



## AST PLUS



Thank you for choosing Island Alpine Guides for your AST Plus course. This package contains some information about your course and information to help you prepare for the day including a complete equipment list.

If you have any questions at all, please do not hesitate to contact us by email at [info@islandalpineguides.com](mailto:info@islandalpineguides.com) or by phone on 250-400-2870.

We hope you find the course enjoyable and informative.

Jan Neuspiel  
Director/Guide  
Island Alpine Guides



## AST PLUS

### COURSE OVERVIEW

For many people, making the step from their Avalanche Skills Training to actually getting out touring in the backcountry can be a bit daunting. This course is designed to help bridge this gap. You will spend a day with an experienced ski guide as they facilitate a trip planning session followed by a full day of touring in avalanche terrain, with a structured debrief to end the day. Students will gain the confidence to plan and execute their own trips as well as a ton of local knowledge about their touring destinations.

### MEETING TIME & PLACE

Courses are typically held at Mount Washington, but this may change based on participants' objectives. We will send out a group email in the week leading up to your course start date to confirm all the details, as well as to put participants in touch with each other to coordinate carpooling and other logistics if desired. Meeting time is normally 8:30am.

### PREPARATION

You will maximise your enjoyment on this trip by being prepared. The equipment list provided further down will help you prepare to be comfortable in the field regardless of the weather. The fitness suggestions will allow you to enjoy the skiing rather than struggling with it.

The choice to use alpine touring or telemark skis or a splitboard is up to you. Choose the mode of transport you are most comfortable and competent with. Splitboards are welcome on trips but please ensure you are familiar with how they work and the limitations of the equipment. Mostly, proficiency with the changeovers needs to be practised.

If you don't yet own your own touring gear but would like to use it for this course, [Ski Tak Hut](#) offers 25% off backcountry rentals (skins, boots, and skis or a splitboard) for all Island Alpine Guides customers while on one of our trips or courses. It's a great way to try it out before you commit. They also offer the same 50% discount on snowshoe rentals with poles. **The voucher with further instructions can be found at the end of this document.** If you are using any of the equipment for the first time, it's a good idea to practise changeovers (downhill to touring mode) before the trip.



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Please be sure to have all of the clothing and equipment on the list below. Being cold and uncomfortable on the trip is unnecessary and unpleasant. A warm down or synthetic parka is useful to stay warm at rest stops. Extra gloves are a good idea as you may be digging around in the snow and your gloves can become soaking wet rapidly. A thermos of hot tea is a nice comfort.

Being physically fit will increase your enjoyment of the trip. Prepare by focusing on cardiovascular activity with a pack on. Walking or skiing up-hill with a pack makes excellent training 2-3 times a week if possible.

### TYPICAL SCHEDULE

Generally we like to make the most of the day and so like to get a reasonably early start, meeting at 8:30am and aiming to finish at around 4:00pm depending on the length of daylight.

### PREPARATION

To get the most out of your course, please come prepared for our pre-trip meeting with the following:

- 1) Read the latest avalanche bulletin and make notes in your field book of the main concerns (avalanche problems) for the day, where they are found (elevation and aspects), their likelihood of triggering and potential avalanche size
- 2) From the bulletin make note in your field book of anything else that you find interesting or of relevance to your day of touring
- 3) Using your Avaluator Trip Planner and the [ATES documents](#), pick a trip for the day, and have a more conservative alternate plan in case anything suggests that your first choice is not a go
- 4) As late as possible before coming to our meeting, take a look at online sources for what has actually happened in the weather and what is forecast to happen to see if the predictions of the bulletin are likely to be accurate. Past precipitation can be found at the [BC Hydro hydrometeorologic data page](#). Check the Eric Creek (ERC), Cruickshank (CRU), Wolf River (WOL) and Salmon River (SAM) stations. Current winds (if not past) can be seen on [Mount Washington's](#) online weather report (check the Sunrise station regularly). Various weather models can be compared from one website [here](#).



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### **EQUIPMENT LIST**

Items marked with “+” can be rented from us as an add-on at the time of registering. Items marked with “\*” are optional.

#### **Clothing**

- Synthetic, wool or silk thermal underwear top and bottom
- Wool, fleece or pile sweater or jacket
- Insulating pants of wool, fleece or pile
- Wind and waterproof jacket and pants
- Down or synthetic jacket for extra insulation on top
- Toque
- Mitts or glove, 2 pairs

#### **Gear**

- Touring skis/snowshoes/splitboard
- Poles
- Boots
- Skins
- Transceiver (modern, digital 3-antenna)+
- Shovel+
- Probe+
- Compass\*
- Altimetre\*
- Toilet paper
- Personal small first aid kit (blister kit)
- SPF lip balm
- Sunscreen
- Water bottle
- Lunches
- Thermos\*
- Sunglasses
- Ski goggles
- Backpack to carry everything on this list

### **TRIP PLANNING & LEARNING AIDS**

- Avaluator Trip Planner and Slope Assessment tool
- Print out of the current Island Avalanche Bulletin
- Print out of ATES rating documents for the touring area
- Map of the touring area
- Notebook and pencil



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Please be sure that all clothing and equipment is in good repair and functioning properly with boots fitted properly to bindings. Be sure that skins are fitted properly to skis or boards and that they stick properly. If you are bringing your own avalanche transceiver, be sure that it has fresh batteries in it. Malfunctioning equipment uses up precious learning time for all participants. Please come properly prepared.

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### **GETTING TO MOUNT WASHINGTON**

Please be aware that the road to Mount Washington is a mountain road, which can be subject to serious winter driving conditions. Vehicles should have snow tires and carry chains in case they are required. Please note that our normal cancellation policy will apply for people that are unable to attend a course because they are unable to get up the road in their vehicle. For more information about getting to Mount Washington, please visit their [website](#).

### **RISKS, DANGERS, HAZARDS AND WAIVER**

All Island Alpine Guides courses and trips take place in an outdoor, wilderness environment. This means that as a participant you will be encountering various risks, dangers and hazards some of which include avalanches, cornices, crevasses, cliffs, trees, creeks, rockfall, difficult travel conditions, weather, illness, equipment failure, wild animals, becoming lost as well as the possibility of mistakes being made by IAG guides and instructors. To participate in these activities you will be required to read and agree to our [waiver](#) as part of the registration process. You will also be required to sign the waiver at the start of the course or trip. In doing so you will waive or give up certain legal rights including the right to sue or to claim compensation following an accident.

If you are a minor (under 19 years of age), we require your waiver to be signed by your parent or legal guardian. In this case, please download the appropriate waiver from the link above, print it, have your parent/guardian sign it, scan or photograph the completed copy and send it to [info@islandalpineguides.com](mailto:info@islandalpineguides.com). Minor students arriving without a waiver signed by their parent or legal guardian will not be allowed to participate in the course or trip.



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### 25% OFF VOUCHER FOR BACKCOUNTRY RENTALS AT SKI TAK HUT

**This voucher is only valid for backcountry rentals being used *for an IAG course or trip.***

To get 25% off, you **must** bring the following with you to Ski Tak Hut when picking up your rentals:

- 1) A printed copy of this voucher
- 2) A printed copy of the Island Alpine Guides booking confirmation, which you received by email when you registered. This booking confirmation must show that you are renting the gear precisely for the dates that you are on an IAG course or trip.

**If you do not have the above two things with you when picking up the gear, you will *not* receive the 25% discount. No exceptions can be made.**