



## EQUIPMENT LIST

### HAUTES ROUTES, SKI TOURING AND THE MONT BLANC ASCESCENT

**Skis** - A randonnee (alpine touring) ski set up is essential. It allows for ski touring up the mountain and gives a solid performance for skiing down hill. Any good alpine ;freeride ski in a mid-fat to fat width will work well. *I recommend 70-80 mm at the waist for touring, haute routes and Mont Blanc. If you are more off piste oriented with light touring go for 80-90 mm at the waist. If you are all about off piste go even wider.*

**Bindings** - It is important for your randonnee binding to be easy to get on and off, durable, have a ski brake and ski crampon. *Some suggestions* - Diamir Fritschi Freeride or Naxo NX 21 or Dynafit.

**Ski Crampons** - A ski crampon (harcheisen) is essential and is bought with the binding.

**Poles** - An adjustable probe pole is the most versatile. Some suggestions - Life Link carbon fibre adj. probe, Black Diamond carbon fibre adj. probe. The carbon fibre poles are lighter and have a lighter swing weight, but any adjustable or fixed length probe pole will do. I generally go with a fixed length aluminum pole these days.

**Ski boots** - Any good Randonnee (alpine touring) boot that fits your foot well and seems comfortable. *Some suggestions* - Dynafit, Lowa, Scarpa, Garmont. The Scarpa Denali and the Lowa Struktura Evo are about the stiffest. You might consider getting a Raichle Thermoflex or an Intuition thermally molded liner for more warmth and touring comfort. Fit the randonnee boot a little bigger than an alpine ski boot but maybe a little smaller than a plastic climbing boot. The more toe room the warmer your feet will stay on summit day, but if too big, you give up some edge control.

**Climbing skins** - A full length, full width climbing skin with glue and some sort of clip on system is preferable. *Some suggestions:*

**.Avalanche Transciever** - What to look for - Acoustic loudspeaker (no ear piece), European frequency 457 Khz. *Some suggestions* – Mammut Pulse.

**Shovel** - Any lightweight shovel made specifically for removing avalanche debris. *Some suggestions* - Backcountry Access.

**Probe** - Again, the lighter the better. There are some hot new carbon fibre probes available. *Some Suggestions* – Mammut shovel.

\* Not every one in the group needs a probe and shovel. The guides will have them. Two to three more sets would be good, but it doesn't hurt if every one wants to carry these items.

**Crampons** - Any crampon is fine as long as it fits on your ski boot well and is quick to take off and put on. Steel is fine but aluminum is preferred for ski touring for its lightness. *Some suggestions* - Camp LC 480, Grivel aluminum, Petzl Ecrin (steel but fairly light)

**Ice Axe** - Any ice axe will do, but again the lighter the better. Aluminum axes work well and save weight. An ice axe leash is not recommended. Length recommendations - 48cm to 60 cm. If an axe is too long it gets unwieldy on steeper slopes and is awkward getting in and out of trams. *Some Suggestions* - Camp aluminum, Grivel Air Tech Racing (one of the lightest steel axes), Cassin Ghost (Aluminum and extremely light).

**Harness** - It needs to fit over all your lower layers and be comfortable to walk or ski tour in. Again light weight and compact are desirable features. *Some suggestions* – Mammut alpine light, Petzl Pandion and Tetrax. Adrenaline can provide them if necessary.

**Carabiners** - One small locking biner. For crevasse rescue gear (optional-guides will have) add - 2 non-locking biners and 5 ft. of 6-7mm prussick cord. *Some suggestions* - Petzl Attache, Petlz Spirit straight gate.

**Headlamp** - Small and reliable. *Some suggestions* - Petzl Tikka Plus.

**Gaiters** - Need to fit over your ski boots; optional. Some Gore-tex or ski pants have internal gaitors or fastening systems which work.

**Socks** - Good warm ski sock. If it is too thick, it might restrict circulation and make your toes cold. *Some suggestions* - Smartwool Light Cushion.

**Shell clothing** - A Gore-tex top and bottom will be the most weather proof. Make sure it fits with all the possible layers under it. There are other options to Gore-tex that work fine. The top should have a comfortable protective hood.

**Inner layers** - Mid weight long under wear top and bottom, Mid weight fleece top, Heavier weight fleece jacket or insulated sweater. Schoeller fabric stretch climbing pants are useful, but optional.

**Insulation layer** - Down jacket or synthetic insulation jacket. Some suggestions - Patagonia DAS, Parka, Marmot, etc. A down sweater could be a little on the cold side depending on the weather; a jacket with a hood is preferable. Thinner for Haute Routes and thicker for Mont Blanc.

**Hat** - Warm fleece hat, additional thin balaclava optional.

**Sun hat** - A brimmed baseball cap works well;

**Gloves** - Standard ski glove plus and additional super warm glove. *Some suggestions* - Black Diamond Guide Glove, Patagonia Nitro Glove, and an optional glove liner.

**Pack** - A medium sized pack between 30 and 40 Liters is best. If the pack is too big, the straps often slap you in the face when it is windy and it wont ski as well as a smaller model. It does need to fit all your gear, but don't forget you'll be wearing most of the clothing. A ski oriented pack with pockets and slots for the shovel blade, probe, and shovel handle is very nice, but not imperative. *Some suggestions* - BCA Stash BC, 2400 cu. In.

**Food** - You can bring your favorite snack food and energy bars and gels or find similar bars over here, as well as good chocolate. *Some Suggestions* - Power Bars Harvest and Powergels.

**Fluids** - One to two liter capacity. A steel thermos is very nice to have. Water bladders work ok but even the insulated ones can freeze, and the bite valves pop off and they leak if you set the pack down on the bite valve, and it is a pain in the rear to pour the bottled water you buy in the hut each day into your bladder. I generally just use the 1.5 liter bottles I buy in the hut. They are light and indestructible. That said, the new BCA bladder with it's lockable valve is the best I have seen.

**First-aid kit** - Small and light. *Some suggestions* - Ibuprofen, blister kit.

**Sun screen and lip screen** - Small and light containers. At least SPF 15.

**Camera** - I find when I bring along my small and light camera, I take more pictures. I love my new digital camera.

**Optional Items** - Map, Compass, Altimeter, and GPS are all fun, but optional as the guides will have these items. The map for the area is the ST-GERVAIS-Les-Bains Massif Du Mont-Blanc map, 1 -25,000 scale, put out by L'Institut Geographique National ( [www.ign.fr](http://www.ign.fr) ) . The Swiss maps are all you need for the Haute Route: Martigny, 282 S; Arolla, 283 S; Mischabel, 284 S. [www.swisstopo.ch](http://www.swisstopo.ch)

Any of these items can be purchased in Chamonix or Verbier and the technical gear (skis, ice axes etc), can be rented. However, in April the selection will be slim for buying.

Please let us know if you have any questions about equipment; for example, if you have something that you think will work, but are not sure.