



Guided Climbs & Private Mountaineering Instruction

Program details

Organizing your own mountain programs on a private basis can be extremely rewarding in terms of what you achieve. This is because the pace of the activity depends upon you and your group, there is no compromise involved as the sole aim is to satisfy your goals.

There are a multitude of fine climbing areas, alpine traverses, unique expeditions and adventures that are not in our brochure. If you would like to do something different in the mountains then consider a custom trip. In the past we have operated private trips not only in Canada but also in Antarctica, Mexico & Peru.

Why choose a private program?

You would typically choose a private or custom program when your objectives, schedule and expectations are not matched by those offered on our scheduled programs.

You can hire a guide / instructor to do any of the activities in which we specialize:- mountaineering, rock and ice climbing, ski and snowboard mountaineering and hiking & trekking.

Yamnuska guides and instructors are certified by the Association of Canadian Mountain Guides. In addition to certification, which only relates to a guide's technical competence, all of our guides have access to Yamnuska's staff training and guide mentoring programs which help to develop many other key qualities required of a professional guide. They need to be endowed with patience, empathy, and a sense of humor as well as being effective communicators and great coaches.

How does it work?

If you would like to arrange a private climb or custom program please contact us directly, by email at info@yamnuska.com or by phone (403) 678 4164, to discuss with us what you are interested in doing. We will discuss with you your objectives, experience and expectations in order to design a program that would meet your needs.

We will confirm price and itinerary with you at which point you would book by making the appropriate deposit.

Costs

Yamnuska guides are some of the best in the industry. Our standards are very high and we are totally committed to providing you with the best possible experience. Our guiding team benefits from staff training, peer and client review, daily conditions reports, and support from senior guides. We back up all of our programs with a full time, on-call Duty Manager and support network ready to help in any situation. We also have cutting edge, modern equipment ready to rent or borrow on all of our programs.

When you arrange a private or custom program you will be paying a guide fee plus the expenses incurred in running the program. It is important to understand that should you wish to shorten your trip due to weather or personal reasons you will still be paying for the entire duration that you registered for.

This is an outline of the typical costs involved.

These costs do not include Goods & Services Tax (GST) which is usually 5%. A 50% rebate on the GST is available for those visiting from outside Canada. Gratuities are not included.

Before booking your private program we will give you a final quote as to cost.

Guide fees:

The fees below are set by the number of people in your group. The guide to client ratio will be determined by the difficulty and technicality of your objective. For intermediate and advanced climbs we recommend no more than a 1 guide to 2 client ratio, for beginner level ascents and basic instruction ratios can reach 1:6.

Number in group	Per Person / day
1	\$450
2	\$255
3	\$190
4 or more	\$158
The above prices do not include 5% GST (sales tax)	

Where climbs are more difficult, serious and/or long (for example Mounts Assiniboine, Louis, Robson, Sir Donald; Chouinard-Beckey on Howser) a surcharge will apply. Usually at least \$100 CDN.

Transportation

You will either need to provide the transportation for you and the guide or, should the guide need to drive him/herself to the program area then a charge, based on distance will apply. This ranges from \$20 on up depending upon where you go. Once we know whether you will be able to drive the guide or where you will be going we will include transport costs in your quote.

Yamnuska has several 15 passenger vans and we can supply transportation for your group using these. We can quote you a cost for this which will also depend upon how far you are driving and how much the vehicle will be used.

Accommodation

For accommodation before and after a program or during a program involving day trips from either Canmore, Banff or Lake Louise, please refer to our webpage for recommendations.

During a program you may find yourself camping, using mountain huts and hostels or even staying in hotels. Thus the cost of trip accommodation will vary with what you choose. Backcountry camping may involve minimal cost, National Park Campgrounds such as those at the Columbia Icefields cost \$16 per tent per night. Mountain huts operated by the Alpine Club of Canada average \$25/night/person (guides free). In constructing your private program we can include the cost of accommodation for you. The actual costs will be outlined in the quote.

Meals

Yamnuska can supply all your out-trip meals. Should you choose to supply your own we charge you only for the cost of your guide's food.

In planning your menu we will need to know of any special dietary restrictions or preferences you may have (e.g. vegetarian) and of any allergies you may have (e.g. shellfish).

The following daily rates (5% GST not included) apply:

Guide only: \$25/day
Guide plus 1 person: \$80/day
Guide plus 2 persons: \$120/day
Guide plus 3 persons: \$160/day
Guide plus 4 persons: \$200/day
Thereafter an extra \$40/day/extra person.

Food charges will be prorated where less than 3 meals are supplied in a day. Included in the charge is supply of group cooking gear (stoves, pots & pans).

For larger groups we can also arrange for a cook when requested and appropriate (mountain huts & campsites).

Gear

Group safety & technical gear (e.g. ropes & rack) is included in the guide fee. You will need to supply personal clothing and gear (e.g. ice axe, crampons, helmet & harness). Some of these items can be rented and the cost included in your package price.

