

Di Gilbert Mountaineering – Rjukan 2009

“Technique is our protection.” Chuck Pratt.

Introduction

Di first visited Norway in 1998 to ice climb in the Tjorhorn region. She returned to Rjukan in 2005 and has been every year since, making 2009 her 5th visit to this very special part of the world. Maybe it has something to do with reliable conditions, short approaches and an abundance of ice!

The Course

This course is really designed for anyone who wants to climb water ice – irrespective of previous experience and knowledge.

During the 5 days Di will guide you through the essential skills required to climb water ice safely and efficiently. When we meet you on the first evening, we will discuss your aspirations and build the course around these.

All accommodation and in-country travel is included in the course.

Ratio:

This course is run on a 1:2 ratio and requires 2 people for the course to run.

Dates

Monday 26th January – Sunday 1st February
Sunday 1st February – Sunday 7th February.

We will co-ordinate and collect you on the first day of your course from Oslo Torp Sandefjord Airport and drive you out to Rjukan. We will also co-ordinate your return trip.

This will give you 5 full days ice climbing.

Price

£1,100 per person.

This price includes all technical instruction/guiding, accommodation on a self catering basis, transfer from Oslo Torp Sandefjord Airport to Rjukan and course transport.

It also includes all technical equipment but excludes any personal equipment.

It may be possible to hire the technical climbing tools and crampons from Di Gilbert directly for a small fee.

You are responsible for organising your own flights to Torp Sandefjord, all food & drink, personal insurance and personal clothing & equipment.

Transport

I use www.ryanair.com for flights from the UK to Torp Sandefjord Airport. When booking, I recommend you prepay for a sports bag because this will save you getting hammered on excess baggage.

We will be use a small hire car in Norway which works fine.

Accommodation & Facilities

We stay in one of the cabins at the Rjukan Hytteby – www.rjukan-hytteby.no.

These are clean and friendly cabins with ample space for 3 people and located short walking distance from the local swimming pool which sports an excellent outside hot tub, steam room and sauna.

You can either hire linen from the Hytteby or supply your own – i.e. towel/sleeping liner.

They have a small kitchenette, a TV and wi-fi facilities.

Rjukan lives up to the Norwegian reputation for being expensive to eat and drink out in the restaurants. There are a few supermarkets in Rjukan where basic supplies can be purchased. I personally bring cereal bars and snacks with me from the UK.

Equipment

Climbing Hardware:

Boots: A pair of 4 season winter climbing boots with a rigid sole. I'm a big fan of Scarpa Freney's since they are lightweight and warm enough. www.scarpa.co.uk.

Crampons: Unfortunately your blunt crampons used on the mixed rock in Scotland won't cut the mustard on the water ice in Norway. I want a good sharp pair of technical crampons that I can rely on when bricking myself on the steep ice. Dual points or Mono points, it's your call. I recommend Grivel G14's or Rambo 4's. www.grivel.com.

Axe & Hammer: Personal preference here but you'll find it hard to climb in winter without them. Make sure that they are sharp. Leashless or with leashes, once again your call. These are available for hire if required. I recommend any Grivel technical tool www.grivel.com.

- Climbing helmet: It tends to hurt my head when things drop onto it from a great height, so a helmet's not a bad idea.
- Climbing harness: Something to tie the rope into. I prefer a model with fully adjustable leg loops so that I can put it on/off without tripping over my crampons.
- Belay plate: A recognised belay plate on a HMS karabiner.
- Personal gear: Ideally, please bring two prussiks along with 2 long slings with HMS karabiners. If you don't have these, then they can be supplied.
- Walking poles: Good for stability in the deep snow.

Other Climbing Things:

- Rucksack: Roughly 40-45 litres will be fine for this course. You want to be able to comfortably get all your kit inside. I like simplistic designs with a good size pocket in the lid. I highly recommend www.deutergb.co.uk.

Everything in your rucksack wants to remain dry so a waterproof liner is a good idea. I'm a big fan of Exped's Fold Dry bags. Failing this, lots of plastic bags with also work.

- Things to drink from: Personally, I take a small flask and a small drinks bottle.

- Gaiters: Stops my boots filling up with snow, and getting wet feet when trail breaking.

- Head torch: A small head torch with spare batteries. Either Halogen or strong LED's are the best.

- First Aid: A small personal first aid kit to deal with common problems i.e. blisters, sunscreen, lip salve etc. Don't forget to pick up a bottle of 'medicine' as you come through duty free.

Clothing:

- Outer Shell: Absolutely essential and it's personal preference which fabric you choose. Just make sure that they will keep the goodness in and the badness out. For winter, I prefer waterproof bottoms with a full length zip.

- Thermals: To keep you warm.

- Insulation layers: To keep you warm. Don't forget the spare layer which will keep you even warmer. Top half and bottom halves – i.e. tops

& bottoms. I'm a big fan of the synthetic 'belay jacket' which is a lightweight jacket that can be worn over all my clothes.

Gloves: Thin pairs and thick pairs. I normally take 2 pairs of thick gloves since I assume that one pair will take more than an evening to dry out properly.

Hats etc: To fit under your helmet. A necky is a good idea too.

Socks: Keep my feet toasty warm.

Normal clothes: Don't want to be travelling in my smelly outdoor gear.

Things hard to Categorise:

Liner: Either hire sheets or take out your own sleeping liner + pillowcase.

Passport: With at least 6 months validity.

Travel Documents Flight details and a copy of your insurance details.

Camera: Along with spare batteries, chargers, memory cards and/or film.

Toiletries: Don't forget your shorts for the sauna and a towel.

Sunglasses: Wishful thinking.

Money: Either hard currency (Krone) or plastic.

Mug: Can't stand the Norwegian things that they call cups – more like thimbles.

Evening entertainment: Either DVD's (I will have my laptop) or cards?