



MOUNTAINEERING

GENERAL INFORMATION

Mountaineering is an activity option on our Basecamp Antarctica voyages. Led by internationally certified mountain guides, this is a more strenuous activity for those who want to walk beyond the shore to reach higher ground and viewpoints.

Participants walk in rope parties across mostly glaciated environments. In general, we plan glacier excursions parallel to other activities during Basecamp voyages.

You will be split into groups during the activity to get the maximum experience. Groups may be based on experience and ability levels, as each site is suited to different activities.

Mountain and glacier excursions vary in length, difficulty, distance, and altitude climbed. This activity requires good physical health and is only suited for participants who are strong walkers.

We offer free use of lightweight snowshoes and mountaineering equipment.

One mountaineering excursion is free of charge. Every participant will be able to make at least one outing but may make more, depending on logistics. The activity must be booked with our reservation department prior to departure and is reserved on a first come, first served basis.

All human waste must be brought back to the ship. This means toilet visits on land are not allowed while mountaineering per Antarctic Treaty / IAATO regulations.



As with all of our activities, local conditions dictate what we can offer. We will always do our best to carry out a planned excursion but cannot make guarantees.

ACTIVITY CATEGORIES

Our mountaineering activity is divided into two categories:

Basic mountaineering includes activities like glacial travel and learning rudimentary mountaineering skills. This is the most popular of our mountain-based activities and is open to all guests and all levels of experience. It can be undertaken with muck boots provided on board.

Technical mountaineering

- **Ice climbing:** You will need to bring your own boots for this activity (see boots section). No previous experience is required.
- **Alpine ascents** are for those with previous mountaineering experience (including with the use of crampons on steep snow). We will take you on more challenging alpine routes, you will need to bring your own boots for this activity (see boots guide)

REQUIRED GEAR

- Boots (see "Boots" section)
- Gaiters (if bringing your own boots)
- Ski / mountain gloves
- Sunglasses / glacier glasses with sides
- Sunblock, sunscreen, fatty lip salve (no water)
- Toilet / hygiene kit: pee bottle (e.g., wide-opening Nalgene bottle). There are special adapters for ladies in outdoor shops
- 25-liter rucksack
- One-liter water bottle

GEAR WE PROVIDE

- Helmets
- Harnesses
- Crampons
- Ice axes
- Ropes and emergency equipment (carried by guides)

Please note that local conditions (landing site, weather, ice, wildlife...) will dictate the activities offered, including Technical Mountaineering which require specific sites and conditions. We will always do our best to carry out a planned excursion/activities though due to the changeable nature of weather and other conditions we can never guarantee any of them.



BOOTS

Our supply of Muck Boots are suitable for basic mountaineering (Muck Boots are provided on board). For technical mountaineering (alpine ascents and ice climbing), you will need your own boots. For alpine ascents, you will also need experience in the use of climbing with crampons.

If you decide to bring your own boots in the hope of doing a technical mountaineering activity they should meet UK classification B2 and B3 or US classification C and D (or equivalent). The mountain leaders will check suitability of personal footwear.



B2, C boots have a stiffened mid-sole, higher ankle profile, thicker upper body, and can take crampons with heel-clip bindings.

Example boots: Berghaus Kibo
Hanwag Ferrata Combi GTX

Suitable for all activities.



B3, D technical boots are rigid, usually plastic, and can take heel clips and wire toe balls.

Example boots: Mammut Mamook GTX
La Sportiva Nepal Extreme Scarpa Phantom Tech

Suitable for all activities.



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OCEANWIDE
EXPEDITIONS

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How long are mountaineering excursions?

We aim for three to four hours in the morning and afternoon. We are not allowed to eat or leave any toilet waste behind (per Antarctic Treaty / IAATO regulations), so our time on land is limited. We plan to go on shore immediately after breakfast or lunch, and we will be back for the next meal.

How difficult are the excursions?

You need to be fit and have good stamina. Please note that we often go into fairly unknown terrain. There can be rocks, snow, mud, or frozen hard surface to walk on. We can sometimes only tell more about the difficulties when we are on the spot.

How fast do we travel across glaciers?

Normally the walking speed is fairly slow. The progress will be affected by crevasses, ice, snow, and the ability levels of participants on the rope. We will make frequent stops.

Do we walk as one group or split into smaller groups?

The number of participants per rope party is limited and always led by one mountain guide. We have two mountain guides on board, so there is limited capacity per mountaineering outing. Participants who do not wish to commit to mountaineering can join a walk near shore or do any other activity offered.

Are hikes optional? Can I stay behind on shore?

You can stay on board during an activity but not alone on shore. All guides are needed for activities, though there is usually an easier option available.

Can I bring food to eat while mountaineering?

Eating snacks on shore is not allowed per the Antarctic Treaty / IAATO regulations to prevent the spreading of disease and seeds of alien plant species.

If I bring mountain boots, do I have to carry the supplied muck boots?

If you are an experienced climber and bring your own boots, you will be able to leave our muck boots at the landing site.

Am I guaranteed to do technical mountaineering if I bring my own boots?

Bringing your own boots has no bearing on whether we are able to offer the technical mountaineering activity. Your experience and physical fitness (assessed by the mountaineering guide) and the local conditions impact this option and define the possibility to do technical mountaineering.



HOW TO CHOOSE THE CORRECT MOUNTAINEERING BOOTS

BC MOUNTAINEERING ACTIVITY DESCRIPTIONS			
ACTIVITY	RECOMMENDED FOOTWEAR	EXPERIENCE	FITNESS
Basic Mountaineering	Ship supplied Muck boots	None	Good
Technical Climbing	Rigid soled mountaineering boots needed	<p>Ice Climbing No experience required</p> <p>Alpine Ascents Previous experience of crampon use in steep snow</p>	Excellent