



Mt Robson Ascents

Program Details

Mount Robson is Canada's famous mountain. Climbers come from around the world to attempt its icy flanks. The great bulk of this heavily glaciated peak creates its own climate and the summit is never assured. Just getting to the peak can be a challenge, the summit is surrounded by broken glaciers, icefalls and tangled rainforest. Even if the weather cooperates you'll still need stamina, drive and good mountaineering technique to reach the summit.

Why try it then? Simply it's a beautiful mountain, its shiny, trapezoid summit massif rising far above all other peaks for miles. The climbing is classic, challenging glaciers on the approach, a demanding ice face followed by a twisting, sculpted snow ridge leading to a spacious summit. Just getting to the top is half the battle, you have to reverse all you've climbed to get there.

The Peak

Mt. Robson is the highest peak in the Canadian Rockies and its summit elevation is 3954m. It's located on the western edge of the range, 100km west of Jasper in British Columbia's Mount Robson Provincial Park. Its massive bulk, the first thing that moist westerlies hit after crossing B.C. has resulted in a moist local microclimate. At its base is temperate rainforest more typical of the coast and its upper heights are cloaked in the massive glaciation that makes it such a beautiful and challenging climb.

We prefer to attempt the the Kain Face on the N.E. side of the peak, it was the first ascent route in 1916. Now it is much steeper as the glaciers have changed. It is a serious climb involving some objective hazards and whilst the climbing is not extremely technical (45 - 550 snow and ice), conditions and weather can increase the challenge considerably. The summit day is often long and demanding can take takes 14 hours or more.

Due to the dangerous state of the Robson Icefall we now often access the high Dome Camp by helicopter. This allows us to climb the peak in as little as two days. Alternatively we can fly to a point lower on the mountain and access The Dome via the ridge from the Resplendent col, itself a challenging climb, especially when carrying a heavy pack. Approaching on foot it would take at least six days to complete the climb.

Other routes on the mountain include the Schwarz Ledges on the South Face. Overhung by unstable seracs this route is not very appealing. Harder routes include the North Face and the Fuhrer Ridge, these are routes we would only consider guiding with guests who have already built up a climbing relationship with our guides.

Kain Face Itineraries

Fly to Dome Camp

Day 1: Drive to Robson Provincial Park (4.5hrs.) from Canmore, fly to the 'Dome' at 3000m. This is located just below the Kain Face.

Day 2: Acclimatization and training day. Possibly climb Mount Resplendent (3426m).

Day 3: Summit attempt via Kain Face route. Expect to be out for 14 hours. Leaving camp in the very early hours of the morning you will head to the base of the 'Kain Face' and commence 550m of climbing on snow, ice or both with angles reaching 50°. From here the fun continues with the beautiful snow and ice arête leading to the steep slopes circumventing the 'Roof' and then, finally, the last section to the summit. To descend we reverse the climb!

Day 4: Spare day for another summit attempt; or, if weather permits and we were successful the previous day, we may fly out early and head to Mt. Edith Cavell or the Columbia Icefields for another climb on the last day.

Day 5: Either fly out from the Dome or do a final climb such as the East Ridge of Edith Cavell. Return to Canmore where the trip finishes. This can be a long day, so make travel plans accordingly.

Fly to Upper Robson Glacier or Rearguard Meadows

Day 1: Drive to Robson Provincial Park (4.5hrs.) from Canmore, fly to the Rearguard Meadows adjacent to the Robson Glacier.

Day 2: Move up as high as conditions and fitness permit. If all goes well to The Dome, otherwise camp in the Resplendent Col.

Day 3: Complete ascent to The Dome or 1st summit attempt via Kain Face route. Expect to be out for 14 hours. Leaving camp in the very early hours of the morning you will head to the base of the 'Kain Face' and commence 550m of climbing on snow, ice or both with angles reaching 50°. From here the fun continues with the beautiful snow and ice arête leading to the steep slopes circumventing the 'Roof' and then, finally, the last section to the summit. To descend we reverse the climb!

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Weather and Alternates

Mount Robson is known for its variable weather and it is important to realize that reaching the summit is very weather dependent. We have experienced a 50% success rate over the years. Because the icefall below the Dome has lately been too dangerous to climb we are likely to have to fly up to the Dome. To do this required reasonable flying conditions. If the weather is not good enough we may have to wait in valley. Once on the Dome bad weather may force us to descend on foot, possibly via the Resplendent ridge.

Any booking made for a Mount Robson cannot be cancelled at short notice due to weather or climbing conditions. This is because in accepting a booking on Mount Robson other guiding work

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200, 50 Lincoln Park, Canmore, Alberta, T1W 3E9, CANADA
1 866 678 4164 / 1 403 678 4164 info@yamnuska.com

will have been turned down. Should Mount Robson be unsafe or the weather unsuitable then the guides will organize alternate climbs in the region or elsewhere.