Yamnuska has a full range of climbing and camping gear for rent.

Guide's Expenses

You are also responsible for your guide's expenses during your program. These include driving costs (unless you drive the guide), accommodation & meals (doesn't apply to local day climbs), helicopter costs etc.

Miscellaneous Expenses

Other charges that may apply to a private program are:

- National Park Fees: If we climb in Banff or the other National Parks entry fees apply (c. \$8/day/person) and if we overnight in a hut or camp in the backcountry a further \$9/night/person Wilderness Fee applies.
- Helicopter Access: Some backcountry areas (e.g. B.C. Interior Ranges, Mount Robson, Assiniboine) are best accessed by helicopter. Where the fee is fixed we can include that in our package price, where it may vary we will give you our best estimate and arrange for you to pay the helicopter pilot directly.
- Porters: We can arrange for a porter to help on access climbs and on backpack trips to lessen your loads. The charge for a porter is \$200/day plus the porter's gas costs.

Options & Program Ideas

Day Climbs near Banff, Canmore & Lake Louise:

The highways that traverse the Rockies ease access to a wonderful variety of peaks and make rewarding day climbs possible. From Canmore, Banff & Lake Louise you can book climbs for one day or several. Kananaskis Country and the Rocky Mountain National Parks (Banff, Jasper, Kootenay and Yoho) are all possible day destinations (Jasper is further away and you may be better staying at one of the hotels or hostels along the Banff-Jasper Parkway). Typically these climbs are mostly on rock with some snow in the early season.

Private Day Climbs are easiest to organize and involve the fewest costs, typically just guide fee plus gear rentals, if you are supplying transport.

Beginner level

- Mount Edith: 2554m. An easy rock peak with a little 5.4 rock just N. of Banff. Allow at least 8 hours, elevation gain of 1200m. June - October.
- Mount Rundle: 2949m. A big (elevation gain 1500m) but easy peak right above Banff. By the 'hiking' trail it's mainly steep hiking, not technical at all. If you follow the ridge from the Golf Course you'll quickly think you're much higher as you encounter enjoyable 4th and easy 5th class terrain, drop back to valley when you've had enough. June - October.

- Mount Temple: 3544m. A long but easy scramble with some cliff bands leads to the summit of the highest peak in the Lake Louise area with an exceptional view. Big elevation gain of 1500m. July - September.
- Mounts Whyte & Niblock: (2983m. & 2976m.) These two peaks, right above Lake Louise, offer a more alpine climbing experience than the others in this section. Mid-June - September.
- Intermediate & Advanced Levels
- Castle Mountain: 2760m. Towering above the Bow Valley this rocky monolith can be done in a long day from the valley or eased with an overnight in the hut part way up. There are several routes including Eisenhower Tower with some 5.5 or the spectacular Brewer's Buttress which is 5.7. both involve about 10 pitches of roped climbing. June - September.
- Mount Aberdeen: 3152m. This alpine peak right above Lake Louise involves a 1524m (5000 ft.) gain, a steep glacier and spectacular summit. June - July.
- Mount Louis: 2680m. This spectacular limestone spire rises just north of Banff. The Kain Route with the Perren finish is a Rockies classic (5.7). June - September.

There are also many great multi-pitch rock routes in the area such as those on Yamnuska, East End of Rundle and Ha Ling Peak (Chinaman's). These are better outlined on our Private Rock Climbing page.
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Mountaineering Instruction

The Canadian Rockies offer ideal instruction venues on snow, ice and rock. For shorter (2 - 3 days) programs we find the Columbia Icefields region ideal. Close to the highway are numerous glaciers and snowfields on which we can learn and practice glacier travel, crevasse rescue and the other skills of snow and ice mountaineering. Above are peaks on which we can put these skills into practice, most notable of which is Athabasca.

The Columbia Icefields are a 2.5 hour drive north of Banff & Canmore, just south of Jasper. We usually combine a day or two of instruction with an ascent of Athabasca, one of the Rockies major glaciated peaks. Mid-May to mid-October.

Another excellent instructional area is the Wapta Icefield. Just north of Lake Louise (1 hour drive from Banff & Canmore) these large glaciers are surrounded by peaks suitable for beginner instruction and climbs. Strategically placed huts are perfect bases for longer instructional programs (3 - 7days). It is in this region that we operate our very popular Intro to Mountaineering courses. Mid-June to mid-October.

It is also possible to provide rock-oriented mountaineering instruction on the peaks surrounding Banff, Canmore and Lake Louise.

Mount Athabasca

- Mount Athabasca at 3491m is deservedly one of the most popular peaks in the Canadian Rockies. Ease of access and varied routes plus stunning scenery make this a must for visiting mountaineers. Mid-May to mid-October. For more information on this option click [here](#).

