



Mountain Medicine on Skis - Chamonix

4th – 8th February and 4th – 8th March 2018

Pre-trip Dossier – v1 (22/12/17)

Welcome to this exciting course set in Europe's premier skiing playground. This note will help you prepare or answer your questions if you are thinking about joining us. Please read this at the earliest opportunity and note the **ACTION POINTS**. This is not a ski holiday or an ordinary course and the devil is in the detail in making this formula work and delegates arriving prepared as we've asked.

Be sure to check the website for details that are not included or repeated here especially about the ski standard required. <http://wildernessmedicaltraining.co.uk/medics-series-courses/mountain-med-on-skis/> and this special FAQs newsletter <http://eepurl.com/-0Q25>

Not booked yet?

If you have not already signed up for the course, always see the website for the latest information, places available and to book and pay securely online. Registered delegates will be kept up to date directly by email.

Course structure – applies to both courses

Saturday – 5pm earliest group accommodation available

Sunday – mandatory warm up ski together, get equipment sorted, early evening formal meet and greet and course kick off and 1st medical lecture

Monday - Thursday – skiing, medical tuition on slope each day, evening tutorials Mon-Weds.

Thursday – final course day that concludes 5pm. (6pm earliest realistic departure from Chamonix if returning home - for flights no earlier than 9pm)

Saturday – depart group accommodation (normally by 10am latest)

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Budgeting

The course fee covers instruction, some equipment on loan (not skis), medical tuition and 2 course books (WMT's Medic manual and Staying Alive Offpiste).

So, you'll also need to budget for:

- Accommodation & meals, beers, drinks/snacks whilst skiing
- Ski equipment rental, ski passes (Rapid Card)
- Travel insurance
- Flights/baggage and airport transfers

TRAVEL

Where to start? www.chamonix.com is a fantastic website for local information including pictures, webcams and more. www.chamonix.net is better for info about getting to Geneva and Chamonix, flight options from anywhere in the world, airport transfers and more. You need to fly into Geneva, Switzerland.

Some scheduled UK flights to Geneva

- use www.skyscanner.net to search for you!
- Easyjet www.easyjet.com
- BMI Baby www.bmibaby.com
- Jet2 www.jet2.com
- British Airways www.ba.com
- Swiss Air www.swiss.com

Visas

Full British, Irish or other EU passport holders don't need a visa for Switzerland and/or France. Other passport holders should check.

Geneva Airport – Chamonix transfers

CVT - Chamonix Valley Transfers – is our local partner. They deliver outstanding service and competitive prices. They've created a dedicated WMT branded booking page so use this link to book (and then they know you're a WMT client). Prices may vary depending on the time of day of your pick up and how late you leave it to book.

<http://wilderness.cvt.ski/transfers/> We suggest booking transfers only when we've confirmed your accommodation details/address. They run a door to door service.

Shared apartment accommodation Saturday to Saturday

We propose to put you in a shared town centre shared apartment with others on the course – or one chalet if we can find one big enough and cost effective. This worked well in 2015 and 2016. You need to arrive by Saturday night and allow time that day if you need to rent skis etc.

You will most likely need to share a room (we aim for same sex only) and bathrooms. The latest to book might get a sofa bed in the lounge! You should budget £200 to £250 for this accommodation. We have good contacts in town to help us find and choose the most suitable and cost-effective properties. We'll book the accommodation for 7 nights as most people usually make a week out of their visit. Accommodation is normally available from 5pm and departure is normally by 10am. Bear these timings in mind for flights as early check in and late check/left luggage can't be counted on. The cost of the

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accommodation is divided equally amongst everyone regardless of the number of nights you are staying (otherwise it gets very complicated). You can eat it or out. Most nights the group eats out together, but this is not mandatory.

If you do not want to participate in the group accommodation, this course might not be for you and you should discuss your needs with WMT's Barry Roberts BEFORE you book and pay – call +44 7967032930.

RESOURCES & USEFUL ADVICE

Here's a handy town & valley map

<http://www.chamonix.com/pdf/planVille.pdf>

Other maps here including excellent virtual tours:

<http://www.chamonix.com/maps,14,en.html>

Insurance

Make sure you are properly insured for guided on and off piste skiing including glacier skiing. Bring your EHIC (European Health Insurance Card) with you, if applicable to your country of residence. Carre´ Neige insurance can be purchased with lift passes (but not online). It is very cheap – c. €2.80/day and covers rescue off the slopes and ski pass refunds, medical treatment and repatriation. It does not cover glacier skiing. Beware that the BMC (British Mountaineering Council) will consider this a “work” trip if you are being subsidised in any way or counting towards CPD and they won't insure you. “Free” travel insurance from a bank or credit card often excludes snow sports, especially off piste skiing. Tell your insurers you will be doing off piste glacier skiing with a IFMGA guide. We will ask for your insurance details on arrival. WMT will not advance funds to rescue you or for medical treatment. **Get insurance now** in case you must withdraw from the course for an insurable reason (as 2 people did in 2017). Here's the link to WMT's terms and conditions which you have agreed to, including for cancellation.