Thus participants must not only be in excellent shape for high climbing they must also be willing to adapt to whatever the weather forces upon us.

Guides and Guide Ratios

The guides assigned to lead Mount Robson climbs are fully-certified Mountain or Alpine Guides. They have been certified by the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides (ACMG) or by other member countries of the International Federation of Mountain Guide Associations (IFMGA). Where numbers warrant a second guide, he or she could also be an ACMG Assistant Alpine Guide. Yamnuska's guides operate within the official terrain guidelines of the ACMG and Yamnuska also is licensed to operate on the peak by Mount Robson Provincial Park.

The maximum ratio on a Mount Robson climb is 1:2. In certain situations or on certain routes the maximum may be 1:1.

Time Needed & Climbing Season

We require a commitment of at least 5 days for attempts on the Kain Face. This allows a reasonable amount of spare time in case of bad weather which may delay access to and from the peak and limit summit opportunities. Should bad weather further prolong the trip guide fees will be charged for extra days. We will only consider shorter Robson trips if they are imbedded into longer private guiding programs such as where a guest may have booked the guide for at least 5 days in any event.

If the trip is successful early on then the extra days can be used on other climbs in the region. If wanting to walk to and from the peak then extra days will be required.

The snow on the upper peak tends not to stabilize until mid-July. The optimal season is usually mid-July though the 3rd week of August. Some years you can climb right into September but there is a risk that the mountain might be out of condition due to late season storms.

How difficult is it? How fit and experienced need you be?

You must have a resume of prior mountaineering experience which includes glacier travel and climbing on steep ice and snow. This is one of our most demanding and challenging climbs. You will also need to be in excellent condition. If you have insufficient experience for this climb consider taking our advanced 'Intro to Alpine Ice' mountaineering program or arrange for at least 4 days of training with our guides beforehand.

If it becomes obvious that you are either not fit enough for the climb or lack the mountaineering skills needed then the guide will organize alternatives if possible. There will be no refunds in this situation.

Costs

We offer a fixed price 5-day Kain Face ascent package.

Price includes: guide fees, park fees, camping gear and out trip meals.

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# guests with guide	Per Person cost
1	\$3510 CDN
2	\$2268 CDN
Extra days on the mountain will be charged at our daily basic guide rate of \$475 for 1 guest or \$268 each if 2 guests.	
Price does not include: 5% Goods and services Tax (50% rebate available to non-residents), transportation to Mount Robson for yourself or the guide nor the cost of any helicopter flights (see notes below).	
Currency Exchange Calculator	

Notes on hiring a guide

When hiring a guide you pay guide fees plus expenses. The guide fee is a daily rate, which varies according to the number of people per guide. Expenses you will incur include the cost of transportation for yourself and the guide to Mount Robson, camping gear rentals if applicable, Provincial Park fees and meals (for the guide also). In addition there is the cost of any helicopter flights. To simplify things we have offered the 5-day package price outlined above.

Helicopter cost

Because this depends upon flying conditions and whether or not the flight is shared with other groups, we cannot accurately predict this cost. Therefore we do not include this in our package price. Instead we arrange for you to pay this cost directly to Yellowhead Helicopters (we will help facilitate this). For flights to and from the Dome the price without other groups sharing costs currently ranges between \$1400 and \$1750 Cdn including tax for up to 2 guests plus guide.

Transportation

We do not usually supply transportation and you are also responsible for the cost of the guide's transportation to the area. We suggest you pick the guide up in Canmore on your way to Mount Robson. If the guide has to drive up there to meet you a charge of \$280 is applied. In the case where you cannot arrange transportation we may be able to do this but the cost will be substantial (more than the cost of a reasonable rental car taken from the airport).

Getting to Mount Robson

Mount Robson is located in Mount Robson Provincial Park which is 100km west of Jasper on Highway 16. For ease of logistics we suggest you arrive via Calgary, travel 120km to Canmore where you can overnight then in the morning meet the guide pickup the supplies and gear before driving north to Mount Robson via the Icefields Parkway and Jasper. If flying to the region we would suggest you pick up a rental car at Calgary Airport that you can use for the trip.

Pre & Post Trip Accommodation

Optional pre and post trip accommodation packages are available from \$80 per person per night for shared room lodging (\$160 for single occupancy). Purchase with booking. Subject to availability.

You can also make your own arrangements. Check our links page for a range of recommended Canmore accommodations. In addition the Alpine Club of Canada Clubhouse (403 678-3200) is a good hostel here in Canmore with good facilities and reasonable prices.

Equipment and Clothing

We supply group camping and climbing gear but you must bring your own personal climbing gear (e.g. harness, helmet, ice axe, ice tools), clothing and general equipment. We can lend you a harness, helmet, ice axe, ice tool and crampons. Let us know, in advance, what you will need.

