

News From Yamnuska Mountain Adventures



December 2007

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YMA NEWS

Hello,

Winter here in the Rockies is in full swing and we've already had some incredible days of Ice Climbing and Backcountry Skiing!

For those of you who had a chance to make it out to our 9th annual Canmore Ice Climbing Festival, we hope you had a great time. It was a successful event with lots of community involvement.

2008 looks like it is going to be an amazing year with many opportunities for new adventures. Everyone is predicting a long cold winter, so come on out, strap on some skies and take a run through some beautiful Rockies scenery with us!

If you are planning any personal backcountry trips this winter, don't forget about Avalanche hazards and check the [CAA avalanche bulletins](#) before you head out. We offer the two day [Avalanche Skills Training](#) course almost every weekend in both Canmore and Calgary.

Have a safe and happy holiday season,

Andrew Stevens

9th Annual Canmore Ice Climbing Festival Report



Yamnuska Mountain Adventures was proud to once again be the Presenting Sponsor for this year's festival over the Dec. 7-9 weekend.

Yam built, supervised and supported the ice climbing wall in Centennial Park right in the middle of Canmore. There were also various specialty clinics that ranged from the "Intro to Basic Ice" weekend to the "Advanced Mixed Clinic" with the man who wrote the book on the sport, Sean Isaac.

Over 250 people tried the public ice climbing wall over the weekend. A particularly vivid image was recounted by Andrew Stevens from Yam. "One afternoon a school bus pulled up and people poured out. They went straight to the ice wall - kids, adults, families, and they just started climbing! It was impressive!"

One Yam client enthused, "I loved being in the mountains during the Canmore Ice Festival. There were lots of ice climbers and there was a sense of celebration everywhere you went. The weekend slide shows were standing room only, which reflects on the caliber of Will Gadd, Sean Isaac and Barry Blanchard, the presenters. Even though it was really cold during the weekend, it didn't take away from the warmth of the festival." Patricia M. - Toronto



The Canmore Ice Climbing Festival is definitely a 'must attend' event to put in your yearly December calendar. We look forward to having you join us in 2008!

Courtesy of Margaret Imai-Compton



Bring on Winter in the Mountains!



With cold temperatures and a good amount of snow, ice climbing and backcountry skiing are already in full swing. Yamnuska has a full programme of winter activities that will appeal to all levels.

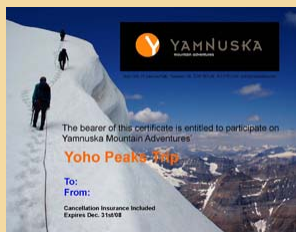
Our comprehensive programme is designed around ice climbing, ski mountaineering, and backcountry lodge-base skiing. We also offer excellent courses in Avalanche Safety using curriculum set by the Canadian Avalanche Association.

Check out our website videos on ice climbing, skiing and avalanche safety in the Rockies. All details on programme specifics, trip details, dates and prices are featured at www.yamnuska.com.

[Ice Climbing Video](#)
[Backcountry Skiing Video](#)
[Avalanche Safety Video](#)

Creative, unique gift ideas from Yamnuska

Stumped for a different, memorable gift idea? Give an experience that your loved one will remember for the rest of their lives! We have gift certificates in any amount for Yam courses and trips. What better way to send friends and family out into the backcountry with their new ski gear than with an avalanche safety or [Intro to Backcountry Skiing](#) course.



We also sell all manner of Guide recommended outdoor gear from a number of quality manufacturers. You can find Yam branded gear, outdoor apparel, backpacks, water bottles, coffee mugs and other products on our website.

Just call our office at 1-866-678-4164 or email info@yamnuska.com and we'll chat with you about gift giving possibilities. Many of our clients have purchased Yam trips or courses for Christmas gifts or birthday celebrations. They are always well-received.

[Click here to see Yamnuska's Guide Recommended Equipment](#)



Mistaya Lodge Backcountry Ski Trip March 30 - April 6, 2008

Join David Begg, Yamnuska Director and James Blench, past Director, on their annual ski mountaineering week, to be held next spring at spectacular Mistaya Lodge.

Mistaya Lodge is tucked hard against the continental divide at the head of Wildcat Creek, a tributary of the Blaeberry Valley east of Golden, B.C. It has all the right ingredients for a successful April ski mountaineering week:

North facing glaciers which hold the powder and extensive south facing slopes which are good for corn snow. Just over Baker Saddle are the Wapta Icefields and an alternate exit route if you'd like to ski to the very end!

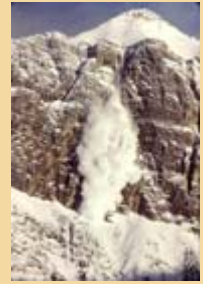
As usual the emphasis of the week will be to get out and ski as much as possible. April is the best month for ski mountaineering and the area has great options for easy peaks and extensive glacier ski tours.

So come and join us for a week of fun, hopefully sun and great mountain skiing!

[Click here to learn more about the Mistaya Lodge Trip](#)

Avalanche Rescue - Shovelling Techniques

Ask anyone, in the know, who travels in avalanche terrain what the three most essential safety items are and the answer will be: beacon, probe and shovel. The safety gear we all need for a proper companion rescue, but do we all really know how to use them to our most effective advantage?



When I started my avalanche education the emphasis was always on avalanche transceiver practice, a little bit on probing and almost no mention of shoveling. After all as Canadians what need to be said about shoveling? We have all grown up with shovels in our hands, building snow forts and keeping the driveway clean.

So looking at a time perspective in a companion rescue, a practiced searcher with the use of a transceiver can typically find a buried person in around five minutes. The primary search is quick, the secondary search is quick, and the pinpointing takes a wee bit longer. However with the use of the probe in a pinpoint search it is possible to better the pin pointing time. Ok, we have found the person and now we have to get them out. Now here comes the hard part, and the most time consuming, the shoveling.

What do we know about shoveling? Is this a practiced technique? Digging out an avalanche victim is not an easy thing to do in a time critical environment. This should be practiced along with beacon searching and probing. Set yourself up for success with the right tools and the right techniques.

Top Tips

- Use a metal shovel that is designed for backcountry companion rescue.
- Cut and lift. Even the most durable shovels strain under prying heavy or hard snow.
- Once the victim has been found with the beacon and probe, leave the probe in place.
- Start downhill of the marked location and dig in towards the victim.
- With several people, go hard and switch off frequently.
- Be careful about standing on the victim or shoveling too aggressively when you are close to them.
- Upon initially uncovering the victim, ensure their face is clear of snow and that they can breath.
- Turn off their beacon at first opportunity if there are more victims buried.

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