<http://wildernessmedicaltraining.co.uk/terms-and-conditions/>

Snowcard insurers

<http://www.snowcard.co.uk/> UK residents only – Snowcard WILL insure our medics to come on this course even if you are being funded – they consider this non-manual business travel – best to speak to them about your specific needs, cancellation cover required, duration of travel etc. **Tel. 01295 660836.**

KIT LIST

General advice:

- Pack as you would for a normal ski holiday or ski touring trip. Apply your own experience. Please ask questions if you're uncertain or are going to “splash the cash” to get new gear!
- Dress in layers. A thick “Spyder-type” ski jacket is not a flexible garment and NOT suitable for this course.
- Follow out kit list and advice!

You will need:

- balaclava/warm hat
- ski helmet – very strongly recommended
- thermals/fleece layers/ski socks

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- **ski pants and jacket/shell** (preferably hooded)
- ski gloves and/or mitts, thin liner gloves
- sun glasses & **ski goggles**
- sun block
- ski pack – 20 to 30L **rucksack***

These items in red are the ones that delegates frequently get wrong or don't bring/normally use. Ask if not sure.

You will also need to bring or rent:

- ski boots
- skis
- poles (ideally with fat baskets which are better in powder and loose off piste snow)

These items will be loaned to you as required – you are welcome to bring your own if you have them:

- avalanche transceiver, shovel, probe

* Everyday you will need to ski with water, snacks, goggles and spare clothes as a minimum. Some days you may also need skins, crampons, an axe, shovel etc. Therefore a proper ski pack is required. Choose a pack that you can lash skis on the back of, has compression straps for tightening the load, a comfortable, secure waist belt and shoulder straps and a chest strap. Any decent shop that sells skis should be able to advise you. Basically, you need a pack suitable for a ski mountaineering day tour. You cannot share a pack with your mate/boy-girl friend.

Really important advice - what skis to use?

We strongly recommend skiing in downhill boots and skis for the majority of the course – NOT in ski touring equipment. Ski touring kit is generally lighter and softer and therefore not suitable (or designed for) piste skiing when snow conditions can be hard. You will progress further if you heed this advice. We may only be on touring skis for one day of the course so it is cheaper to rent touring kit for a day than pay to fly it out. Our ski shop partners have excellent, new Salomon skis with Dynafit pin bindings. If you plan to invest in new equipment, the first item should be downhill ski boots. Get them custom fitted and buy them in resort so you can get them tweaked after each day of skiing until they fit just right. Book an appointment in advance.

Ski hire

Please only use **Chamonix Ski** to rent downhill skis and boots. Their shop is in the same building where the course instructors live and the course van is parked so it makes it easy to help you change/return skis and we know the owner Alex well.

Check their prices online but EMAIL them directly in good time to reserve kit for the best price. <http://www.chamonixski.com/index.php>

And if travelling with friends, one person can take the lead in getting everyone's requirements (model of skis required based on ability, height, weight, boot size – do a dummy booking on their website to see the ski pack options and info required) and EMAIL this to Alex with your dates/timings

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contact@chamonixski.com mobile tel +33 (0)6 74 19 44 73

If for some reason you're tempted to rent from another shop – don't! You will be on your own if you have problems with your skis, picking them up, changing them if you don't like them etc.

WMT will provisionally reserve **touring skis** for you at another partner shop because Chamonix Ski doesn't rent touring skis (normally for day 5 only). We need your **BOOT SIZE** and **HEIGHT** in advance or tell us if you are bringing your own - **ACTION** You pay for the hire of the skis on the day.

Ski Stations

There are 4 main lift stations in the Chamonix Valley. Most of the main skiing is higher, above 2000m. **Brevent** is above town and linked to **Flegere** (2 km up the valley). **Grands Montets** is 8 km up the valley and is the largest station, with access to a lot of off piste skiing and glacier skiing. **Le Tour/Domain de Balme** is furthest away (10 km) and fabulous (but under rated) for off piste and access to some great short ski tours. **Les Houches** is *down* the valley 4 km and is not included in the **Chamonix Le Pass** (but included in the **Mont Blanc Pass**) which is the domain most likely to be open during severe weather and high avalanche risk. We normally also ski in Courmayeur (Italy) and Megeve, especially if lifts are shut in Chamonix due to bad weather.

Lift passes & the Chamonix Rapid Card – action point

The ski pass options in the Chamonix area are complicated so, without trying to explain why, we ask that each delegate buys the **Chamonix Rapid Card**. This is a pay as you go smart card that gives you discounts and a 7th day free so if you might be doing more than one trip to Chamonix this year it'll be worth it in terms of cost saving.

It costs 50 Euro to buy the card and the main advantage will be that nobody will be queuing for lift passes each day so EVERYONE must have a card. The rapid card is valid everywhere mentioned above except in Italy, where everyone can just buy a day pass.

It takes a few weeks to process and for you to receive your hands-free card in the post so don't leave it to the last minute. Sign up for the card here <https://www.montblanccard.com/en/>. Please tell WMT when you've received your card please – ACTION. It only takes one person to not get the card (or leave it too late) to keep everyone else waiting each day. Don't let it be you!

Helmets are highly recommended for piste and off piste skiing. Fewer people ski with a helmet when ski touring but this is becoming more common.

Get fit – there's still time!

<http://www.skiclub.co.uk/skiclub/infoandadvice/category.aspx?categoryID=11#.VJNZzXABs> Most previous course delegates will admit they weren't fit enough to get the most out of WMT's most physically demanding course.

CPD credits

For medics, we estimate this course is valid for at least 12 CPD credits. For more information on CPD please consult this webpage <http://wildernessmedicaltraining.co.uk/accreditation-medic-courses>

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Balance payments are due promptly 8 weeks before the course please. We will send you an email link to pay online via a secure payment page.

Communicating with other course delegates

See who else is going and chat about pre-trip fitness, ski gear, life!

February course <https://www.facebook.com/events/1859554950970920/>

March course <https://www.facebook.com/events/227869737619535/>

Weather and Snow Reports - www.chamonix.com

ACTION POINTS

- buy the RAPIDCARD online now
- sort travel insurance
- email WMT your boot size and height

I hope this satisfies most of your queries. Please email any questions any time. You can expect periodic email updates. We hope you are looking forward to the course and we look forward to skiing with you.

All the very best,

Barry Roberts

WMT Commercial Director

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www.wildernessmedicaltraining.co.uk





TEACHING TEAMS Winter 2018 courses

February

Barry Roberts BSc BEd, WMT Commercial Director

Baz has maintained a long-standing interest in adventure and wilderness medicine since ski patrolling, climbing and leading canoe expeditions in Canada starting at 15. As a co-founder of WMT he has managed and taught WMT courses for 25 years. He was a Director of Raleigh International and has 25+ diverse international expeditions under his belt, mostly as the leader, mainly to the mountains in East Africa, the Greater Ranges and Greenland, including 3 major ski touring expeditions. He is an advanced diver, paraglider pilot, skydiver (now retired), a qualified Day Skipper, ski instructor and ski mountaineer. He is the co-author of *Staying Alive Off-piste*, a contributing author to the OUP expedition medicine handbook (3 chapters) and author of many adventure magazine features. From '04 to '08 he was sponsored by The North Face. Expedition highlights include climbing Everest and the first winter ascent of the highest mountain in the Arctic (Gunnsbjornsfjeld in Greenland) from which he paraglided off.

Luc Bellon – UIAGM Mountain Guide

Luc is French and an internationally qualified high mountain guide (IFMGA) and ski instructor with an extensive background in mountain rescue as a former mountain policeman with the PGHM. He has worked extensively with Barry Roberts running ski courses and corporate events in Chamonix and he has supported WMT's Chamonix courses in summer and winter for the past 9 years.

Duncan Gray MBChB DA FRCS

After 18 years as an A&E consultant in Glasgow, Duncan has recently moved to the Highlands to pursue his love of outdoor sports. Last year he passed the Winter Mountain Leader assessment and is now working towards the Five Star Sea Kayak qualification. His expedition experience includes the Chinese Himalayas, a ski crossing of South Georgia and summiting on Mt McKinley. On Masherbrum in the Karakoram he reached an altitude of 6500m before turning back while treating a case of cerebral oedema. In Antarctica he worked for Adventure Network International, visiting the South Pole four times, and provided medical cover for the first marathon to the South Pole. He has worked widely in Australia including hospital based helicopter rescue and the RFDS. In Canada he worked in the medical centre in Whistler and was a part time ski patroller there for three seasons. He has worked and travelled in Pakistan, Nepal, India, and Saudi Arabia and in Vietnam worked for an emergency repatriation company. His aviation medical experience also includes nine months with HEMS, the London Air ambulance. For many years he was in the British Army Airborne Forces, and served in the second Gulf War overseeing a resuscitation unit which was part of the Parachute regiment battle group. He also provided medical instruction for Royal Marines preparing for marine assaults on ships, conceiving many novel training scenarios and critiquing exercises.

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In the last two years he provided medical cover for two treks in the Sahara, a jungle trek in Myanmar and for a successful ascent of Kilimanjaro (in June 2015). His other hobbies include white water kayaking, a transatlantic yacht race, scuba diving and recently free fall parachuting.

March

Barry Roberts, Luc Bellon and Harvey Pynn

Dr Harvey Pynn MA FRCEM DMM (UIAA) DMCC DTM&H DipIMC, WMT Medical Director

Harvey is a Consultant in Emergency Medicine at Bristol Royal Infirmary and an Honorary Consultant and clinical governance lead in Pre-Hospital Emergency Care with Great Western Air Ambulance. He has undertaken several operational tours across the world whilst serving in the Armed Forces. Harvey has completed more than 10 expeditions worldwide – mainly in mountain and jungle areas (both as leader and doctor). He holds the Mountain Leader award and is an ALS, APLS and MOET Instructor. Harvey has particular interests in trauma, environmental and tropical medicine and has completed the diplomas in mountain medicine and medical care of catastrophes. He completed the diploma in tropical medicine in London in 2011. Amongst his many publications Harvey recently authored a paper with guidelines for expedition medics with the Faculty of Pre-hospital care at the Royal College of Surgeons of Edinburgh. He is a contributing author to the 2nd Ed of the Oxford Handbook in Expedition and Wilderness medicine. Harvey medically advises Nord Anglia education in their international outdoor education programme. He is the educational supervisor for several expedition medicine clinical fellows in Bristol and supervises a popular SSM for Bristol medical students learning about wilderness medicine. On the expedition front, in April 2010 Harvey completed the gruelling Marathon de Sables in Morocco for the charity Mencap and more recently took part in a medical research expedition to the Cordillera Real of the Bolivian Andes. Harvey was appointed WMT Medical Director in August 2013 after 10 years of teaching, developing and directing WMT courses. (updated Dec '17)



Mountain Medicine on Skis - Outline Programme Chamonix 2018

This programme is a broad guideline only and what is delivered on the day is a function of snow/weather conditions, safety and the fitness of the group. Always be flexible!

Ski & mountain programme

Day 1 – 8.15am meet, briefing and head out for a formal warm up ski (mandatory), 6-8pm formal kick off – evening welcome chat, intros and medical lecture, gear check

Day 2 – Polishing piste skiing skills; learning to flow, edge, ski with less effort, more grace, efficiency, speed and control, developing avalanche awareness, use of avalanche transceivers, victim search practice, medical training (see the Medical Programme)

Day 3 – Transitioning to off piste skiing; techniques and tricks, choosing a safe line back-country, route planning, navigation, using GPS, medical training; other skill training might include using an ice axe, rope-work, snow anchors, crevasse rescue

Day 4 – Basic introduction to using touring skis, looking after your skins, mastering the “kick turn”, practicing going up and down on a short ski tour, medical training

Day 5 – Final day – putting it all together – longer ski tour giving students more responsibility for trip planning and execution, teaching and coaching en route, medical training

Medical programme

Day 1 – Evening tutorial; scene safety, triage and management of the injured casualty in the remote winter environment. We’ll delve into the physiology of trauma and the effect of the cold on the human body and techniques for mitigation will be discussed. Best practice pre-hospital and in hospital will be discussed.

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Day 2 – Mountain session; we will put the learning of the previous evening into practice with a medical scenario in the ‘field’

Evening; frost nip, frostbite and non-freezing cold injury seminar covering the latest research that has informed the most up to date medical practices and reduced the need for early surgery. Case studies will illuminate and reinforce the theory.

Day 3 – Mountain session; triage practical in the avalanche setting

Evening; altitude seminar delving into the pathophysiology of Acute Mountain Sickness, High Altitude Cerebral Oedema and High Altitude Pulmonary Oedema. Review of treatments and discussion of ascent profiles and risk mitigation. Practical use and demonstration of the portable hyperbaric chamber.

Day 4 – Mountain session; femoral and pelvic fracture management, moving, lifting and carrying a seriously injured casualty improvising with the kit one would carry in the mountains

Evening; hypothermia seminar in which we interrogate the ICAR guidelines and discuss the role of techniques such as ECMO (extra corporeal membrane oxygenation)

Day 5 – Mountain session; we will combine mountain and medical skills to practically demonstrate how to care for a casualty for a more prolonged period in a hostile environment. Demonstration of snow scrapes, snow holes and other techniques.

The course handbook covers many other topics. With a small course group and time permitting, the instructors are available throughout to discuss anything of interest on the chairlift, slopes, classroom or after hours in the pub.