The equipment and clothing you bring with you will play a large role in the quality of your experience. It should be lightweight, durable and in good condition. You must be familiar with the function of your equipment. Make sure that it fits and that it works with other items of your equipment before you come. You don't want it to let you down at 12,000ft. Small additions can make life easier (for example short lengths of cord attached to zippers and wrist loops added to mittens).

Read the following suggestions and list carefully. If you have any questions or need clarification don't hesitate to call or write. There is room for substitution and changes but if you have any doubt, do contact us.

CLOTHING LIST

We suggest layers of light, easily carried clothing that allow for fast and easy adjustment to best suit fast changing temperature conditions. We discourage cotton clothing as it causes rapid heat loss when wet. Feel free to call us if you have any questions about what to bring.

You will need to bring:

- Sweater or fleece jacket
- Wool / fleece hat that covers your ears.
- Wool / fleece mittens or mountaineering gloves.
- Waterproof overmitts if your gloves or mitts are NOT waterproof.
- Water and wind proof pants with side zippers.
- Water and wind proof jacket with hood
- Neck Tube
- Warm long pants to climb in. These should be wool/nylon blend knickers, fleece pants, nylon exercise pants with light long johns or wool trousers.
- Warm shirt, medium weight fleece or polypro.
- Light shirt or T-shirt
- Set of polypro / fleece long underwear
- Sunhat with wide brim
- Knee length gaiters
- Several sets of socks (wool/synthetic outers, polypro liners)
- Extra sweater or fleece jacket or light down jacket or vest

CLIMBING EQUIPMENT LIST

You will need to bring: (Items in blue are available to rent from Yamnuska, we can loan you the items in red). You must give us plenty of notice if wanting to rent or loan gear.

MOUNTAINEERING BOOTS: You will need mountaineering boots with rigid soles designed specifically for this use. Mountaineering boots are made from leather or plastic. The most important feature of a mountaineering boot is comfort. Different brands seem to suit different feet. If buying try a few different pairs and if they are not comfortable don't buy them. There are many good brands. They include Asolo, Kayland, Koflach, la Sportiva and Scarpa.

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- LARGE BACKPACK. At least 75 Liter capacity, internal frame with accessory straps. Big enough to carry your personal gear and clothing plus share of group camping gear and food.
- ICE AXE with curved pick (55cm length good for alpine ice).
- CRAMPONS (must fit your boots or easily be adjustable).
- ICE CLIMBING TOOL. Pref. with hammer head.
- HARNESS, sit harness preferred.
- HELMET.
- PERSONAL CLIMBING GEAR including prussic slings, locking and non locking biners (note: we do have extras you can use).
- HEADLAMP with fresh batteries and spares.
- POCKET KNIFE.
- Collapsible TREKKING POLE (S) (optional).
- PERSONAL CAMPING GEAR
- Unbreakable large plastic BOWL, or Jug
- SLEEPING BAG rated to -10 C
- Light MUG & Spoon, Pocket Knife
- SLEEPING PAD (S) ('Thermarest' &/or 'Ensolite')

MISCELLANEOUS EQUIPMENT

- SUNGLASSES with good UV protection, we suggest 'glacier glasses'.
- Extra Strength SUN CREAM.
- WATER BOTTLES) 2 wide mouth Nalgene Liter bottles or equivalent.
- CAMERA and spare film.
- LIP CREAM,
- BLISTER KIT ('moleskin', 'Second Skin')
- FIRST-AID Items (band-aids, ibuprofen & aspirin / Tylenol is enough as guides have a kit also).
- PEE BOTTLE (optional)
- Personal TOILET ITEMS
- Light STUFF SACS (optional)

Insurance

Please ensure that you are covered for the cost of evacuation or rescue should you fall ill or be injured. Most health benefit plans (public and private) and some travel insurance policies do cover this. Otherwise, in the unlikely event that you need these services you may be liable for the cost (not astronomical). We can give you further information if necessary.

Booking Information

Please contact us directly, by email or phone to arrange a climb. Once a date and guide can be confirmed we will require a deposit of 35% of the cost. Full payment will be required 8 weeks in advance of the climb.

All guests must fill in an Experience Questionnaire when first booking. Please note that you will also be required to sign our waiver before commencing the program. Please view our sample waiver copy.

Should you cancel more than eight weeks in advance of trip, a \$105 cancellation fee will apply. Cancellation between six and eight weeks before trip commencement will mean a loss of your deposit. Cancellation less than six weeks before trip commencement will result in a loss of all payments made.

We suggest you take cancellation insurance, this is available on booking and will cost 5% of the package fee quoted.

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For detailed Booking Instructions and Conditions, please visit our website.

Please note that you will be required to sign our waiver before commencing the trip. A copy of the waiver can be viewed on our website.

Please don't hesitate to contact us if you need to know anything else about this program.

Map of Office Location:

