend onto the Coleman Glacier. We cover glaciology, and movement on a glacier as a team of skiers. The Coleman has excellent terrain to practice cramponing and ice axe technique on steep snow and ice, the use of prusiks, and basic low-angle ice climbing and rappelling with skis.

**Day 5 -**

We use day five to go over glacier travel and crevasse rescue for ski mountaineers. This includes one-on-one crevasse rescue with skis on, and multi-team crevasse rescue. We then go on a tour of the glacier. That evening we prepare for the ascent the following day.

**Day 6 -**

On this day we climb Mount Baker and ski it! This may be an opportunity to ski from the top although that requires many things to work in our favor. The best way to approach this day is to know that however high we get on the mountain we are sure to have great skiing on the way down and learn a ton about ski mountaineering. Once we are back at camp we pack up and head out.