The Bugaboos

This famed group of granite spires is found in the Purcell Mountains west of Canmore and Banff (3.5 hour drive) and can't be more highly recommended for those of you interested in high quality alpine rock climbing. It is served by an excellent alpine hut or you can camp in some of the most spectacular campgrounds known. This area is ideal for private and custom programs from 3 - 7 days. It is also a great place experience mountaineering with your kids (10 yrs. plus). End June (lower routes) to early September.

A wide variety of routes means that all abilities can be catered for. Peaks and routes include:

- East Post: 2590m. Located just above the hut, the West Ridge is a fun scramble (great with the kids) or more challenging by the S.E. Ridge (5.6).
- Donkey's Ears: 2850m. A scramble up distinctive spires with an unlikely, airy finish (5.5) by the S.E. Ridge or an enjoyable 6 pitch 5.7 climb by the S. Face ('Ears Between').

- Crescent Spires: 2900m. A series of small spires behind the Donkey's Ears with some classic ridge climbing and some very nice multi-pitch rock routes such as Lions Way (5.6) and the McTech Arete (5.10).
- Pigeon Spire: 3114m. No matter what your grade you have to do the W. Ridge which is surely one of the loveliest and enjoyable climbs out there (5.4).
- Bugaboo Spire: This famous and spectacular spire defines the area. Climb the classic Kain Route (5.7) or N.E. Ridge (5.8).
- Snowpatch Spire: Once thought unclimbable has many technical rock routes including the S.E. Corner (v. long 5.7), S.W. Corner (classic 5.9) and the Krauss-McCarthy (5.8).
- Chouinard-Beckey route on S. Howser Tower. This superb route is best done with one guide per guest and it usually takes two days with a bivvy. Surcharges apply to this climb for which you must be comfortable and speedy seconding 5.9 and the occasional 5.10.

Mount Assiniboine

- Mount Assiniboine 3618m is one of the finest peaks in the Canadian Rockies. It is often compared to the Matterhorn and whilst there is a similarity with that famous peak Assiniboine's beautiful isolation, high above Lake Magog give it a character that is entirely unique. Best July - August.

Visit our web more information on guided ascents of Assiniboine, for which we offer an inclusive package price.

Mount Robson

- Mt. Robson 3954m. The highest peak in the Canadian Rockies, we usually climb via the Kain Face. With helicopter access allow 5 days. Mid-July to early September.

Visit our web more information on guided ascents of Mt. Robson, for which we offer an inclusive package price.

Edith Cavell, Fay, Lefroy, Victoria & other Rockies Classics

There are several classic peaks in the Banff, Lake Louise and Jasper areas that are perfect guided objectives. Just a few are:

- Mount Edith Cavell: 3363m. The East Ridge is a classic rock route usually done in a day from a high camp (5.6). July - September.
- Mount Fay: 3235m. Climbed from the Neil Colgan Hut above Moraine Lake. W. Ridge is good alpine rock scrambling plus snow/ice couloirs, N. Face offers good ice routes. July - September.
- Mount Lefroy: 3423m. Climbed from Abbott Pass Hut by snow/ice couloirs on N.W. slopes. July - mid-August.
- Mount Victoria: 3464m. Across Abbott Pass from Lefroy also climbed from the Hut by S.E. Ridges to S. summit. July - September.

There are many other fine peaks in the Rockies which can also be climbed with a guide, peaks such as Columbia, Forbes, the President & Stanley to mention a very few.

Wilderness Area Expeditions (Purcells, Selkirks, Adamants etc)

In recent years a popular option has been to helicopter into areas of the British Columbia interior ranges where there is a great variety of climbing at all levels. These trips combining great climbing with the joy of being in remote beautiful areas.

Family Programs

Enjoy the mountains with your family. There are areas that are ideal places to introduce children to mountaineering whilst making sure that the fun level remains high. We would be happy to organize a custom program for you and your family.

Insurance

In most areas there is no fee for rescue. In the National Parks you must have a valid entry pass to qualify for free rescue. You can obtain this on entry to the Parks. In Assiniboine and other British Columbia Parks you may

be liable for the cost of rescue. In this case you need insurance to cover rescue. If in doubt consult us to check whether or not you will need this.

Whilst Canadians are covered for costs associated with medical treatment following accident or illness, overseas visitors should obtain appropriate medical insurance.

Should you take our optional cancellation penalty waiver cover you will be refunded in full or in part should you cancel this program due to illness/accident prior to or during the program.

Booking Information

We will supply you with a quote which will include all expenses such as meals, accommodation and rental gear when we know your requirements. Registration requires a deposit of one third of the quote or, for trips of three days or less, full payment. All guests must fill in an application form and an experience questionnaire. Please note that you will be required to sign our waiver before commencing the program.

Balance of payment is required eight weeks before trip commencement. 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 total fee quoted.

For detailed booking instructions and conditions please visit our website.

If you need any rental gear please let us know early to ensure its availability.

Map showing Office Location

